



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Last review date | September 2024 |
| Date approved by the Trust Board | September 2024 |
| Date for next review | September 2025 |

Document Control

Document version numbering will follow the following format. Whole numbers for approved versions, eg 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 etc. Decimals will be used to represent the current working draft version, eg 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc. For example, when writing a procedural document for the first time the initial draft will be version 0.1.

The table below provides details of the changes made to this document, to inform those reviewing and approving the document.

| Document Edition | Section | Details of Change |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|
| 2.0 | Introduction | Six Es updated to three |
| 2.1 | All | Reviewed and updated 02/11/22 |
| 3.0 | All | Reviewed and updated May 2023 |
| 4.0 | All | Minor wording amendments approved by Trust Board September 2024. |

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction.....4**
 - Related policies 4
- 2. Policy aims.....5**
- 3. Legislation and Guidance5**
- 4. Guiding principles5**
 - Ethos and organisation 6
- 5. Policy Procedures.....6**
 - Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying 6
 - Roles and responsibilities..... 7
 - Information and resources..... 7
 - Religious observance 7
 - Staff development and training 7
- 6. Our equality objectives7**
- 7. Disability and Special Educational Needs (SEN)8**
 - Reasonable adjustments..... 8
 - Pupils with statements of special educational needs and EHC plans 8
- 8. Where can you get help?.....9**
- 9. Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination9**
- 10. Enforcement9**
- 11. Informal Report Form9**

1. Introduction

The Leading Edge Academies Partnership (the 'Trust') is a team of school leaders that aim to be Leading Edge and pioneering in their approach to education and well-being. We are a growing family of like-minded schools that offer a values-based education to the communities we serve and welcome staff, workers, pupils, parents/carers and volunteers from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds.

The term 'Trust Community' includes all staff, trustees, governors, pupils, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

We are a values based Trust, which means all actions are guided by our three 'Es' as follows:

- **Excellence** – 'Outstanding quality'
- **Evolution** – 'Continuous change'
- **Equity** – 'Fairness and social justice'

This policy is based on the value of '**Equity**'

Related policies

This Equality and Diversity Policy is consistent with all Trust policies, including:

- Admissions
- Behaviour
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion
- Accessibility
- Special Educational Needs (SEND)
- Recruitment Policy

2. Policy aims

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Trust and all its schools aim to meet our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

3. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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.

4. Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above, we are guided by seven principles:

Principle 1: All pupils are 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, and visit here.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships.

We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

Principle 4: We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

Principle 5: We observe good equalities practice for our staff.

We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

Principle 6: We have the highest expectations of all our children.

We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

Principle 7: We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable.

We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

Principle 8: We work towards measurable equality objectives

We create and publish specific and measurable equality objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted and the evidence we have collected and published.

Ethos and organisation

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

- pupils' progress, attainment and assessment
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- the curriculum
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- safeguarding
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

5. Policy Procedures

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice that stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to on page 5:

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

We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents, including the type of incident, seriousness and how the incident was dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Trust and its schools comply with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

Local Academy Committees are responsible for monitoring adherence to the policy in individual schools and monitoring impact.

The Headteacher/Principal 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 referred to on pages 5-6.
- 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, trustees and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers. All staff, trustees and governors have access to a selection of resources that discuss and explain the 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.

6. Our equality objectives

The objectives we have identified take account of national and local priorities and issues as appropriate.

Our equality objectives are devised in consultation with the Trust Board and integrated into school plans and practices.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

- To narrow the attainment gap between Pupil Premium pupils and non-Pupil Premium pupils to zero
- To improve our attendance rate for Pupil Premium and SEN students to above national average
- To ensure the achievement and progress opportunities for boys and girls are equitable

7. Disability and Special Educational Needs (SEN)

We are an inclusive Trust which welcomes members of the Trust Community with disabilities and special educational needs and we will not treat a member of the Trust Community less favourably on these grounds without justification.

We will endeavour do all that is reasonable to ensure that the Trust's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our Policy on Special Educational Needs is consistent with this policy. Copies of these policies can be obtained from the respective Trust Academies.

Definitions: Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a "substantial and long-term adverse effect" on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010). For further clarification, please refer to the policies referred to above.

