



COCKBURN

MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

TRANSFORMATION TO EXCELLENCE

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EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

Vision and values

Our core purpose is built on high expectations and raising standards. As a Multi-academy Trust will not only make our existing collaborations more sustainable, but also secure new collaborations. As a Multi-academy Trust, our approach is based on an assimilated methodology to drive forward standards in our partner schools and improve the life chances for children by:

- increasing participation and shared provision through partnership
- providing clear qualitative and quantitative data to track performance in key areas
- improving learner achievement through high quality professional development for teaching, learning and enhanced leadership skills
- applying non-negotiables in key aspects of practice to ensure operational consistency
- deploying expertise strategically to provide a seamless education at each key stage

Our vision is to create a group of exceptional schools that radically improve students' life chances.

We seek to widen their aspirations; to reach destinations that are attainable and fulfilling. We work to raise attainment and the quality of teaching and learning for all our students through high expectations of academic success and behaviour.

1. Introduction

Under [The Equality Act 2010](#) and [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2017](#) schools/academies are no longer required to publish an equality scheme or action plan. The statutory requirements are for governing bodies of all maintained schools and academies to:

- *draw up and publish equality objectives every four years;*
- *annually publish information demonstrating how they are meeting the aims of the general public sector equality duty*
- *draw up an accessibility plan and review this every three years*

It is still good practice however, for schools to make a statement about the principles used to review the impact on equalities of its policies and procedures, to identify how it fulfils its specific duties to publish information and how specific objectives will be determined and measured.

2. The legal framework

We welcome our duties under:

1. The Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the protected characteristics of;
 - age (*as appropriate for school/academy*);

- disability;
 - gender reassignment;
 - marriage and civil partnership;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - race;
 - religion and belief;
 - sex;
 - sexual orientation
2. The Public Sector Equality Duty to assess the impact of our policies and practices on staff and students and take action to remove any obstacles identified, having due regard to:
- **Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.**
 - **Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.**
 - **Fostering good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.**

3. Guiding principles

In fulfilling our statutory duties we are guided by seven principles.

Principle 1: All members of the Multi-academy Trust and wider community are of equal value

We see all members of the Multi-academy Trust and wider community of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or socio- economic circumstances
- whatever their gender and sexual identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or background
- whatever their age

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- gender and sexual orientation so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are recognised;
- religion belief or faith background;
- sexual identity; and
- age (where appropriate).

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, or national origin, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment; and
- promote positive intergenerational attitudes and relationships.

Principle 4: We will ensure that the recruitment, retention and ongoing development of staff is undertaken in a fair and equitable manner to support our vision and values

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, or national origin;
- whichever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity; and
- whatever their age

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

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

- disabled and non-disabled people;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men;
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; and
- age (where appropriate).

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Where possible we consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled;
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- both women and men, and girls and boys;
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; and
- people of different ages and generations.

Principle 7: We feel that the community as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled;
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- both women and men, girls and boys,
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; and
- people of different ages and between generations.

4. Practical application of these principles and Equality Objectives

In the light of the principles stated above the following characteristics have been considered in order to identify practical objectives and plans of specific action:

- disability
- ethnicity
- gender
- sexual orientation
- religion and belief
- age

Equality objectives

Objective 1: To ensure reasonable adjustments are fully considered and where applicable put in place for staff and students covered under the Equality Act in order to meet their needs and ensure that any disadvantages they experience are addressed:

We will do this by:

- Complying with the SEND and attendance policies
- Carrying out risk assessments for students and staff with specific medical needs
- Seeking appropriate medical advice
- Ensuring the necessary support agencies are consulted
- Investing in proactive employee assistance programmes and early intervention therapy
- Maintaining our Investors in People and Investor in Students status
- Students with differing abilities, talents and needs will be represented in the Academy community: ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate in student voice activities
- Regularly carrying out staff voice surveys and responding to any concerns

Objective 2: All stakeholders are aware of equal opportunities and non-discrimination and that all applicants who apply to work in the Trust have a positive and inclusive experience:

