

# Our Single Equalities Policy, Equality Objectives and Accessibility Plan



Redrafted November 2017

This policy outlines the commitment and expectation of the staff, children, pupils and governors of Revoe Learning Academy to ensure that equality of opportunity is applied to all members of our community. For us, this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of people at RLA, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of our Academy community.

The **Equality Act 2010** is concerned with [discrimination](#) and [harassment](#) in respect of nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

At RLA, we believe Equality permeates all aspects of RLA life and is the responsibility of every member of RLA and the wider community.

## **Aims of the Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

The Act has two main purposes: to harmonise and unify discrimination law and to strengthen it.

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## **Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments**

Education providers are under a number of duties in relation to the making of reasonable adjustments for disabled children and pupils.

### **General Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments**

The general duty to make reasonable adjustments is set out in Section 20 of the Act. The general duty comprises up to three requirements:

- **First requirement.** Where a **provision, criterion or practice** puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to avoid the disadvantage (*section 20(3)*).
- **Second requirement.** Where a **physical feature of a property** puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to avoid the disadvantage (*section 20(4)*).
- **Third requirement.** Where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage without an **auxiliary aid**, there is a duty to take reasonable steps to provide the auxiliary aid (*section 20(5)*).

### **Our Mission Statement:**

RLA's Mission Statement applies to all of us: '**Respect. Learn. Achieve.**'

### **Our Vision:**

To be a nurturing, high-achieving, ambitious learning community where excellence for all is achieved through collaboration, discovery, innovation and mastery.

### **Our Aims are to:**

- ✓ deliver excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all learners
- ✓ provide a welcoming, safe, respectful and inclusive culture for all
- ✓ achieve excellent outcomes for all children
- ✓ empower all learners to become respectful, resilient, tolerant citizens
- ✓ create rich, relevant, stimulating learning experiences which enhance future life opportunities
- ✓ build effective networks to raise expectations and aspirations for all

### **Our Ethos (Summary):**

We serve a diverse community, made up of people with different needs, talents and aspirations. We celebrate difference and look to use all of our available resources to ensure that we are an inclusive, effective place of learning, teaching and care.

At RLA, there is an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect which welcomes everyone to RLA. We challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour.

RLA is keen to provide a broad, rich curriculum with a wide range of learning experiences for the children and pupils. Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, displays, classroom based and visits.

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The close partnership between the children, pupils, parents and carers, staff and Governors is pivotal. Through us all working together for the child, we will provide effective learning, teaching and care for every child and pupil in an atmosphere of trust where all are valued and celebrated.

## Our Equality Objectives and Accessibility Plan 2016 - 2019

### Monitoring and Review:

RLA is an inclusive academy, working towards greater equality in all that we do. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those it serves; and provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to achieve their best.

We collect, analyse and use a range of equality data to support improvements.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress and attainment, as they move through RLA. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching.

Resources are available to support groups of children and pupils where data suggests that progress is not as good as is expected. Our Governing Body receives regular updates on child performance data, which is compared to national and local authority data, to ensure that our children are making appropriate progress compared to other children.

As well as monitoring child performance data, we also regularly monitor a range of other information, relating to:

- ✓ Attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Behaviour and Exclusions
- ✓ All forms of bullying and or homophobic behaviour
- ✓ Parental engagement and involvement
- ✓ External Agency involvement

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required. This allows us to take appropriate, timely action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make necessary improvements.

RLA is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and establish a Governing Body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

We collect and analyse a range of profile information for our staff and governors:

- Applicants for employment
- Staff profile
- Governing body profile
- Attendance at training events

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- Disciplinary and grievance cases
- Staff appraisal

This data remains confidential to RLA. Due regard is given to the promotion of equality in the School Development Plan. The person responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of this policy and action plan is the Headteacher. Their role is to:

- Lead discussions, organise training, update staff in staff meetings, support discussions
- Work with the Governing Body on matters relating to equality
- Support evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of this policy

### **Developing Best Practice.**

#### **Learning and Teaching at RLA will:**

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of, and attitude towards, disabilities
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity;
- Subject leaders promote/celebrate cultural contributions to the subject matter
- Seek to involve all parents and carers in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all groups
- Take account of the performance of all children when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all children
- Identify resources and training that support staff development

#### **Learning Environment:**

We have high expectations of all children regardless of their sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all children. Adults at RLA will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.

