



# Equality & Diversity Policy

April 2021

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## Introduction: Equality Duty

Over the last decade, schools (along with other institutions and public bodies) have been working towards an improved understanding and response to the diverse nature of communities, whilst recognising their role in promoting the understanding of equality for different groups of people. This work is particularly in response to legislation that places a clear duty upon schools to ensure that leadership, management and governance within schools are providing learning and opportunities for all, with a core focus of fairness, rights and justice.

Extensive equality legislation exists in the UK to protect people but also to advance and promote equality. Despite support from the government, parliament and the judiciary, inequality still exists across the UK. It is well-recognised and accepted that certain groups on average do less well at school and therefore will have limited life chances following their educational attainment. It is the hope that continued promotion of equality within communities will help equality practices improve and assist those who are treated unequally to uphold their rights to ensure personal and wider community fairness.

The Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup> served to consolidate and streamline existing equality legislation in the UK. It provides a legal duty upon public bodies and employers to not discriminate, harass or victimise a person within, or subject to, their institutions or companies. The Act provides the legal protections for persons most often subject to unfairness and inequality. These are outlined as Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 established a single Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>2</sup> (PSED) on all public bodies, including schools. The PSED has three main elements, which is to carry out their functions by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

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<sup>1</sup> Equality Act 2010. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

<sup>2</sup> Public Sector Equality Duty. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty>

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as outlined above:

- Decision makers in schools must be aware of the duty to have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action which may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- Schools should consider equality before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep it under review on a continuing basis.
- The equality duty has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school’s functions, and the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics, and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

### **Specific Duties**

The Act also introduced specific duties, which are designed to help public authorities to meet their obligations under the PSED. The PSED is set out on the face of the Act, while the specific duties are set out in secondary legislation.

The Specific Duties require schools to:

- Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish equality objectives every four years (one or more as is proportionate to the organisation).

All information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public.

### **Auxiliary aids and services**

Schools should acknowledge their duty to provide auxiliary aids as part of the reasonable adjustment duty for all schools as from September 2012.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Technical guidance is available from the Commission on Equality & Human Rights. Available at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equalityact-codes-of-practice-and-technical-guidance/>

## Equality and Diversity Statement

At Fareham Academy, we believe that our pursuit of equality and celebration of diversity is our greatest strength, as it is only when we **acknowledge, accept and appreciate** the contributions of others, that we are at our best. Here at Fareham Academy, we firmly uphold that education is a universal right for all and must be freely provided without exception or prejudice. Inclusivity of all pupils, staff, parents and others linked to the Academy and its' wider community, is at the centre of our continued aim to **unlocking potential** within every pupil and to **create opportunity** equally for all. The ability to uphold the ethos of equality and diversity at Fareham Academy is a vital attribute of all pupils, staff, parents and others, to ensure a community where everyone is respected and celebrated.

## Academy Context

Fareham Academy is a thriving mixed secondary Academy, set on a well-resourced and self-contained site that is set truly at the heart of its community.

We are a caring and forward-thinking school, where academic achievement and the personal development of each child go hand in hand. Our motto **'Unlocking Potential – Creating Opportunity'**, supported by our **'Kindness'** ethos, captures the ambition we have for all our pupils.

We are a 'Good' Academy with "Outstanding" features, where truly inclusive learning comes first. We work exceptionally hard to offer our pupils the best possible educational opportunities and unlock the potential in every child.

We have high expectations in relation to behaviour and uniform; central to this is how pupils communicate with each other, our staff, and members of the wider community. Our school ethos is *Kindness*, we strive to cultivate a desire for learning and self-improvement so that pupils leave the Academy as well mannered, confident and culturally rich individuals.

Our Academy is a friendly, vibrant and exciting place to learn. We believe that all children are individuals, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects their diverse needs, whilst supporting them through the care of our outstanding pastoral team. We work in close partnership with our parents, as well as promoting student voice through our passionate and committed Student Leadership Team.