Reasonable adjustments

The Trust has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of academy life, for example:

- the curriculum
- classroom organisation and timetabling
- access to school facilities
- clubs and visits
- school sports and
- school policies

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an exam
- providing examination papers in larger print or a reader/scriber for a child with a visual impairment
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

The Trust is not legally required to make adjustments that include:

- physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, or a new library.

In making 'reasonable adjustments' the Trust is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils, where to do so would be reasonable. Trust academies will carefully consider any proposals made by parents/carers and will not refuse any reasonable requests for such aids and services.

Pupils with statements of special educational needs and Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

The Trust's Policy on Special Educational Needs includes details about the welfare and educational provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs and EHC plans.

8. Where can you get help?

There are many sources of help and some of the more common sources are listed below:

- Line manager
- Occupational Health (via Line Manager and HR)
- General Practitioner
- ACAS – www.acas.org.uk
- The Equalities and Human Rights Commission – www.equalityhumanrights.com
- The Government Equalities Office – www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities

9. Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination

If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the CEO.

We aim to resolve concerns or complaints by informal means wherever possible. Informal concerns can be reported using the confidential Informal Report Form on page 11.

In the event an anonymous report is submitted, the Trust will not be able to act on the information or respond to you in person. We therefore encourage you to use the Informal Report Form if you feel comfortable to do so.

Complaints: If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed on page 5, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the Trust's formal Complaints Procedure. A copy of the Trust's Complaints Policy is available from the website www.leadingedgeacademies.org.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

Reports: If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint (explained above), please contact the COO.

10. Enforcement

We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the Trust Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

Employees may also be personally liable for any acts of discrimination prohibited by this policy that they commit, meaning they can be sued by the victim.

11. Informal Report Form

This form is for pupils and staff to use and is confidential. You can still report anonymously.

What will happen if I submit an informal report?

A member of the Executive Team will contact you to begin a conversation about your report and how best to proceed. If you do not wish to be contacted, you can use the anonymous reporting form.

How will my information be used?

The specific information you provide will remain confidential and will not be passed to anyone else without your permission. The only exception to this is if we feel there is an unacceptable risk to an individual or to the Trust or any academy/school within the Trust.

The Trust will use the information you provide to help us understand what kind of incidents are taking place within our community and take positive action.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY INFORMAL REPORT FORM



Your details

Name:

Email:

Telephone:

Who are you reporting on behalf of?

- Myself Current pupil Former pupil
- Someone else unknown to me Other Prefer not to say

And you are a:

- Current pupil Former pupil Current staff member
- Former staff member Other Prefer not to say

When did the incident(s) take place?

- It is ongoing In the last week In the last month
- In the last year Between 1-5 years ago Over 5 years ago
- I do not know Prefer not to say

Where did the incident(s) occur?

- Within the Trust: MBA FIA FRA LUD STH STB
- Other school location Travelling to/from Online
- On school business elsewhere No specific area I do not know
- Prefer not to say

Please describe the situation

Who was involved? Please give as many details as you can

Has any action already been taken? If so, please give details

Was this the first or a repeat incident? First Repeat I do not know

Have you already submitted an anonymous report about this incident? No Yes

What was the behaviour experienced? (please tick all that apply. Refer to the Glossary of Terms for definitions)

Harassment Bullying Sexual
 Online Stalking (in person/online)
 Physical Verbal
 Racist behaviour Other harassment

Direct or indirect discrimination Less favourable treatment regarding social activities
 Less favourable treatment regarding teaching and education
 Less favourable treatment regarding access to employment opportunities
 Other discrimination

Violence and abuse Controlling or coercive behaviour
 Domestic violence or abuse
 Hate crime

Violence and abuse continued Intimidating behaviour
 Physical misconduct (hitting, pushing, spitting)
 Sexual violence or abuse
 Other violence or abuse

I do not know

None of these

Prefer not to say

What do you think was the reason for this incident? (Please tick all that apply)

My/the target's:

- Age
- Disability (including hidden disabilities and mental health)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity leave
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- I do not know
- None of these

Please send completed Informal Report forms in an envelope marked 'Private & Confidential' for the attention of the Headteacher's/Principal's PA at your academy/school.