We will do this by:

- Ensuring that all processes pertaining to recruitment, continuous professional development and induction have due regard for equal opportunities.
- Recruitment & selection policy, processes and templates are regularly reviewed to ensure they are free from bias.
- All applicants who at least meet the minimum criteria of the personnel specification will be guaranteed an interview, to help address the under-representation of staff with disabilities in the school/academy workforce.
- Giving applicants the opportunity to provide feedback on any barriers they faced during the recruitment process and can make suggestions on how the process can be improved as part of the equality monitoring form.
- Using organisational health indicators to identify any areas of under representation and to take positive action where appropriate.
- Equality & diversity are included in corporate and local induction processes

Objective 3: Inclusive, personalised learning strategies will be developed to meet the individual needs of all students to help them to achieve the best possible outcomes and qualifications for the next stages of their life and education. Respect is fundamental to the Trust's shared Values and Expectations and will be promoted in all aspects of academy life:

We will do this by:

- Fostering an inclusive ethos, ensuring the curriculum, learning environment and work experience challenge stereotypes and removing barriers to learning
- Developing students' knowledge and understanding so they can fully participate in a diverse multicultural world
- Promoting inclusion, individuality in all aspects of academy life and challenging any form of unacceptable behaviour
- Monitoring, recording and reporting hate incidents to ensure students are not at risk of discrimination or bullying
- Celebrating and promoting different cultural, social and religious events, celebrations and festivals within the academy community

5. The curriculum

We will actively seek opportunities to review the curriculum in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles outlined above.

6. Training and development

We will ensure staff and governors are offered the opportunity to engage in appropriate training and development to support the achievement of the seven principles

7. Ethos and organisation

We ensure that the principles listed above apply also to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- students' progress, attainment and assessment;
- students' and staff personal development, welfare and well-being;
- teaching styles and strategies;
- admissions and attendance;
- staff and governor recruitment, retention and professional development;
- care, guidance and support;
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- working in partnership with parents/carers;
- working with the wider community;
- participation of groups in wider school/academy activities; and
- preparing all members of the learning community for living and positively contributing to a diverse society.

8. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

Cockburn Multi-academy trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling legal duties for all aspects of equality:

- prejudices related to disability and special educational needs
- prejudices related to racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school/academy and how they were dealt with.¹

9. Roles and responsibilities

- The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that the Multi-academy Trust complies with current legislation, and that this policy statement and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.
- The Chair of the Local Governing Body for each school/academy in the Trust is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy statement.²
- The Executive Headteacher/CEO is responsible for ensuring that the policy statement is implemented across all School/Academy's in the Trust.
- The Headteacher/ Head of School has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy statement. They will ensure that all staff, governors and visitors are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
- All staff are expected to:
 - promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
 - challenge and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
 - identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
 - support students in their class for whom English is an additional language
 - keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
 - ensure that students have the opportunity to have their voices heard with regards to equality issues

10. Information and resources

¹ Guidance on reporting is given in Leeds City Council's "[Hate incident reporting guidance for children's settings and schools](#)"

² This is not statutory; however guidance on the role of the Equality Governor is available from [Leeds for Learning](#). The relevant training is also available through the website.

The content of this policy statement is shared regularly with all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all students and parents and carers.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

11. Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

12. Breaches of the policy statement

Breaches will be dealt with through the relevant policies and procedures, for example the grievance or disciplinary policy

13. Monitoring and review

- quantitative and qualitative data will be collected relating to the implementation of this policy and adjustments made as appropriate
- in particular achievement data, broken down as appropriate according to special educational needs and disabilities, ethnicity, language, religious affiliation, national origin, gender and age (as appropriate) will be analysed and used to inform objectives.

Publishing information on the school's public sector equality duty

This policy is available electronically on the school/academy website, in hard copy on request at the main office.

This document links to the following policies:

- Recruitment & Selection policy
- All Employment Policies
- Staff wellbeing policy
- SEND Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Supporting children with medical conditions policy
- Accessibility plan

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