



Olive Academies

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## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

Written: Dec 2016  
To be reviewed: March 2019 (unless legislation determines earlier)

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## 1. Introduction

This equality and diversity policy represents a commitment to a common set of values and objectives, and to a consistent approach to communicating, implementing, and monitoring the policy.

## 2. Aims

Olive Academies are committed to advancing and achieving equality of opportunity for all pupils, parents and carers, staff, trustees and visitors. We believe all people are of equal value and are entitled to equality of opportunity and that our diversity enriches our community. This belief is underpinned by our vision and values, which are that all young people from all backgrounds should be given the opportunity to succeed.

## 3. Scope

This policy is shaped by the guidance provided in the Equality Act (2010), which unifies, supersedes or updates much of the previous law relating to equality. This introduced the single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies including schools, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics.

It encompasses the following '**protected characteristics**':

- age (applies to staff)
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- gender
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Schools are prohibited from discriminating against, harassing or victimising:

- prospective pupils
- pupils at the school
- in some limited circumstances, former pupils

## 4. Values, principles and standards

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- equality and social justice

- acknowledging and valuing diversity
- respect for others
- compliance with equality legislation
- elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination
- active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour
- commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all pupils to develop their full potential
- commitment to the positive development of all staff and governors
- accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the academy, and others engaged in academy activities

## **5. Objectives**

The objectives of this equality and diversity policy are to:

- a) develop an ethos which respects and values all people
- b) actively advance equality of opportunity
- c) prepare pupils for life in a diverse society
- d) promote good relations amongst people within the academy and the wider communities within which we work
- e) eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation and other oppressive behaviour
- f) delivery of equality and diversity through our academies policies, procedures and practice
- g) make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to academy provision and activities
- h) take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural expectations
- i) monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within our academies
- j) set targets for improvement and evaluate the impact of equality and diversity action in achieving our goals

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) board are responsible for:

- making sure the academies follow all of its equality and diversity policies, and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality

The Academy Advisory Board (AAB) is responsible for:

- overseeing and monitoring policies and practice in promoting equality and diversity within the academy at a local level

The headteacher is responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high profile lead on equality and diversity
- advancing equality and diversity inside and outside the academy
- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation
- putting equality and diversity policies into practice
- monitoring the implementation of the policy and reporting to the AAB as necessary

- reporting to the AAB on equality objectives through the academy improvement plan and other reporting mechanisms
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training they need to carry them out
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) are responsible for:

- promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination
- actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination, related to protected characteristics perpetrated by pupils, other staff and visitors
- keeping up to date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training

Pupils are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions
- following all the academy equality and diversity guidance

## **7. Equality in policy and practice**

The academy operates equality of opportunity in day to day practice in the following ways:

### **Teaching and learning**

OA aims to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, each academy will:

- provide a curriculum that is accessible and relevant to the needs of each individual pupil through a range of activities, technologies and opportunities which ensure that learning is fun
- use whatever specialist techniques and teaching approaches which may motivate support the needs, or improve access of any individual pupil.
- ensure pupils have the time needed for them to acquire, develop, practise and apply skills.
- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and take action to address any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- use materials and activities that reflect the diversity of the academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- ensure pastoral support takes into account religious and ethnic differences and the experiences and needs of particular groups of pupils, including refugees and asylum seekers
- seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's education;

- encourage staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- ensure teaching and classroom-based approaches are appropriate to meet the individual needs of pupils
- challenge any behaviour (verbal or written, e.g. graffiti, literature/propaganda) that differentiates, degrades or isolates an individual or group due to race, religion, language or culture;

**This includes:**

- racist comments or name calling;
- comments about appearance;
- rejection by colour;
- mocking language or accent;
- denigrating religious observances or cultural traditions.

**Admissions, behaviour and exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent. Exclusions will always be based on the academy's behaviour policy. Strategies are always put in place to meet the needs of any child who may be at risk of frequent sanctions or possible exclusion. We monitor behaviour management plans to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

**Equal opportunities for 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. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy reflects the diversity of our community.

**Employer duties**

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

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity, and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating teaching and learning responsibilities or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- senior leadership team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **Consultation and involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and progress against it are informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We will achieve this by using the following to shape the plan:

- feedback from the annual parent/teacher meeting
- input from staff surveys or through staff meetings
- issues raised in annual reviews
- feedback at AAB and MAT board meetings.

### **Tackling discrimination**

Harassment on account of race, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated within the academy environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying will be dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher /senior leadership team/headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the AAB and local authority each term.

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including:

- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- exclusion from groups and games;
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- unwanted looks or comments;
- racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- bringing discriminatory material into academy;
- verbal abuse and threats;
- incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding to and reporting incidents**

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole academy.

## **8. Communication of our policy**

We will take active steps to communicate this policy to all pupils, parents/carers/associated persons, staff, governors, stakeholders, partners, contractors and visitors to the academy. We will:

- publish our policy on the academy website;
- raise awareness of the equality and diversity through the academy newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;

## **9. Monitoring and review**

### **Review of progress and impact against equality objectives**

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

We collect and analyse the following equality information for our pupils:

- The performance of boys and girls
- the performance of boys and girls with learning difficulties.
- the progress of children from ethnic backgrounds.
- the performance of children who are Looked After.
- constant monitoring of attendance
- monitoring of targets set in the annual improvement plan.

### **Review of policy**

This equality and diversity policy will be reviewed every three years, or as required to ensure it remains compliant with equality legislation.

## Appendix A

### Categories of Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 states that there are seven categories of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating a person less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a 'protected characteristic' such as sex, race or a disability is unlawful.
- **Associative discrimination:** direct discrimination against a person who associates with another person with a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** it is unlawful when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but have a different impact on a person with a protected characteristic. (NB indirect discrimination is only lawful if it can be justified for reasons unrelated to the characteristic in question).
- **Victimisation:** treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague, is unlawful.
- **Harassment:** unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on grounds of one of the relevant characteristics such as sex or race – is also unlawful in many of the situations covered by discrimination law.
- **Harassment by a third party:** harassment by people not employed by the academy e.g. contractors.
- **Discrimination by perception:** discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic (even if they don't).

### What is required by law in employing staff?

- According to law, schools must not discriminate in the employment of staff on grounds of gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation (including perceived orientation), religion or belief, age, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. Employers are no longer allowed to ask candidates about their sickness record in an interview unless they can prove that this is to check whether they can complete an essential task e.g. heavy lifting.
- With regard to disability, schools must make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.
- The requirement to avoid discrimination relates to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices such as dress codes and disciplinary procedures.

### What is required by law in relation to pupils?

- Schools must not discriminate against children seeking admission or with regard to how pupils are treated, on grounds of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. They must not discriminate against pupils or potential pupils on the grounds of their sexual orientation or that of their parents, carers or other associates. Pupils or potential pupils must not be discriminated against



on the grounds of the marital status or gender reassignment of parents, carers or other associates.

- This includes discrimination in provision of teaching or allocating the pupil to certain classes, applying different standards of behaviour, dress and appearance, excluding pupils or subjecting them to any other detriment, and conferring benefits, facilities or services.
- With regard to disability, schools must make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent disabled pupils being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled, even if it means treating them more favourably.
- Age discrimination legislation does not apply to the treatment of pupils or the delivery of education.