



Single Equality Policy (Primary)

Start Date: September 2014
Review Date: September 2017

Single Equality Policy

Encompassing Race, Disability and Gender Equality and Equal Opportunity policies.

Introduction

Our Academy is committed to securing equality of opportunity through the creation of an environment in which individuals are treated solely on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

We discourage all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, trade union membership, disability, political views and religious or similar philosophical beliefs, and aim to ensure equal treatment for all.

Aims

The Oasis Community Learning Board aims:

- To provide an appropriate and inclusive learning experience for all pupils, irrespective of their gender, race, origin or culture, disability, religion or belief;
- To treat all staff equally in employment matters according to the law and in line with the “protected characteristics” set out in the Equality Act 2010. (See Appendix 1)

The Academy aims:

- to provide a positive learning environment which is free of prejudice and promotes equality of opportunity;
- to recognise and celebrate people’s differences to build and maintain a culture of respect and co-operation;
- to protect its pupils and employees from discrimination, harassment and victimisation:
 - Through its admissions policies and procedures,
 - In the way it provides education for pupils,
 - In the way it provides access to any benefit, facility or service to pupils, staff or the wider Oasis community

The Academy welcomes the Equality Act 2010, recognising that it replaces all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. This document replaces earlier separate race, disability and gender equality policies.

In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, called *the general duty*, the Academy will deliver its functions with due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- promote and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it and
- Promote and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Implementation

The Principal and the Academy Council will have overall responsibility for ensuring that pupils, staff, parents and partner agencies are made aware of this policy and that the policy is implemented within the Academy.

The principal, Academy Council and other decision makers in the Academy will have due regard to the general duty when making a decision or taking action and will assess whether it may have implications for people with protected characteristics. The duty will be implemented in a way which is proportionate to the issue being considered.

The Principal and Academy Council will consider equality implications before and during the development of policies and will keep them under review on a regular basis.

The Principal, staff and Academy Council will monitor and respond to any incidents of discrimination reported.

Publishing information and equality objectives

The Academy will publish this and other policies on its website, along with information showing the work it does to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The Academy will:

- ensure that all staff and other adults working in the Academy receive an appropriate level of training and support in all aspects of equality;
- through the curriculum, provide opportunities for pupils to broaden and share their knowledge and experience of other cultures on a local, national and global basis;
- in its choice of teaching and learning resources and materials, present and promote a positive image of people with protected characteristics, and actively avoid stereotyping;
- Through the curriculum and extra-curricular activity, provide opportunities which challenge the thinking of pupils, their families and the wider Oasis community on all aspects of equality, inclusion and cohesion.

Information collected relating to pupils' achievement, progress and participation will be analysed to ensure that no group or individual is being systematically disadvantaged. Action will be taken to address gaps in achievement. The Academy can publish this information where publication does not allow the identification of individuals.

The Academy will publish equality objectives in line with the specific duty. Progress on these objectives will be published annually and the objectives will be reviewed every 4 years.

In all cases described below it is possible for discrimination to be direct, indirect, or to take the form of harassment or victimisation, which may also include the use of electronic technology.

Race

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. We regard as racism any attitude held by a person or group of one ethnic origin towards an individual or group of different ethnic origin which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile towards the individual or group. We also

consider racism to be behaviour, acts or expressions that reflect such attitudes, or any incitement to behaviour of that kind.

The following examples would constitute unacceptable behaviour – the list is not exhaustive:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity;
- Verbal abuse, derogatory name-calling, insults, threats and racist jokes;
- Racist graffiti;
- Issuing/wearing of racist materials, e.g. leaflets, magazines, insignia;
- Inciting others to behave in a racist manner;
- Making racist comments or suggestions in the course of discussions or lessons;
- Refusing to co-operate with others because of colour or ethnic origin;
- The use of electronic technology to further any of the above abuses.

Gender

The Principal, staff and Academy Council will ensure that there are no practices which could result in unfair or less favourable treatment of boys or girls, but can make decisions to create single-sex groups or classes which result in no unfair advantage or disadvantage to either sex.

We consider sexism to be any attitude held by a person or group of one sex towards an individual or group of the other sex which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile towards the individual or group. We consider sexual harassment to be behaviour, acts or expressions that reflect such attitudes, or an incitement to behaviour of that kind.

