



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Policy Lead:	Assistant Head (Inclusion)
Last Review Date:	Sept 2022
Next Review Date:	Sept 2024
Approval needed by:	Headteacher



Rationale

At The Oaks Academy equal opportunities are central to our academy ethos and values. Understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for those people who have protected characteristics within academy, while celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the academy community is the key to our approach. Those people with protected characteristics are defined as those who may be susceptible to discrimination because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, or maternity, less able or socio-economic background. These include pupils, students, teaching and support staff, parents, carers, governors, multi-agency staff linked to the academy, visitors to the academy and contractors. We value diversity and believe that equality at our academy should permeate all aspects of academy life and is the responsibility of every member of the academy and wider community. Every member of the academy community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We are pro-active in promoting inclusion, diversity and mutual respect through policy, assemblies, the curriculum, and events throughout the year.

All forms of discrimination by any person within the academy will be treated seriously. A careful note of such incidents should be made, whether they take place in the academy grounds, corridors, or teaching areas. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable.

Ethos & Values

At The Oaks Academy we are passionate about ensuring all our students are able to grow into happy, healthy and confident young people with the ability to fulfil their true potential in life. We promote respect, reflection and responsibility, as well as openness and equality.

Our motto of '*Inspire, Believe, Achieve*' underpins our approach to education and young people and delivered through our three core values:

- ***inspiring*** all our students to meet and exceed their potential through high quality teaching and enrichment beyond the curriculum
- students ***believing*** in themselves and contributing meaningfully to our community
- students ***achieving*** academic excellence through a supportive environment and challenging curriculum

Diversity Statement

As an academy we embrace diversity and are strongly committed to the promotion of diversity and equality for staff, students and all visitors to the academy.

The Oaks Academy strives to be inclusive and is committed to building a caring community by ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all of its members, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion or faith or socio-economic status. We recognise that we are part of an increasingly diverse society and believe it is important to actively promote equality and diversity so that our young people understand and celebrate the richness that derives from spending time with people from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This will help to prepare them for adult life in a multicultural, multilingual Europe that is interdependent with the rest of the world.

In promoting equality and diversity, we wish to eliminate harassment, direct or indirect discrimination and bullying or victimisation for any reason, but particularly of sex, race, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief. These values have been both accepted and adopted by our students, many of whom themselves seek to raise awareness and understanding of the issues surrounding inequality or intolerance.

At the Academy, our pupils are leading on important and relevant matters; we have a Safeguarding and Anti Bullying committee of young people who meet regularly with a focus on improving the lived experiences of the 21st century child. They have produced their own versions of the Safeguarding and Anti Bullying policies and are empowered and passionate to be the change they want to see in the world. We also have a politics club and an LGBTQplus club which are both well attended, and the young people have pledged to always act with RESPECT, kindness and acceptance to others. Furthermore, form time, assemblies and PHSC is utilised as another opportunity to promote diversity and equality through relevant resources and structured conversations between staff and pupils.

The Oaks Academy has developed this policy as a statement of its commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within our academy community. It seeks to ensure that all members of the academy are valued equally, regardless of religion or belief, disability, race, gender, sexual orientation or transgender identity. Whilst socio-economic status is not a specified ground under the equality legislation, the barriers and inequalities experienced by equality groups can also be exacerbated by poverty and social exclusion.

Legal framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1:

All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2:

We recognise and respect difference. Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity

Principle 3:

We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

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

Principle 4:

We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

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

Principle 5:

We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist in addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- all sexualities

Principle 6:

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys
- all sexualities

Principle 7:

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

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- all sexualities

Principle 8:

We base our practices on sound evidence We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Principle 9:

Objectives: We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7). The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above.

Ethos and organisation

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

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being o teaching styles and strategies

- admissions and attendance
- staff 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.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to above.

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this statement and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this statement. The headteacher is responsible for implementing the statement; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the statement.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom to deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- complete safeguarding training in a timely manner
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this statement is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

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

Staff development and training

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the statement

Breaches of this statement will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

Monitoring and review

We collect study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this statement and make adjustments as appropriate. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

Complaints

Complaints with regard to this statement will be dealt with via the schools complaints procedure, a copy of which is available from the school office and website.