## Overall Aims and Values

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Ensuring our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, religion, belief, disability and/or socio-economic background
- Ensuring equality of access for all pupils and preparing them for life in a diverse society
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the Academy, population and local community without stereotyping
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Tackling any form of discrimination through the positive promotion of equality, by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment which nurtures respect for all
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seeking to involve all parents, carers and guardians in supporting their child's education
- Ensuring all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We are keen to ensure that the staffing of the Academy reflects the diversity of our community
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

## **Our duties**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and PSED, and continually seek to include the whole Academy community in the practices and development of equalities to ensure better outcomes for all. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider Academy community. We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under a SEN statement, or where the statement does not provide the auxiliary aid or service. We are also guided by the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*<sup>4</sup>. We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of Academy life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

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<sup>4</sup> UN Convention on Rights of the Child. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the Academy
- Academy policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals (including free school meals)
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- Academy clubs, activities and school trips
- the Academy's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- Academy sports
- employees' and staff welfare
- provision of sanitation facilities

In addition to the above duties, we also appreciate that these duties reflect the *International Human Rights Standards* as expressed in the *UN Convention on Rights of the Child*, the *UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities*<sup>5</sup>, and the Human Rights Act 1998.<sup>6</sup>

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006<sup>7</sup> to promote community cohesion. (i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups)

At Fareham Academy we are committed to making this policy, as well as all other Academy policies, available to all those persons whose disabilities may limit their ability to view this policy in its current format and publishing. For more information about further accessible copies of Academy information please contact the Academy reception team.

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<sup>5</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Act 1998. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

<sup>7</sup> Education and Inspections Act. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>

## **Implementation of Policy**

### **Recruitment**

One of the aims of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, or is otherwise disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified. In accordance with the spirit of this policy, employees are given an equal opportunity to progress within the Trust. When recruiting staff, equal opportunity and health questions will not be asked until after the offer of a job is made, and then, only if it is necessary for the role.

### **Training and Development**

The Trust will endeavour to:

- Enhance and develop the skills knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential irrespective of background or employment status.
- Provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part-time, on the basis of their assessed training needs.
- Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, Trustees, parents/guardians and pupils can make.

### **Curriculum**

Every pupil has an equal entitlement to the National Curriculum and, subject to entry requirements, to all other areas of the curriculum, regardless of language, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.

All pupils should have equal access to the curriculum regardless of academic ability. Consequently, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Accessibility Strategy. The Trust will monitor any careers advice or work experience placements provided by outside agencies to aim to ensure equal opportunities.



## **The Roles and Responsibilities within Our Academy Community**

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality and Diversity Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of this policy
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement this policy
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding this policy so that the Academy's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the policy and report to the Trust Board at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information
- ensure that the Senior Leadership Team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy, or actions arising from it.

Our Trust Board will:

- designate a Trustee with specific responsibility for the Equality and Diversity Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives at least every four years.

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- with the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SIP.

Our Pupils will:

- be involved in the development of this policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with this policy
- be encouraged to actively support this policy.

Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of this policy
- have access to the policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support this policy

- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to this policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child.

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of this policy
- be fully aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality and Diversity Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

Relevant voluntary or community groups and partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of this policy
- Be encouraged to support this policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to this policy.

### **Community Cohesion**

We are committed to supporting community cohesion by:

- Developing a common vision and sense of belonging
- Developing an appreciation of the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances
- Creating opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential
- Building strong and positive relationships.

The Academy shall use engagement tools and extended services to work with the community. For example;

- We have good links with other schools/ academies, locally and regionally.
- Teachers have links with other schools/ academies and promote good role models when interacting with staff from other schools/ academies, through a range of activities.
- Learners have a strong voice and opportunities to take responsibility through our Student Leadership Team.
- We engage parents through a range of activities, consultation evenings and focus groups. Our pastoral system works with Hampshire County Council's (HCC's) Inclusion Support Service (ISS)<sup>8</sup>, to improve children's attendance
- We have strong links with external agencies including social services, the ISS service, the health service and police.
- Multi-agency working with voluntary agencies and the private sector. Building networks and partnerships between services to encourage joint thinking and sharing of skills.
- Integrated support to ensure a personalised service.

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<sup>8</sup> Hampshire County Council's Inclusion Support Service (ISS). Available at:  
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/educationinclusion-service/about-us>

- Relevant signposting to other agencies in the community.
- Raising awareness in the community about the range of services available at the Academy.

