

St Cuthbert's C of E Academy Infants and Pre-School

Whole School Equality Policy

Issue Next Review: March 2020

Mission Statement

Our academy is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every pupil and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:

1. All learners are of equal value whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our academy/ infant school community to feel a sense of belonging within the academy and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development
6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential
7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, and especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” under the Equality Act 2010 but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty” requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties” require all public organisations, including schools, to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how the academy, our infant school, is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the Academy is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Development of the policy

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards. We will share the draft policy through Parent Forum and Staff Forum to ensure that the viewpoints of stakeholders are considered. This policy will require governors’ approval.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector

Equality Duty, information is included in our school development plan, self-evaluation review, the school flyer and future prospectus, our academy web site and other communications.

There are also links in the Behaviour, Admissions, SEN and Anti-Bullying Policies as well as minutes of governors/ committee/ staff meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our Recruitment Policy.

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access to facilities and services.

We are aware of the “Reasonable Adjustment” duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Head teacher will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

We seek the opinion of those who are affected by a policy or activity in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the Academy.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The Academy policies relating to Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The academy/ school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality. These include but are not limited to:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs.
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.
- prejudices around travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum.

- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

We treat all bullying incidents seriously. We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our academy and how we dealt with them. We review this data regularly and take action to reduce incidents. We treat bullying of staff seriously and this is reflected in our Dignity at Work Policy.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of our Academy population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and numeracy skills.

We collect, analyse and share data on:

- academy/ school population by gender and ethnicity.
- % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability.
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English.
- inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage, including but not limited to:

- Free School Meals
- EAL
- All SEN
- SEN School Action and SEN statement
- Looked after Children
- Gender

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able".

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils. We provide support to pupils at risk of under-achieving.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

We also aim to increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum, improve the physical environment and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the Academy's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination across the curriculum.

We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the Academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.

We promote a whole Academy ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.

We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, and whole academy/ school events.

Other ways we address equality issues

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole Academy community we:

- review relevant feedback from the parent questionnaires, parents' evening, parent-Academy forum and/or
- focus meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting.
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from a variety of means including the school council, lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Individual Action Plans/ PSPs, mentoring and support.
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at governors' meetings.

Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our academy's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues. We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

Our Equality Objectives are

Achieve a year on year (over three years) reduction in the attainment gap in Literacy: Reading Writing and SPAG and Numeracy: mathematics in KS1 between pupils with a SEN/D and their peers

Achieve a year on year (over three years) reduction in the % of fixed term exclusions for pupils with protected characteristics

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every two years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the academy/ school website.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the Academy community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governors:

The governors are responsible for ensuring that the academy complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and actions are implemented. Every governors' sub-committee

keeps aspects of the Academy's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, and personnel issues. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the academy's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

Head teacher, Deputy and extended Leadership team:

The Head teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Head teacher and Deputy with extended Leadership Team have day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. They will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the academy's principles, for example, in providing
 - materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
 - maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
 - support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the Academy as part of the induction procedure.

We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of the academy year.

Visitors:

All visitors to the Academy, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information to enable them to do this via this policy documentation and verbal advice.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made

on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy, our infant school, reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy is available:

- on the academy website
- as paper copies by request from the main office
- on display for visitors, including parents and carers in our staffroom
- as part of induction for new staff

We publish on the Academy website copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs.

APPENDIX ONE**Checklist for Academy staff and Trustees**

1. The academy collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training
2. This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the academy provides
3. The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders
4. The academy publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties
5. The academy analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need
6. The academy sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives
7. A senior member of staff has responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes
8. The academy ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
9. The academy ensures that visitors to the academy understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
10. The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
11. All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in academy life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies/ collective worship and the academy council
12. The academy monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
13. Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the academy community
14. Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies
15. The academy takes part in annual events to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender
16. The academy environment is increasingly accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the academy – including the acoustic environment
17. Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the academy and issues such as language barriers are considered

18. The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information
19. The governors are increasingly representative of the community they serve
20. Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled