



# The MAST Academy Trust

Policy	Equality policy	
Owner	Melanie Humphreys – The Mast Executive Administrator (Master Policy only)	
Date approved	January 2021	
Approver	Trust Board Standards and Effectiveness Committee	

Current version	V3.0
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Next review due	Autumn Term 2024
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## Objective of Policy

This policy complies with the guidance given in **Statutory Instrument: EQUALITY- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011**. It has been written as guidance for staff, parents or carers and children with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010
- Kirklees Inclusion and Diversity Strategy Statement
- Kirklees Inclusion and Diversity Annual Report (July 2017)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (last updated June 2014)

Version Control	
Version Number	Summary of amends from previous version
2.0	Review and appropriate updates since last version, front cover amends.
3.0	Update following equality review, inclusion of website link to statement

Sign off requirements	
Approvers	Position
Standards and Effectiveness Committee	Trust Board
Reviewers	Position
Natasha Greenough	CEO The MAST
Liz Godman	Trust representative

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## **1.0 Aims**

The Mast Academy Trust actively promotes equality in an inclusive culture. It is our aim to provide an education for all children and pupils which acknowledges that the society we live in is enriched by diversity. We will strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools reflects the diversity of all members of the community, where everyone is equally valued and where we all treat one another with respect and fairness. Children and pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity, to prepare them for life in a multi-racial world. We will not tolerate harassment, discrimination or victimisation of any kind. We expect all members of our school community to be committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion and belief.

## **2.0 Objectives**

- To promote equality of all groups, for example assessing the impact of our policies on different groups
- To promote community cohesion by encouraging the development of mutual respect and good relationships between all different people, regardless of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion or belief
- To challenge and seek to eradicate discrimination on any grounds, including ethnicity, age, gender or gender identity, disability, pregnancy or maternity, religion or religious affiliation. This will include, for example, acting quickly to deal with all bullying, including that which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, such as racist bullying
- To give a high profile to rights and responsibilities by promoting human rights, justice and fairness throughout the curriculum and wider school community
- To ensure that all children and pupils have a right to equality of access to educational provision
- To ensure that no student is victimised due to the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or behaviour of a person with whom a student is associated, for example one of their parents or siblings

## **3.0 Introduction**

The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools welcomes its duties under the Equality Act (2010).

The Equality Act establishes nine protected characteristics which apply to schools. The first seven of these apply to children and pupils and prospective children and pupils:

1. Disability
2. Race
3. Sex
4. Gender reassignment
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Religion or belief
7. Sexual orientation
8. Marriage and civil partnership
9. Age

The Mast Academy Trust also includes children and pupils who are disadvantaged as a protected group in terms of ensuring equality of access to the broad curriculum.

#### **4.0 Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)**

This policy sets out how The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools has paid due regard to the need:

- **to eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- **to advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- **to foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

#### **5.0 Specific Duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty**

- To publish information which demonstrates our compliance with the need to have due regard for the three aims of the General Duty.
- To prepare and publish specific and measurable objectives which we will pursue over the coming years to achieve the three aims.

This scheme sets out the steps the trust board and each school's governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for all members of The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools' community in all aspects of school life, taking positive action to promote equality.

#### **6.0 Definition of 'due regard' and how we aim to comply with the principles of the General Duty**

1. Whilst making a decision that might affect an equality group, the decision maker must have regard to the three aims of the Act at that time. This cannot be done in retrospect, nor can it be delegated.
2. The duty will be exercised with rigour and with attention to relevant evidence, including that derived from consultation with staff and the wider community.
3. The duty is continuing, so we will revisit it and bear it in mind constantly.
4. We will keep records to show that the equality duties have been considered on each occasion. Governing Bodies will report the number of racist and homophobic incidents for each school to the trust board annually.

#### **7.0 Trust Ethos, Vision and Values**

At The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools, we are committed to ensuring the equality of education and opportunity for all children and pupils, staff, parents, carers and other school users, with a particular focus on those who share a protected characteristic. We aim to provide a fair and just school community which promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality; respects diversity; and challenges and acts upon discrimination and inequality, including bullying. We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We aim to foster a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to

The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life. Equality and diversity are at the heart of our core values.

All school policies are reviewed as part of an ongoing process, and will be reconsidered with regard to equality following the production of this policy.

### **8.0 Other related policies & documents**

- Accessibility Plan (Individual school policy)
- Admissions Policy (Trust policy)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (Individual school policy)
- Attendance Policy (Shelley Pyramid Policy)
- Central Record of Recruitment and Vetting Checks (Trust policy)
- Complaints Procedures (Trust policy)
- Health and Safety Policy (Trust policy)
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (Trust policy)
- School Behaviour Policy (Individual school policy)
- RSE (Relationships & Sex Education) Policy (Individual school policy)
- Special Educational Needs Policy (Trust policy)
- Supporting Children and pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (Individual school policy)
- Teacher Appraisal Policy (Trust policy)
- Teachers' Pay Policy (Trust policy)

### **What we already do**

In order to comply with the General Duty we have the following procedures in place, to ensure that we consider the needs of our school community in everything we do:

### **Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act:**

- We gather information from a range of sources when a student enters The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools, e.g.: family, child, previous school, external agencies where applicable.
- We respond quickly to any conduct reported that is prohibited under or by this act, in accordance with school procedures. Acts of discrimination, harassment and victimisation are recorded, along with any actions and sanctions taken, and incidents are followed up on in a reasonable timescale, to ensure all those affected are aware of what action has been taken and no further issues have occurred. Actions may involve referrals to key workers within schools, the trust central services or external agencies, including the police.
- Through lessons, class/tutor time, assemblies and extra-curricular activities, we aim to create an ethos and atmosphere of dignity and fairness, where children and pupils are free to develop themselves, knowing that differences are respected and they are encouraged to become independent learners, take responsibility for their actions and become good citizens.
- We provide staff training on issues relating to Equality and ensure all staff are aware of the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Members of each school's Senior Leadership Team undergo Safer Recruitment training, and key members of the trust board and each school's governing body also complete this training.
- Appraisal and Pay structures are in place within The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools to ensure all staff have equal opportunities in terms of pay and promotion.

### **Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it:**

- We track all aspects of a child's provision and progress by monitoring attendance, behaviour, attitude to learning and academic data and applying intervention strategies as appropriate.
- We provide extra or special provision for certain groups, e.g.: EAL intervention, movement groups, accompaniment to move between lessons, as appropriate to the children and pupils' circumstances. Adapted provision is made under the principles of sound educational reasoning.
- We monitor the effectiveness of intervention strategies and adapted provision arrangements to enable us to improve our practice and benefit children and pupils.
- We take account of the achievement of all children and pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- We use materials that reflect the diversity of The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools' population, local and wider community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping, and ensure all children, pupils and staff are exposed to positive role models from all protected groups.
- We monitor children and pupils' involvement and participation in all opportunities provided and aim to provide new opportunities where gaps are identified.
- We provide details of appropriate agencies and support networks via The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools' websites and our social media feeds on Facebook and Twitter for anyone in need.
- Transition and CEIAG staff monitor progression routes for all children and pupils, to perform NEET analysis (within secondary schools), which allows The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools to identify barriers for certain groups and evaluate each school's curriculum.

### **Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it**

- We deliver lessons across the curriculum and within RPSHCE that broaden children and pupils' knowledge of equality issues and encourage tolerance and understanding of all children and pupils.
- We group children and pupils within lessons to help to foster good relations and respect between different groups of children and pupils.
- We deliver assemblies to children and pupils that promote understanding, respect and positive relationships.
- We promote children and pupils' awareness of equality of opportunity through a variety of schemes and celebrations including charity events and national awareness events, such as Autism Awareness Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Black History Month and LGBT Awareness Month.
- We promote children and pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development through the curriculum and focussed events.
- We communicate with parents and carers through letters, texting, each school's website, social media, postcards, phone calls, emails and in face to face meetings.
- Leaders in school promote positive relations with parents and carers – including those who could be deemed 'hard to reach', to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

## **9.0 Equality Impact Assessment**

In order to ensure that our current provision and procedures comply with the requirements of the Equality Act, we will carry out regular reviews of all aspects of trust-wide life with regard to the protected characteristics by means of an Equality Impact Assessment.

Our intention is to complete an Equality Impact Assessment when carrying out the following actions:

- introducing new provision or practice
- changing or reducing provision or practice
- removing provision or practice

## **10.0 Consultation**

The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools recognises the importance of taking account of people's differing experiences, needs and histories, and of the differing challenges and barriers they may face. Bearing in mind the protected characteristics, consultation with those we have identified as likely to be affected, forms part of every Equality Impact Assessment. Primarily we consult with children and pupils. However, we also consult with parents/carers, staff, governors and other school users when appropriate. We consult in the following ways:

- We consider the representation of all equality groups across activities and teams such as sports teams, student leaders and prefects
- We meet children and pupils individually to discuss their needs and progress
- We consult with children and pupils regularly through School and Year Council meetings
- We carry out surveys and questionnaires with children and pupils from all groups, parents, carers and staff and respond to their feedback to improve our practice
- We promote discussion of issues affecting all groups during curriculum time, particularly in RPSHCE lessons and tutor time
- We identify and work with focus groups of children and pupils to make changes to existing policies

## **11.0 How we measure the impact of any changes**

We monitor the ongoing impact of any changes on those who may be affected in the following ways:

- We track children's and pupils' achievement across school with an additional focus on equality groups
- We carry out regular surveys that demonstrate emotional health and wellbeing, engagement and involvement in different aspects of school life
- Leaders carry out regular analysis of groups' achievement, attitude to learning, rewards and sanctions, attendance and punctuality
- Leaders carry out regular analysis of the academic performance within their subject areas, with an additional focus on equality groups
- The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools' Development Plans and Curriculum Development Plans include strategies for ensuring all children and pupils have the opportunity to achieve their potential

## **12.0 Publication and Review**

The specific duties under this Act require us to be open and transparent about all our decision-making processes, intentions and results.

We will annually update our annual equalities statement to detail our objectives for the academic year. The equality statement can be found on the [trust website](#).

We record the results of our Equality Impact Assessments and action taken. We will review and publish this information and its impact on our children and pupils through:

- reports to the trust board and each school's governing body
- information on The Mast Academy Trust and all its schools' websites
- information and letters sent to, or meetings with, parents, as appropriate
- School Council meetings