



Equality Duties Framework

Ambitious. Resilient. Kind.

Audience:	Parents/carers School staff (in particular Heads, Senior Leadership Teams and inclusion/related managers or similar) Local Governing Bodies Trustees Regional Boards
Approved:	Local Governing Body (LGB) – September 2026
Other related policies:	Most other education and HR policies
Policy model:	Principles: this means REAch2 schools can use this framework directly <u>or</u> maintain their own documentation, ensuring at the next opportunity that this aligns with REAch2 principles set out here
Review:	every 4 years minimum, as an overall framework (with <u>annual</u> review of progress towards the chosen objectives)
Version number:	1.5 (September 2026)

REAch2 equalities duty framework



At REAch2, our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our Touchstones:

Integrity	We recognise that we lead by example and if we want children to grow up to behave appropriately and with integrity then we must model this behaviour
Responsibility	We act judiciously with sensitivity and care. We don't make excuses, but mindfully answer for actions and continually seek to make improvements
Inclusion	We acknowledge and celebrate that all people are different and can play a role in the REAch2 family whatever their background or learning style
Enjoyment	Providing learning that is relevant, motivating and engaging releases a child's curiosity and fun, so that a task can be tackled and their goals achieved
Inspiration	Inspiration breathes life into our schools. Introducing children to influential experiences of people and place, motivates them to live their lives to the full
Learning	Children and adults will flourish in their learning and through learning discover a future that is worth pursuing
Leadership	REAch2 aspires for high quality leadership by seeking out talent, developing potential and spotting the possible in people as well as the actual

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Equality Statement

At **The Palmer Academy**, we are committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming and ambitious environment where every child is valued, respected and supported to thrive. We believe that all children, regardless of their background, identity, ability, faith, ethnicity, gender, special educational needs, disability or family circumstances, deserve equal opportunities to succeed and achieve their full potential.

This statement demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that all pupils have full and equitable access to a broad, balanced and enriching curriculum. It also guides our decision-making and practice across all aspects of academy life, including leadership, organisation and school improvement.

Through our curriculum and wider opportunities, we actively promote positive attitudes, mutual respect and an understanding of the diverse society in which we live. We encourage our pupils to be **Ambitious, Resilient and Kind**, developing the knowledge, skills and character needed to make a positive contribution to their communities and the wider world.

The values of **REAch2 and its Touchstones** are at the heart of our academy. They underpin our commitment to inclusion, belonging and high expectations for all. We celebrate both our similarities and our differences, recognising that diversity strengthens our school community and enriches the experiences of our pupils.

We recognise that discrimination, prejudice and inequality can exist within society. At The Palmer Academy, such attitudes and behaviours are challenged and will not be tolerated. We are committed to fostering a culture where everyone feels safe, respected and empowered to be themselves.

We value every child and acknowledge the unique contribution each individual makes to our academy community. Together, we strive to create an environment where all members of our school community can flourish and achieve excellence.

This equality statement is reviewed annually on behalf of the Local Governing Body by the Headteacher.

Anne Higginbotham

Head Teacher

OVERVIEW

Overarching Principles

- In REAch2, both as an overall Trust and as individual academies, we are committed to at least meeting and, in many respects, going beyond the minimum requirements in equality legislation. Many of our schools serve diverse and/or disadvantaged communities; and, as a Trust, we have chosen to be primary-only because we know how important the earliest years of learning and engagement are for our pupils. All this reflects our fundamental belief that education must increase equality of life chances – as captured in our Touchstones of inclusion, enjoyment, inspiration and learning set out on p.2.
- We believe in equality for all, not just those sharing characteristics that are ‘protected’ within the law (see under Definitions section below). Just as important for us is, for example, equality for those from socially and/or economically disadvantaged backgrounds, or with English as an additional language.
- We see positive action for equality as providing tangible benefits for all the stakeholders in and around our schools, particularly pupils, staff and parents/carers (see section on Intended impact below).

