



## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Policy Lead:	<b>Helen Holland</b>
Last Review Date:	Sept 2025
Next Review Date:	Sept 2026
Approval needed by:	<b>Governing Body</b>

*Over the past decade The Oaks Academy has seen a change in our pupils' school community demographic. Our community is now much more diverse as 46% of the school is EAL.*

## **Ethos & Values**

At The Oaks Academy we are passionate about ensuring all our students can 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 a school we embrace diversity and are strongly committed to the promotion of diversity and equality for staff, students and all visitors to the school.

The Oaks Academy strives to be inclusive and is committed to building a caring community by ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all 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 **LGBTQIA+** club which are both well attended, and the young people have pledged to always act with kindness and acceptance to others. Furthermore, form time 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 school community. It seeks to ensure that all members of the school 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:**

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Making pupils aware of our behaviour and anti-bullying policies through our personal development programme.
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures

### **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, 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 consider 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 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 adjust 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 regarding this statement will be dealt with via the school's complaints procedure, a copy of which is available from the school office and website.