## **Development, Monitoring and Reviewing**

### **Policy development**

The Academy believes it is important that this policy (and indeed all policies) reflects everyone in our community who may face inequality. Fareham Academy is committed to opening up discussions about developmental considerations in respect of this policy. Developmental suggestions can be represented to the Headteacher or the Chair of Trustees either directly or indirectly, in writing or via any other tangible means of communication. To assist in ensuring effective consideration for development of this policy, we recommend that considerations are detailed sufficiently in writing and delivered to either the Headteacher or the Chair of Trustees. However, any and all considerations shall be accepted and considered where possible, whatever the format or communication means used.

### **Policy reviews**

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. The date of review can be found on the front page of this document or upon request from the Clerk to the Trustees. We kindly ask that any developmental considerations are provided to the Headteacher or Board of Trustees in sufficient time for updates to be considered before the review date of this policy, this should be no later than two months before the scheduled review date.

### **Policy breaches**

Fareham Academy is committed to the adoption and implementation of this Equality and Diversity Policy. However, in the event a member of the Academy or its community believe it is necessary to make a claim that the Academy has breached the Equality and Diversity Policy, either by its actions or lack thereof, they are able to detail their claim in writing and address it to the Headteacher or Chair of Trustees for consideration. Should the claimant believe the outcome of the consideration not be satisfactory, they may further the claim to the Local Authority (Hampshire County Council) and then if necessary, to the Department for Education (DoE) if the resolution is still not satisfactory to the claimant.

Please note the information above is not for the reporting hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying. For more information on this, please see the relevant sections below.

### **Monitoring and policy assurance**

It is necessary to use staff, pupil and parent data to monitor areas where inequality may be present in order to target those areas to achieve a levelling up plan. All information shall be used in accordance with the Academy's Data Protection Policy, as well as current and relevant privacy legislation

regarding the approved use of personal data. If you have any questions about how your data will be used to monitor equalities at Fareham Academy, please contact the Academy directly.

### **Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

Development and progression of equalities within our society has consistently improved in recent years. However, despite this continued progress, hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying still occurs within our communities. Hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying are incredibly serious incidents and can be very damaging to individuals or groups who become victims of such incidents or bullying. At Fareham Academy we understand that certain individuals or groups are more at risk of being victimised, for example by receiving:

- racist hate or bullying
- religious hate or bullying
- homophobic hate or bullying
- biphobic hate or bullying
- transphobic hate or bullying
- disability hate or bullying
- sexist hate or bullying.

At Fareham Academy we will take any necessary action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such hate or bullying behaviour. We take reports of hate incidents or bullying very seriously and investigate all reports fully. We also record all reports and relevant findings in line with government and local authority guidance. We will use information recorded to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities. To assist the Academy in preventing hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying from occurring, we have a robust, active and up-to-date Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and a dedicated behaviour team who works with all pupils, Academy Staff, the SLT and Trustees. In addition, through our Academies' ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to better understand the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

If you believe you or another person has been a victim of a hate or prejudice-based incident or bullying, please speak to the Headteacher, Chair of Trustees, the Designated Safeguard Lead or any member of staff at Fareham Academy.

## **Equality Objectives**

Fareham Academy is dedicated to setting clear and measurable Equality Objectives, with the aim to improve equality for those with protected characteristics within the Academy community. We believe that these objectives provide a transparent format on which the school can develop and demonstrate its commitment to achieving an environment for all that pursues equality and celebrates diversity.

An important aspect to the value and relevance of the Equality Objectives is that the entire Academy and its community can contribute to the content of the Equality Objectives. To enable this collaboration across the Academy and its community, we shall conduct an Equality Objectives Consultation in the period of time before the proposed review date and publishing of subsequent Equality Objectives. This consultation shall be open to all those who work or study within the Academy, as well as members of the local community. We are committed to providing a platform for those who wish to offer their ideas about what the Academy should include within its Equality Objectives to ensure effective progress and promotion of equalities.

## **Equalities Information: An Annual Review of Equalities Progress**

In addition to our duty to publish Equality Objectives every four years, it is also our duty to publish an Equalities Information: An Annual Review of Equalities Progress to review the achievements and progress made in completing the objectives. We hope that the Equalities Information will highlight the important progress we are making and will enable our stakeholders and community to hold us to account for our performance in achieving the equality objectives we have set.