

The Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust

Equality Policy



The Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust

Date of Adoption	Dec 2017
Date of Next Review	Dec 2021

Values

Every member of the Trust family of schools will be valued and encouraged to fulfil their potential. In our Trust we believe:

- Everyone has something to offer
- Trust, honesty, empathy and social responsibility are the Christian values that frame our work
- We are here for the whole person, spiritually, morally, educationally and socially
- In working with transparency and openness

Introduction

This single policy reflects the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010. Part One sets out the Trust's aims to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the Act; Part Two sets out how the Trust intends to deliver its legal obligations and Part Three sets out the Equality Objectives of The Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust and its family of schools.

PART ONE: Our Legal Duties

The single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into effect in April 2011 as a result of the Equality Act 2010. It requires public bodies (which includes academies) to promote equality. The Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust (the Trust) is therefore required to consider the needs of its.

This policy sets out how pupils and their families, employees, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers with the following protected characteristics (previously known as equality strands) will be protected from harassment and/ or discrimination:

- gender
- race
- disability;
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity.
- age;
- being married or in a civil partnership;

This document also extends to cover all aspects of vulnerability, including those associated with socio-economic factors where known (e.g. pupils qualifying for free meals).

The Trust is committed to being a good employer and this policy outlines how we meet our varied duties in terms of recruitment and employment practices. We also seek to be fully inclusive of all those in our community, including parents, guardians and carers.

The Act also requires all public organisations, including academies to comply with the following three duties:

1. To give due regard to the need to (in relation to the protected characteristics above):

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation**
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups**
- c) Foster good relations between different groups**

2. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty

3. Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

1.1 Unlawful Behaviour

The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour – direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.

Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act - it is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done (“a protected act”) in connection with the Act.

1.2 Discrimination Arising from Disability – arises from treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments. The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act. In particular, it works in only one direction, i.e. it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that we are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities

1.3 Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans

The Trust is required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.
- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services
- Provide information in an accessible format.
- Develop and implement (by allocation of resources) Accessibility Plans which will;
 - a. Increase disabled pupils’ access to the school curriculum

And for all users of the school

- b. Improve the physical environment
- c. Improve the provision of information

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that the Trust owes to all pupils with disabilities whether identified or not, and to those pupils who will be attending in the future. Our schools will seek relevant information regarding newly placed pupils to ensure as far as possible that their needs are anticipated under this Act. We will

ensure that we work closely with professionals, parents and carers as appropriate to identify the challenges presented to us by new pupils under this Act.

1.4 Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty, applicable to the Trust, to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faith /beliefs and socioeconomic backgrounds. Trust and individual school policies and activities should all promote community cohesion and inclusion to comply with, and support these duties.

PART TWO: The Policy

At The Good Shepherd Multi Academy Trust we value the individuality of all our children and we are committed to enabling all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognising their strengths and encouraging them to achieve their full potential. We are also committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and wellbeing of our children and young people and expect all pupils and their families, employees, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers to share this commitment.

The Trust will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics within all elements of its work.

This means:

- We will take reasonable and necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling our pupils to take as full a part as possible in all the activities of the school. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the school environment and its activities are as accessible and welcoming as possible for pupils and their families, employees, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers. We are also committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.
- We will actively encourage positive attitudes towards pupils and staff and expect everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
- We will regularly consider the ways in which the taught and wider curricula will help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals and develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- We will regularly consider the ways in which our teaching and the curriculum provision will support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- We will monitor the progress and achievement of pupils by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics.
- This information will help the schools to ensure that individual pupils are achieving their potential, the school is being inclusive in practice, and trends are identified which inform the setting of our equality objectives in the school development plans or through any interventions and support that may be in place
- We will collect and analyse information about protected characteristics in relation to staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure all staff have equality of opportunity. We will not ask health-related questions to job applicants before offering a job, unless it relates to an

intrinsic function of the work they do. We will make reasonable adjustments such as providing auxiliary aids for our disabled staff.

- Staff will ensure the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those for whom English is not their first language. Auxiliary aids and services will be provided for them, where reasonable adjustments are required. By planning ahead, staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the school will monitor the uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- We will seek the views of advisory staff and outside agencies and partnerships with other schools where this is needed. In planning the curriculum and resources the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.
- Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents will be carefully monitored and dealt with effectively. Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying
- We expect that all staff will be role-models for equal opportunities, deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Throughout the year, Trust schools will plan on-going events to raise awareness of equality and diversity. This may include a focus on disability, respect for other cultures, religions and beliefs, anti-homophobia/gay pride, gender equality, developing community cohesion and an understanding of the effects of discrimination.
- We will ensure pupil/parent/staff consultation is regularly sought in the development and review of this policy.
- We will regularly seek the views of pupils, parents, advisory staff and visitors to the school, to ensure that the school environment is as safe and accessible as possible to all school users. We will regularly review our accessibility plans

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all staff of the Trust and visitors/ volunteers 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.