☐ In our experience, action for equality works best where it’s an integrated part of planning

and delivery, not just some kind of 'bolt on'. At school level, therefore, equality objectives are likely to mirror or draw directly on key aspects of the Self-Evaluation Summary, the School Development Plan, Pupil Premium action plans and work to realise Visual Learning (see under Definitions section below).

- Key information, including about specific equalities objectives, will be published on the REAch2 website and/or every academy's website and will be made available in other formats on request.

Intended impact

For pupils, we expect action on equalities as set out in this framework to deliver improving outcomes for all children, with accelerated improvements for pupils in vulnerable groups and/or sharing 'protected characteristics'. We also expect pupils to benefit from equality being a key driver in our learning provision much more widely, developing the 'whole child' over time including through curriculum innovation and enrichment activities such as REAch2's 11 before 11.

For staff, we believe that positive action for equality makes its own business case, by helping to ensure that our organisation taps into all the skills and talent available. We expect action on equalities as set out in this framework and reflected in our Human Resources (HR) policies and practices to mean that: we promote equality of opportunity and diversity across our workforce; our workforce is increasingly representative of the communities we serve; we recognise and value the differences and individual contribution that people make; we work in an environment free from discrimination, bullying and harassment; and we provide support and encouragement to staff to develop their careers and increase their contributions to the organisation through the enhancement of their skills and abilities.

We expect parents/carers to benefit from their children's outcomes and development but also more broadly through them and their children being part of an inclusive community. We would not expect to be able to gauge this impact in measurable terms.

Roles & responsibilities

- REAch2 schools will: ensure they go beyond minimum legal requirements by developing and implementing equalities action in line with the key principles in this framework.
- REAch2 central staff will: support our academies in delivering on this expectation, while also embedding equalities in the work of the central team.
- REAch2 non-executives will: support and challenge us at every level, particularly local governors in relation to individual schools, to be ambitious, committed and effective in relation to our equalities actions.

How this relates to national guidance & requirements

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are subject to the requirements placed on public bodies in England. This means we must:

- have regard to the three aims of the general equality duty:
 1. eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 2. advance equality of opportunity between people with/without protected characteristics (see list in the Definitions section below)
 3. foster good relations between people with/without those characteristics.
- carry out specific duties:
 4. publish information annually about protected characteristics in relation to employees and those affected by our policies and practices
 5. set and review at least one specific, measurable equality objective at least every 4 years.

It is recommended that the specific duties are reflected in a separate document for ease of demonstrating compliance, but there is no requirement for the equality objectives in substance to be separate from, or additional to, our wider planning and delivery. Indeed, as set out in our principles we believe integrating equalities into our core school improvement and continuous professional development processes is the best way to advance equality effectively.

More information is made available by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, including in this comprehensive guidance: www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/psed_essential_guide_-_guidance_for_english_public_bodies.pdf

Any key definitions

“Protected characteristics” - under the Equality Act 2010, these are: age; being or becoming a transsexual person; being married or in a civil partnership (note only the first equality aim above applies in legislation here); being pregnant or on maternity leave; disability; race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion, belief or lack of religion/belief; sex/gender; and sexual orientation.

PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION IN MORE DETAIL

A. Requirement to have equality objectives

Our schools will set their own objectives (all of them specific and measurable), wherever possible directly drawing on aspects of their Self-Evaluation Summary, School Development Plan, Visual Learning plans and/or Pupil Premium action plans/statements. Annex 1 provides a possible format. Head Teachers and Senior Leadership Teams will discuss proposed objectives with their Local Governing Body who should approve the final objectives and be directly involved in reviewing progress against them at least annually. Ideally, the objectives themselves should not be changed every year, in order to assess/demonstrate progress over time – though changes can of course be made where new school improvement or wider priorities emerge, including where these are identified by a new Head Teacher and/or Chair of Governors.