The following examples would constitute sexual harassment – the list is not exhaustive:

- Physical abuse against a person or group because of their gender;
- Verbal abuse, intimidation, insults, threats;
- Using lewd or suggestive vocabulary to cause offence or humiliation;
- Reference to an individual's or group's sexuality;
- Making sexist comments or suggestions in the course of discussion in lessons;
- Refusing to co-operate with others because of their gender;
- The use of electronic technology to further any of the above abuses.

Sexual Orientation

We consider it unacceptable to hold or express any attitude towards an individual which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile on the basis of that individual's or group's orientation towards persons of the same sex or opposite sex (namely homosexuals, heterosexuals and bisexuals). It is also unacceptable to discriminate on the grounds of perceived sexual orientation (that is, assuming – correctly or incorrectly – that someone is homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual), and association (that is, being discriminated against on the grounds of the sexual orientation of those with whom you associate).

Religion or Belief

We consider it unacceptable to hold or express any attitude towards an individual which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile on the basis of that individual's or group's religious belief or similar philosophical belief. It is also unacceptable to discriminate on the grounds of perceived as well as actual religion or belief. Further, it is unacceptable to discriminate against individuals or groups on the grounds of the religion or belief of those with whom an employee associates.

Age

We consider it unacceptable to hold or express any attitude towards an individual which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile on the basis of that individual's age. It is also unacceptable to discriminate on the grounds of perceived as well as actual age.

Disability

The Academy recognises the Equality Act's definition of disability as when a person has a "physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

The Academy is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disablement. The Academy will welcome applications from people with disabilities to join the Academy community as pupils, staff or volunteers.

Applications for admission will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all pupils. An applicant's disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place unless

- the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the pupil would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
- The Academy would be unable to provide suitable trained staff or facilities to allow the requirements of the curriculum to be met.

The Academy may, in line with the disability provisions in the Act, treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and may have to make changes to its practice to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can access employment or education offered. This means that if something the Academy does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils, the Academy will take reasonable steps to try to avoid that disadvantage.

The curriculum will provide flexible and equal access to all pupils, whether able or disabled as far as is practicable within a mainstream learning environment. As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled pupils and staff will be taken into account in the design and delivery of learning.

Disabled pupils and staff have access to appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the Academy. The views of disabled pupils and staff will be taken into account when their requirements are being assessed.

The Academy will publish, implement and regularly review accessibility plans aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment to allow disabled pupils to take best advantage of education, benefits and facilities provided; and
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

So far as is reasonably practicable, the Academy premises are accessible and safe so that disabled members of the community can participate in public events held there.

Training for staff and other adults

The principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and its implications for their work in the Academy. He / she will ensure staff and other designated adults have access to relevant support, information and training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities within the Academy.

Liaison with parents

The Academy will report to parents annually on what it does to ensure the fair treatment of all pupils, and where relevant and appropriate, those within groups defined by the “protected characteristics” in the Equality Act 2010.

Where appropriate, and as far as resources allow, information to home will be provided in different formats that take account of disability or other barrier to access. This can include the translation or interpretation of information into the first language of the child or parent(s).

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Oasis Community Learning Board will review this policy at least every two years, or sooner in light of changes to legislation, to assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The Principal and the Academy Council will involve pupils, staff, parents and members of the local community in the work they do to tackle equality issues and in the review and monitoring of this policy and related practice. All reasonable steps will be taken to include the views of people and groups who have special knowledge, skills or experience to inform and advance the Academy’s approach.

Appendix 1

Equality Act 2010 – Additional information and Context

On 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It has consolidated this legislation and also provides some changes that schools need to be aware of. (*Ref: Equality Act 2010: Advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities*)

Race, Gender and Disability Equality schemes

Schools previously had a statutory duty which required them to take proactive steps to tackle racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations, to promote gender equality and have a gender equality scheme in place and to take proactive steps to tackle disability discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils. Under the Equality Act 2010, these have been replaced by the general equality duty and the new specific duties.

Positive Action

New Positive Action provision will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.

Protected characteristics

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, but this does not apply to pupils in schools.

Association

It is unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom a pupil is associated.

Unlawful behaviour

The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour – direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Curriculum

The content of the curriculum is explicitly excluded from the impact of the Act. However, the way in which the school /academy provides education – the delivery of the curriculum – is explicitly included.