The Trust Board of Directors

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with equality legislation and the effective operation of this policy by.

- Ensuring that the Trust and each school complies with all relevant equalities legislation
- Designating a Trustee with specific responsibility for Equality
- Conducting a 4 yearly review of the policy
- Annually monitoring and reviewing the progress and implementation of the Equality objectives and evaluating the success of the Trust's equalities work taking account quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence
- Ensuring all aspects of this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities within it are enacted

Local Governing Bodies (LGB's)

Every LGB has a delegated responsibility to deliver the equality policy and monitor and review the equality objectives at an individual school level. This can be achieved through:

- Ensuring all aspects of this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities within it are enacted
- Embedding action points arising from this policy within the School Development Plan
- Supporting the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- Informing, consulting and engaging with pupils families and the wider community as appropriate
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, guardians and pupils
- Welcoming all applications for admission to the school, whatever a pupil's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability
- Ensuring that pupils and their families, school staff, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers are not discriminated against

The Trust CEO and Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that:

- This policy is communicated and made readily available to pupils and their families, employees, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers and that there is a collective responsibility to apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- This policy and its related procedures are implemented
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support to enable them to effectively deliver this policy
- Appropriate action is taken in any case of actual or potential discrimination
- All staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and provide reasonable adjustments to staff when appointed. All appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities
- All pupils and their families, employees, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents
- All incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, are treated with due seriousness
- The principle of equal opportunity is promoted when developing the curriculum
- Appropriate support and monitoring is provided for all pupils and specifically target pupils to whom the policy/action plan has a more direct relevance
- Parental engagement and attendance is monitored
- Annual monitoring and reporting to the Trust Board/ LGB on the effectiveness of the policy is undertaken

Trust employees should:

- Enact all aspects of this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities within it
- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention to their line manager
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds

- Attend training and information sharing opportunities as necessary to use this policy with confidence, and keep up to date with current equality legislation
- Monitor and, where necessary, guide the practice of volunteers, visitors or contractors working in the school
- Promote equal opportunities through their words and actions

Pupils according to their ability and understanding should:

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour, or any other behaviour that could cause offence to others under this policy
- Experience a curriculum and environment which is respectful of diversity and difference and prepares them for life in a diverse society
- Understand the importance of reporting discrimination
- Ensure any peer support programme within the school promotes understanding and supports pupils who are experiencing discrimination

Parents and Carers should

- Be encouraged to participate fully in implementing the policy within the academy, particularly by reinforcing its ethos at home
- Have the opportunity to attend any relevant meetings/awareness raising sessions related to the policy
- Have the right to be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

All Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors should:

- Make themselves aware of, and comply with the expectations contained within this policy
- To refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or language on Trust premises
- Bring to the attention of a member of staff any act, or behaviour that concerns them with regard to this policy

2.2 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out in this policy, each area of operation in the Trust including the schools embed equality of opportunity in their day to day practice in the following ways:

A. Ethos and Organisation

The Trust and its schools will ensure that the principles previously listed above also apply to the full range of policies, procedures and practices including those that are concerned with:

- Learners' progress, attainment and assessment;
- Learner' and staff personal development, welfare and well-being;
- Teaching styles and strategies;
- Admissions and attendance;
- Staff and director recruitment, retention and professional development;
- Care, guidance and support;
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians;
- Working with the wider community;
- Participation of groups in wider school activities;
- Preparing all members of the learning community for living in and positively contributing to a diverse society.

B. Pupil Achievement

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will ensure the following:

- The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will use this contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- We will take into account the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- We will ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- We will use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability without stereotyping;
- We will promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- We will provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- We will actively seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- We will encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact of such subjects on learning;
- We will include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

C. Broad and Balanced Curriculum

The enriched curriculum we provide has been developed in order to fulfil our academy trust aims. The education will be balanced and broadly based whilst taking into account the requirements of the EYFS and National Curriculum. We will ensure that learning is supported and developed through effective record keeping and assessment.

We will regularly consider the ways in which our teaching and the curriculum provision will support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.

The curriculum offered within the Trust encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. Equality and diversity is embedded as far as possible in all areas of the curriculum and pupils are given opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination, and to positively explore difference in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability.