RLA places a very high priority on special educational needs and disability provision. We meet pupil's learning needs, including the more able, by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work;

RLA provides an environment where all have equal access to all facilities and resources. Consideration is given to the physical learning environment - both internal and external, including displays and signage.

### **Curriculum:**

At RLA, we aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Children have opportunities to explore concepts/issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all children have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles
- All children have access to qualifications which recognise achievement and promote progression

### **Resources and Materials:**

The provision of good quality resources and materials is a high priority. These resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of males and females in society
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of our Academy community

### **Language:**

It is important that all members of our Academy community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case

### **Extended Learning Opportunities:**

It is our policy to provide equal access to all activities from an early age. We try to ensure that all staff and non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

### **Provision for Bi-lingual and EAL Pupils:**

We undertake at RLA to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
- Advanced bi-lingual learners
- Use first language effectively for learning

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### **Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance:**

- Staff take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils
- All children are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation (whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations)
- All children/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination
- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout RLA to ensure that different groups of children can see themselves reflected in our Academy community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings rather than the challenges.

### **Staffing and Staff Development:**

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

- This must include children's access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible
- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all Academy staff
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of children
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds

### **Staff Recruitment:**

- All recruiters are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact

**Note:** Under the Equality Act 2010, in very limited circumstances, an employer can claim that a certain religious denomination or belief is considered to be a genuine occupational requirement of that role. In addition, there are also instances in which a job will qualify for a genuine occupational requirement on the grounds of gender. However, only in very few instances would this be permissible, for example, where the job is likely to involve physical contact with members of the opposite sex, where matters of decency or privacy are involved.

### **Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community:**

We will work with parents/carers to help all children to achieve their potential.

- All parents and carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of our Academy
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in Academy activities

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- Exploring the possibility of the Academy having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Our Governing Body will ensure that RLA complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan
- The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the Governing Body
- RLA staff will promote an inclusive, collaborative ethos in our Academy, challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for children with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues
- All members of RLA have a responsibility to treat each other with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to RLA adhere to our commitment to equality

### **Commissioning and Procurement:**

RLA will ensure that we buy services from organisations that comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.

### **The Measurement of Impact of the Policy:**

This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on children, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our Academy community.

### **Publicising the Policy and Plan:**

This policy will be available on the RLA website and signposted via newsletters and Prospectus. We will report annually on progress which will formulate the basis for the annual action plan

### **Information showing the academy or school has due regard for equalities:**

#### ***What is the purpose of publishing equality information?***

Each academy or school has to publish information showing it is complying with the requirement (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard for equalities. On the basis of this information each academy or school also has to set itself at least one equality objective.

It is also on the basis of the information which an academy or school publishes that parents, carers, local communities, trade unions and equality organisations will hold the Governing Body to account.

#### ***How and where should the information be published?***

The information which an academy or school publishes must be accessible, in both senses: a) easy to find and b) easy for a non-specialist to understand.

It is up to each academy or school to decide this for itself but it is probably the same means of publishing that it uses for other important information. For many, this means the document will be on the website and that a brief summary of it will be posted on notice-boards, and included in newsletters to parents and in the staff handbook.

Other things being equal, it would be appropriate and valuable to publish equality information within, or alongside, the school's self-evaluation documentation.

### ***What about confidentiality?***

Is it necessary to publish *all* relevant information, regardless of how sensitive it is or may be? The answer is that the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 will apply, and that normal conventions and rules relating to confidentiality will need to be observed. It follows that not all the relevant information that an academy or school gathers has to be placed in the public domain. For example, it would not be appropriate to publish information which enables individual children or members of staff to be identified. Nor, as a general rule, would it be appropriate to publish information that could be maliciously used to harm an academy or school's reputation.

### ***What sort of information?***

What sort of information will count as showing that an academy or school has due regard for equalities, and that it is willing for others to hold it to account?

By and large, each academy or school is permitted and encouraged to answer this question in its own way, according to its own circumstances. However, the government has indicated that minimally every public body must provide demographic information about its service users, and must show that it is aware of different outcomes and inequalities amongst them.

