



Cheshire Academies Trust
Inspiring hearts and minds

Single Equality Policy

Next Update: Autumn 2023

Introduction

Schools can have a major influence on the attitudes of society and of those we educate. We are in a powerful position to bring about change for the good. We aim to give confidence and promote awareness of the valuable contributions of all members of our society. Within the philosophy of the school it is recognised that all children are entitled to full access to the curriculum regardless of any of the nine protected characteristics.

Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to any of the nine protected characteristics.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. We recognise these duties are essential and that they 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:

- 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
- race and ethnicity

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, age, 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, age, 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
- people of different Gender identity or expression of gender identity
- Age of different pupils

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We aim to consult and would involve as much as is practically possible in our setting:

- 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
- gay people as well as straight
- people of different Gender identity or expression of gender identity

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

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
- gay people as well as straight
- people of different Gender identity or expression of gender identity

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

Principle 9: Objectives

Each year we formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published, in relation to

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference. Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. 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 seven principles set out above.

Our environment reflects both the academy and Cheshire Academies Trust's commitment to a policy of equal opportunities for all. Displays reflect a positive image of the protected characteristics whenever possible.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and value that will challenge prejudice related behaviour;
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that reflect the diversity in our society.

In our Trust and academies, we aim to tackle discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- creating an ethos in which all pupils and staff feel valued and secure;
- building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so that they can then use these qualities to influence their own relationships with all others respecting their differences;
- removing or minimising any barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;
- ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils
- actively tackling discrimination and promoting equality and inclusion through our Prospectus, School Rules, newsletters to parents and displays of work;
- making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and prejudice related behaviour;
- identifying clear procedures for dealing quickly with incidents of prejudice related behaviour;
- making pupils and staff confident to challenge prejudice related behaviour.

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles listed 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
- 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

Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other.

Staffing - Recruitment, Training and Professional Development

The academy is required to supply the Trust with employment data related to all groups employed. The Trust is committed to attracting and developing a workforce on a basis of merit. The recruitment process will be monitored to ensure that there is no bias based on the protected characteristics. No teaching and support staff posts are sex specific. Both men and women are encouraged to work with all age groups and each Key Stage. All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice

- 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.
- Prejudices around gender identity

Incidents will be dealt with in a sensitive manner. The RSE curriculum will be used to help promote a positive image of all members of society, with particular reference to the protected characteristics (age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexuality orientation).

The following is guidance on the procedure for dealing with prejudice-related incidents:

- The academy will follow the guidance in dealing with prejudice related incidents as these are unacceptable in our academies
- Any adult witnessing an incident or being informed about an incident must follow these agreed procedures:
 - stop the incident and comfort the person who is the victim;
 - if appropriate, reprimand the aggressor and inform the victim what action has been taken;
 - if the incident is witnessed by other pupils, tell them why it is wrong;
 - report the incident to the Headteacher or Safeguarding Lead and inform him/her of any action taken
 - inform the class teacher(s) of both the victim and the aggressor when the incident relates to a child in school
 - record what happened in the pupils' incident book
 - inform both sets of parents, if appropriate.

All prejudice related incidents will be recorded and reported to the Local Governing Body by the Headteacher.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for approving this policy. The Local Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; 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 policy.

All staff are expected to:

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

Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy 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 as required, both as individuals and as groups or teams.