



Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust

Equality Policy (2017 – 2020)

This policy covers the 9 groups of people having protected characteristics – disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy & maternity.

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| Prepared : | _____ | Tony Lacey | 25.09.18 |
| | Author | | |
| Verified: : | _____ | Claire Jackson | 25.09.18 |
| | CFO | | |
| Approved : | _____ | Jane Owens | 25.09.18 |
| | Chair of Trustees | | |

Equality Policy

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1. CORE PRINCIPLE

At Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy & maternity. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2. EQUALITY - POLICY AND PRACTICE

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this policy, the Trust operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and learning

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

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
 - Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
 - Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
 - Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
 - Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
 - Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
 - Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
 - Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
 - Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure, wherever possible, that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

4. EQUALITY AND THE LAW

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2006).

The action plan at the end of this Equality Policy outlines the actions Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

a. Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an Equality Policy which includes our written policy for race equality;
- Monitor the impact our policies have on pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.
- Review and revise this policy every three years.

b. Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;

- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is “clinically well-recognised”, although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people’s needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Policy which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this policy every three years.

c. Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Policy which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this policy every three years.

d. Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

e. Community cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

5. CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT

It is a requirement that the development of this policy and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the policy:

- Feedback from parent questionnaires, parents’ evening, parent suggestion board, parent governors, PTA;
- Input from staff through surveys, staff meetings / INSET;
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children’s attitudes to self and school;
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- Feedback at Governing body meetings.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of Trustees

- The Trust Board has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The Trust Board seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The Trust Board take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The Trust Board welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The Trust Board ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, gender or disability.

The role of the headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the CEO's role to implement the Trust's Equality Policy and s/he is supported by the Trust Board in doing so.
- It is the CEO/headteachers role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The CEO/headteachers ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The CEO/headteachers promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The CEO/headteachers treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all Oak Trees MAT staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

7. TACKLING DISCRIMINATION

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as:
'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

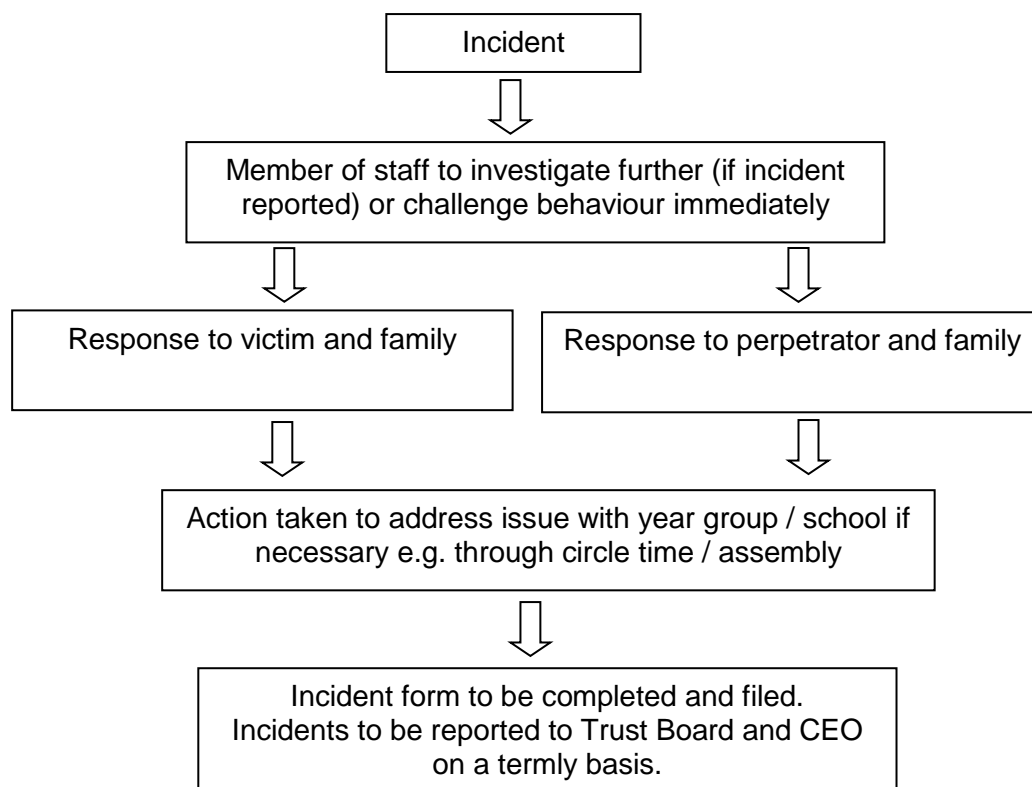
Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.



8. REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND IMPACT

This Equality Policy has been agreed by our Trust Board. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Policy annually and review the entire policy and accompanying action plan on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

9. PUBLISHING THE PLAN

This single Equality Policy fulfils the statutory requirements under the terms of legislation from the Equality Act 2010. As it is a public document, the school governors publish it by:

- Raising awareness of the policy through the School Council, PSHE lessons, school newsletter, staff meetings and other communications;
- Keeping a copy in the General Policies files found in every classroom, Headteacher's Office and the School Office/Reception.
- Ensuring that hard copies are available on request.

10. ACTION PLAN

| Equality Strand | Action | How will the impact of the action be monitored? | Who is responsible for implementing? | What are the timeframes? | Early success indicators |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All | Publish on the Trust website and promote the Equality Policy through the Governors/Trustees and staff meetings. | Via parent, staff and children surveys. School Council meetings. Staff and Governors meetings. Information sent to parents. | CEO/ Headteacher/ Trustees | Ongoing | Staff apply the principles of the Equality Policy and use them when planning lessons, creating class room displays. Parents are aware of the Equality Policy. |
| All | Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils. | Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability | CEO/ Headteacher/ Trustees | Annually in September / October | Analysis of teacher assessments / annual data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups. |
| All | Ensure that the curriculum promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, which reflects the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability. | Increase in pupils' participation, confidence and achievement levels | Curriculum leaders/Class teachers / Lead teacher in assemblies | Ongoing | Increase in participation and confidence of targeted groups. |
| All | Ensure that displays in classrooms and corridors promote diversity in terms of race, gender and ethnicity. | Increase in pupil participation, confidence and positive identity – monitor through PSHE & RE. | Curriculum leaders/Class based staff / Headteacher / Governing Body | Ongoing | More diversity reflected in school displays across all year groups in all academies. |
| All | Ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council by election), class assemblies, fund raising etc. | School Council representation monitored by race, gender, disability. Records of activities/events | Member of staff leading on School Council | Ongoing | More diversity in School Council membership. |
| Race Equality Duty | Identify, respond and report racist incidents as outlined in the Policy. Report the figures to the Governing body / Trust Board/CEO on a termly basis. | The CEO/Trust Board will use the data to assess the impact of the school's response to incidents i.e. have whole | CEO /Headteacher / Trust Board | Reporting termly to Board | Teaching staff are aware of and respond to racist incidents. |

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|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | school / year group approaches led to a decrease in incidents, can repeat perpetrators be identified, are pupils and parents satisfied with the response? | | | |
| Gender Equality Duty | Encourage boys and girls to take up extra-curricular activities. | Monitoring of the gender attendance at clubs by each academy. | PE Subject Leaders | Ongoing | Balance of girls and boys attending clubs. |
| Community Cohesion | Celebrate the cultural diversity within our school, in terms of race, gender and disability, through a display in the main corridor. Promote role models and heroes that all children can positively identify with. | Raised children's awareness about other cultures and successful people within them. | Curriculum leaders / RE co-ordinator | From September 2017 | Increased participation and confidence. All children feeling valued and proud. |
| Community Cohesion | Celebrate cultural events throughout the year to increase pupil awareness and understanding of different communities and cultures e.g. arts week, whole school RE assembly | RE activities in class. Annual whole school assembly to celebrate the main world religions. Arts weeks | RE, Music and Art Subject Leaders | Ongoing | Increased awareness of different communities shown in RE lessons and assemblies. |