In the case of academies or schools, therefore, information needs to be given about the pupil population broken down by ethnicity and gender, and about significant differences in attainment between girls and boys, and between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.

It is reasonable to assume that demonstrating due regard will involve academies or schools making statements such as those listed below, and illustrating them with examples and further information. The first four, as mentioned above, are essential.

### **Documentation and Record-keeping**

1. There are statements of the academy's or school's responsibilities under the Equality Act in various school documents. For example, there is a statement of overarching policy, and there may be significant references in the school development plan, self-evaluation papers, the prospectus, routine bulletins and newsletters, and occasional letters to parents.
2. There are references to the academy's or school's responsibilities under the Equality Act in the minutes of governors' meetings, staff meetings and senior leadership team meetings, and in the minutes of the School Council.
3. Before introducing important new policies or measures, the academy or school carefully assesses their potential impact on equalities, positive or negative, and keeps a record of the analysis and judgements which it makes.

### **Responsibilities**

4. The Headteacher and Leadership Governor have special responsibility for equalities matters.

## **Staffing**

5. The Academy's programme for continuing professional development (CPD) includes reference to equalities matters, both directly and incidentally.
6. There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.

## **Behaviour and Safety**

7. There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents.
8. Surveys and focus groups show that most pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.

## **Curriculum**

9. Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of children, eg those learning English as an additional language, and there is extra or special provision for certain groups, as appropriate
10. There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding
11. There are activities across the curriculum that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
12. The Academy takes part in certain national projects and award schemes, eg the Lancashire Race Equality Mark; Accord Coalition Inclusivity Award; Black History Month; Disability History Month; Equalities Award; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month; LGBT History Month; Refugee Week; Rights Respecting Schools Award; and Stonewall School Champions.
13. In curriculum materials in all subjects there are positive images of disabled people; of gay and lesbian people; of both women and men in non-stereotypical gender roles; and of people from a wide range of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

## **Consultation and Involvement**

14. The Academy has procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and has regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act.
15. The Academy has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about RLA, and has regard in these for the concerns of the Equality Act.

## **Setting Objectives:**

### **Introductory notes**

Equality objectives have to be specific and measurable, and to be outcome-focused, as distinct from being focused primarily on making improvements in provision, crucially important though such improvements are.

This means the vast majority of equality objectives are likely to be about the closing and narrowing of gaps in attainment and take-up, or else about fostering good relations. Some examples of such objectives are cited below.

Further, equality objectives have to be related to matters highlighted in the information which an academy or school publishes to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED).

The legal requirement is to publish at least one objective. A single objective might well be sufficient in a very small rural primary school. It would probably be difficult or impossible for an urban primary school, or for a secondary school, to claim that a single objective shows it is taking the public sector equality duty (PSED) seriously.

The actual number of objectives which a school adopts is probably less important than the seriousness and rigour with which it undertakes them.

Other things being equal, equality objectives should be part of, or aligned with, the academy's development plan.

### **Fostering good relations**

To reduce the incidence of prejudice-related bullying, hostility and suspicion throughout the Academy particularly in relation to homophobia and sexism, and hostile attitudes and behaviour towards people who are disabled.

- To promote and enhance community cohesion and a sense of shared belonging at RLA, and in the local community
- To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the teaching of English and literacy, with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity.

**Questions about each objective which a school adopts.** With regard to each objective which an academy or school selects, it will need to consider questions such as those listed below:

1. **Background evidence.** Why have we chosen this objective? For example, and particularly, what relevant data do we have? Is the rationale for the objective clearly indicated in the published information.
2. **Procedure.** What in practice are we actually going to do?
3. **Responsibility.** Who will be responsible for ensuring the objective is pursued/achieved?
4. **Measurable success indicators.** What will count as relevant and measurable evidence that we are succeeding/have succeeded?
5. **Timings.** By when do we expect to see signs of progress or success?
6. **Expense.** How much are we budgeting, and on what items of expenditure in particular?
7. **Resistance.** Who may be opposed or lukewarm? How shall we respond to them?
8. **Problems.** What problems or difficulties may arise, and how shall we deal with them?