We do this by:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves through the curriculum.
- Ensuring that children have equal access to learning
- Recognising the different learning styles of children, making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities

- Regularly reviewing the teaching within each subject area as well as with the resources that are available to support this so that both the diversity of the school, local community and wider society as a whole are represented in this.
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities
- Ensuring that children learning english as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning
- Data is collected with regard to the attainment and achievement of all pupils in order to inform the planning and provision of support to individuals and groups of pupils
- We recognise the specific assessment needs of pupils with additional needs such as EAL, SEN, etc, and also the importance of scrutinising assessment materials for cultural bias

D. Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate. When deemed necessary the decision to exclude a pupil will always be based on the agreed strategy within the school's Behaviour and Inclusion policies. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

E. Workforce-based Equality

The Trust is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles, the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. Whilst we try to ensure that the staffing of the schools and central Trust reflect the diversity of our community, all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

As an employer we strive to ensure that discrimination and harassment have no part in in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention (including bullying & harassment);
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

PART THREE: Equality Objectives

The Equality Objectives focus on areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantage. They are designed to be Trust wide objectives delivered at an individual school level. Having set the Trust wide objectives each school's LGB will then agree the focus for delivery of each objective within the context of their school, the timescale and the process of monitoring and reporting the delivery of that objective both within the school and to the Board of directors. This information is to be captured in the Equality Action Plan (see Appendix 2). In addition the school may review and reset their objectives during the four year lifespan of the Trust wide objectives depending on the progress and implementation activity they have agreed and the lifetime of that activity.

In order to embed equality within the work of the Trust and its schools, it is important that monitoring of the objectives does not become an additional burden but rather can be facilitated and delivered through existing reporting frameworks and structures.

The Trust has set the following equality objectives for the four year period from December 2017 to November 2021

Area 1: Pupil Achievement

Objective 1: To narrow the gap between boys and girl's attainment in writing and maths; paying particular focus to the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners.

Area 2: (Delivery of) Broad and Balanced Curriculum

Objective 2: Through continuous development of teaching and learning practices, deliver a broad and balanced curriculum with rich experiences that addresses equality and diversity for all learners.

Area 3: Community Involvement

Objective 3: Ensure that there is equal access to information for all permitted user groups; developing involvement of the community in the wider school life.

Area 4: Remove Disadvantage & Promote Participation

Objective 4: Identify barriers to learning and provide opportunities / support for all to participate in any activity offered within the school.

Area 5: Dignity & Respect

Objective 5: Identify spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout 'school' life for all- drawing on pre-agreed ethos statements.

Area 6: Workforce-based Equality

Objective 6: Ensure that all appointments take into account equal opportunity legislation and that staff are appropriately trained to eradicate discrimination.

3.1 Monitoring & Review

On a Trust wide basis the implementation and impact of these objectives will be monitored and reviewed by the Trust Board of directors or its standing committees of Personnel and School Improvement through:

- Receiving reports from school LGB's and Headteachers and the School Improvement Officers monitoring visits.
- Reviewing pupil progress and attainment for different sub-groups (e.g. individual schools, boys vs girls, Pupil Premium, SEN and Children in Care)

annually in the autumn term, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and encourage and support schools to take appropriate action to address any gaps.

- Taking advice from relevant parties such as the Trust HR provider and County Admissions team.

APPENDIX 1

Check list for all Staff, LGB members and directors

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the academy provides?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in Academy life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the Academy's diversity e.g. through assemblies/councils?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the Local Governing Body and Trust Board?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of the Academy's community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- Does the Academy take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the Academy's environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the academy?
- Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the Academy, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of parent LGB members open to all candidates?

APPENDIX 2**Equality Plan****School Name:**

Area	Trust Objective	School Focus for Objective	Timeframe & Monitoring / Delivery Process
Area 1: Pupil Achievement	Objective 1: To narrow the gap between boys and girl's attainment in writing; paying particular focus to the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners.		
Area 2: (Delivery of) Broad and Balanced Curriculum	Objective 2: Through continuous development of teaching and learning practices, deliver a broad and balanced curriculum with rich experiences that addresses equality and diversity for all learners.		
Area 3: Community Involvement	Objective 3: Ensure that there is equal access to information for all permitted user groups; developing involvement of the community in the wider school life.		
Area 4: Remove disadvantage & promote participation	Objective 4: Identify barriers to learning and provide opportunities / support for all to participate in any activity offered within the school.		
Area 5: Dignity & Respect	Objective 5: Identify spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout 'school' life for all- drawing on pre-agreed ethos statements.		
Area 6: Workforce-based equality	Objective 6: Ensure that all appointments take into account equal opportunity legislation and that staff are appropriately trained to eradicate discrimination.		