In most circumstances, we expect our schools to set at least three objectives:

- One focused on pupil outcomes and relating to an issue/characteristic affecting a disproportionately large share of their pupils compared to the national average; this will help to ensure that schools take action which will have an impact on a significant scale.
- One objective focused on outcomes and relating to an issue/characteristic significantly affecting a small share of pupils compared to the national average. Research nationally suggests some of the largest and most stubborn ‘gaps’ in outcomes are in schools with very small numbers of children with that particular characteristic – such pupils should not be overlooked.
- One objective relating to actions with a wider scope/impact, perhaps in relation to curriculum content, enrichment activities, developing the ‘whole child’, whole school values and behaviours, work with parents/carers and the wider community or a workforce issue; this will ensure equality is not seen exclusively in relation to pupil outcome measures.

B. Requirement to progress the general duty to have regard to equalities

The Trust will ensure that equality and inclusion are fully factored into the new arrangements for induction of new REAch2 staff, whether based in school or in our central team, with a focus on prompting every individual to think through how their role – no matter what it is – tangibly impacts on equality of opportunity for our pupils, staff, parents/carers or wider communities.

Communications/transparency

Information compiled for section A above and the objectives maintained for section B above will be published on the REAch2 and/or individual school websites, and will also be made available in hard copy on request (to the REAch2 or school office). Schools may wish to consider also making this information available in relevant community languages and/or via on-line translation services.



ANNEX 1: The Palmer Academy Equality Objectives 2026 - 2030



Draft: Date objectives were approved by the Headteacher (September 2026) and the Local Governing Body: (24/9/26)

Date of most recent review: July 2026. New objectives set for September 2026

Equality Objective	Action	Success Criteria	Progress
To further reduce attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers across reading, writing and mathematics	- Ensure vulnerable pupils have access to high-quality adaptive teaching in every classroom. - Use pupil progress meetings to identify pupils requiring additional support. - Monitor the impact of interventions and adjust provision accordingly. - Provide regular staff training on disadvantage, inclusion and effective adaptive teaching	- Disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with or above national expectations. - The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers narrows annually. - Targeted interventions are monitored and demonstrate positive impact.	
To improve attendance and reduce persistent absence among disadvantaged pupils, pupils with	Provide practical support and signposting to external agencies where appropriate.	- Attendance for vulnerable groups improves year-on-year. - Persistent absence rates	

Report attendance trends to senior leaders and governors.

SEND and other identified vulnerable groups.	• Develop individual attendance support plans for pupils requiring targeted intervention. • Identify and address barriers such as anxiety, medical needs, SEND-related difficulties or family circumstances. • Work collaboratively with external professionals to support individual pupils. • Share effective strategies for supporting engagement and belonging across the school. • Report attendance trends and analysis to governors.	decrease. • Early intervention and family support strategies demonstrate impact.	
• To ensure pupils with SEND achieve well academically, socially and emotionally through high-quality adaptive teaching and effective support.	• Provide ongoing professional development to ensure staff use effective adaptive teaching strategies. • Monitor classroom practice to ensure pupils with SEND can access the full curriculum and make progress from their starting points.	• SEND pupils make strong progress from their starting points. • Staff training improves confidence and effectiveness in meeting additional needs. • Parents report positive experiences of SEND provision and communication.	

Report attendance trends to senior leaders and governors.

	• Provide evidence-informed interventions to address academic, communication, social and emotional needs. •		
• To ensure all pupils feel safe, valued and included, regardless of background, identity, culture, ability or need.	• Deliver assemblies, PSHE lessons and themed events that promote inclusion, equality and respect. • Actively teach and reinforce the values of being Ambitious, Resilient and Kind. • Celebrate events and awareness days that promote diversity and belonging. • Seek feedback from pupils about their experiences of inclusion and belonging. • Ensure staff consistently challenge discriminatory language, prejudice and bullying.	• Pupil voice demonstrates that children feel they belong and are respected. • Incidents of discriminatory language or behaviour are low and addressed effectively. • Pupils can articulate the school's values of Ambitious, Resilient and Kind and how these support inclusion.	