9. **Learning from others.** What plans do we have for finding out what has worked well elsewhere? Do some, or all, staff need extra training?

10. **Engagement.** Who have we consulted when deciding on this objective?

## Appendix 2 – for information

### Race:

The term race includes colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origin and citizenship as well as race.

### Reporting racist incidents in schools:

Schools in Blackpool are required to have in place a procedure for dealing with and reporting racist incidents, which includes providing an annual summary of racist incidents to BBC.

### Disability: What is a disability?

- Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:
  - substantial (more than minor or trivial)
  - adverse
  - long-term (it has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected).

There is no need for a person to have a specific, medically-diagnosed cause for their impairment - what matters is the effect of the impairment, not the cause.

Examples include hearing or sight impairments, a significant mobility difficulty, mental health conditions or learning difficulties. There are many other types of condition, illness or injury that can result in a person being disabled (eg diabetes, asthma, cancer, arthritis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, heart conditions, facial disfigurement).

**Gender:** The term gender includes boys, girls, men and women, and transgender/transsexual people. Sexual orientation is a distinct protected characteristic. (The term transgender refers to a range of people who do not feel comfortable with their birth gender).

**What is the difference between sex and gender?** Sex refers to biological status as male or female. It includes physical attributes such as sex chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, internal reproductive structures, and external genitalia. Gender is a term that is often used to refer to ways that people act, interact, or feel about themselves, which are associated with boys/men and girls/women. While aspects of biological sex are the same across different cultures, aspects of gender may not be.

### Sexual Orientation:

**Heterosexism** is any prejudice and discrimination against individuals and groups who are lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) or are perceived to be so. It is based on the assumption that everyone is or

should be heterosexual. Expressions of dislike, contempt or fear based on heterosexism are usually known as **homophobia**, although **lesophobia** and **biphobia** are also coming into use.

Whether through institutional practice or personal behaviour, the prevalence of heterosexism is likely to mean that LGB people feel excluded and unsafe. This effect can be mitigated by an actively welcoming and supportive environment.

**Sexual orientation** is defined as an individual's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex as her or him (gay or lesbian), people of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or people of both sexes (bisexual).

### **Transgenderism and gender re-assignment**

Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from that usually associated with their birth sex. Gender re-assignment is the process a transgender person goes through to change sex.

At Revoe Learning Academy our values reflect our commitment to a school where there are high expectations of everyone. Children are provided with high quality learning opportunities so that each child attains and achieves all that they are able to. Everyone in our school is important and included. We promote an ethos of care and trust where every member of our school community feels that they truly belong and are valued. We work hard to ensure there are no invisible children here, recognising everyone's uniqueness and success. We recognise learning in all its forms and are committed to nurturing lifelong learners. We are a safe school, committed to improving children's confidence and self-esteem. We know that safe and happy children achieve.

This Accessibility Plan is drawn up in compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. School Governors are accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting of progress of the Accessibility Plan over a prescribed period.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. The effect of the law is the same as in the past, meaning that "schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation".

According to the Equality Act 2010 a person has a disability if:

- (a) He or she has a physical or mental impairment, and
- (b) The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Accessibility Plan is structured to complement and support the school's Equality Objectives, and will similarly be published on the school website. We understand that the Local Authority will monitor the school's activity under the Equality Act 2010 (and in particular Schedule 10

regarding Accessibility) and will advise upon the compliance with that duty.

## Objectives

Revoe Learning Academy is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all children, pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within RLA.

The school recognises and values parent's knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on their ability to carry out everyday activities and respects the parent's and child's right to confidentiality.

The Revoe Learning Academy Accessibility Plan shows how access is to be improved for disabled pupils, staff and visitors to the school within a given timeframe and anticipating the need to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs where practicable.

The Accessibility Plan contains relevant and timely actions to:-

- Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a physical disability and/or sensory impairments, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as equally prepared for life as the able-bodied pupils; (If a school fails to do this they are in breach of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010); this covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or schools visits – it also covers the provision of specialist or auxiliary aids and equipment, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve and maintain access to the physical environment of the school, adding specialist facilities as necessary - this covers improvements to the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education within a reasonable timeframe;
- Improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities; examples might include hand-outs, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events; the information should be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable timeframe.