Equality objectives

Equality Objective 1:

To ensure equality of opportunity permeates the whole academy curriculum including the hidden curriculum, the co-curriculum and ethos of the Academy

Why we have chosen this objective:

We wish to ensure that all students, including those with protected characteristics make good and better progress irrespective of their protected characteristic. Where this is not the case the school will consider whether the protected characteristic is the reason for the lack of progress and if this is not the case, ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to enable individual students to make good or better progress.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- Ensure that when delivering the curriculum it contains non-stereotypical images in order to overcome preconceived ideas of gender, ethnic origin, culture or religion
- Include in resources books, materials and display that are multicultural and non-sexist,

providing positive images of all groups

- Ensure that the organisational arrangements at the school are sensitive to the needs of all
- Ensure that we acknowledge the richness and diversity of British society and help prepare the students to be effective contributing global citizens of society.
- Improve outcomes for all students including those with protected characteristics so that they make progress at least in line with expectations based on their prior attainment and ability.
- Ensure all students achieve the highest possible standards in their learning and make good progress and to be committed to closing the gaps in progress and attainment.
- Ensure representation of key groups is seen on student leadership teams.
- Ensure that the appointment of staff is in line with equal opportunities legislation
- Identify barriers to learning and participation and provide appropriate support to meet a diversity of needs.
- Eradicate all forms of discrimination and remove barriers that prevent all staff and students from realising their full potential.
- To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through daily teaching, with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity.
- Analyse the All Achieve Data Information of all students at weeks 10, 20 and 30, looking at the progress of all students and identifying underachievement.
- Implement timely interventions where required. Track and monitor progress.
- Carry out regular quality assurance checks through the Academies quality assurance and monitoring processes, ensuring that all colleagues who are a part of this process pay particular attention to the progress of the Most Able and High prior attaining students.

Progress we are making towards this objective: Pending Approval

Equality Objective 2:

To promote mental health and well-being so that all members of the academy community feel valued and supported via what is done in the curriculum and co-curricular activities, taking account of those that may be impacted upon due to a person's protected characteristics

Why we have chosen this objective:

The Senior Leadership team of The Oaks Academy recognise the long-term impact of COVID-19 and the challenges of living in a socially deprived area. We wish to ensure that all students, including those with protected characteristics are provided with positive mental health and well-being support to enable them to achieve their best possible outcomes.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- Provide staff training to support the implementation of the above equality objective
- Improve consultation and involvement of pupils with a protected characteristic through the representation of their views on the Student Council
- Design a broad and balanced PSHE and Drop Day curriculum which will focus and support the students' well-being and give them the relevant skills to stay safe and happy in school

and in their wider lives, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion and special educational needs, disability.

- Monitor referrals to counselling and other services to do with supporting well-being and mental health to ensure that any specific issues related to a group with protected characteristics are picked up and acted upon.
- Analyse referral data to internal and external services to ensure that any specific issues related to a group with protected characteristics are picked up and acted upon.
- Ensure that the student voice is heard in relation to policy and process around anti-bullying, especially in relation to gender, ethnicity and sexuality.

Progress we are making towards this objective: Pending Approval

Equality Objective 3:

Develop processes around all transition points for all students, including those in groups with protected characteristics to ensure that appropriate advice, guidance and support is in place to ensure successful transition to next steps.

Why we have chosen this objective:

- It is vital that all students are well supported through all transition points to enable the students to be successful.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- Report on and analyse all destination data to ensure that all groups, including those with protected characteristics are receiving the highest quality advice and guidance on next steps.
- Ensure where transition points lead to a student leaving The Oaks Academy that all relevant information is passed on to their destinations to give them the best possible support in their new setting. This is particularly important for all students belonging to a group with protected characteristic and other non-protected groups such as Children Looked After.
- Ensure all staff are made aware of individuals at transition, including students with specific needs, the best ways to support those needs and the relevant colleague to whom they should report any concerns or issues

Progress we are making towards this objective: Pending Approval