



**Thorncombe St Mary's CofE
Primary Academy**

**Equality Policy and
Objectives**

2021 - 2025

**Living, Learning and Growing
Together**

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1 Policy statement of intent

- 1.1 Acorn Multi Academy Trust recognises that certain groups in society have historically been disadvantaged on account of unlawful discrimination they have faced on the basis of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.
- 1.2 This policy will put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the Trust, its school communities and workforce.

2 Legislative Framework

- 2.1 The Equality Act 2010 provides a single legal framework with three broad duties:
 - Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
 - 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.
- 2.2 The effect of the Equality Duty is that schools must have due regard to the above in relation to the management of their pay policies, avoiding direct or indirect discrimination. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires public bodies to prepare and publish equality objectives and publish information, to demonstrate compliance with the general duty (the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011).
- 2.3 This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:
 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014
 - Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - Equality Act 2010
 - The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- 2.4 Acorn Multi Academy Trust and its academies fully understand the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities.
- 2.5 A protected characteristic under the Act is as follows:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
 - Sex (including transgender people)
 - Gender reassignment
 - Maternity and pregnancy
 - Religion and belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Marriage and civil partnership (for employees).

- 2.6 In schools, the Act makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:
- In relation to admissions
 - In the way it provides education for pupils
 - In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service
 - By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

3 Principles & Aims

- 3.1 We see all employees, learners, potential learners and their parents and carers as of equal value, regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.
- 3.2 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 disadvantages which people may face in relation to their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.
- 3.3 Acorn Multi Academy Trust and its academies will promote race equality and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between people of different racial groups.
- 3.4 Acorn Multi Academy Trust will promote disability equality throughout the Trust and its academies, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination, eliminating disability related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- 3.5 Acorn Multi Academy Trust and its academies will promote gender equality by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote the equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.
- 3.6 Transgender people are explicitly covered by the Gender Equality Duty. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. This Trust and its academies will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within the social community.
- 3.7 Acorn Multi Academy Trust and its academies are opposed to all forms of prejudice and particularly recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.
- 3.8 Acorn Multi Academy Trust and its academies will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations
- 3.9 The Admissions Policies for the Trust schools will not discriminate in any way, except where permitted for Church of England schools
- 3.10 The Trust will:
- Ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given necessary training and support
 - Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised.

- Foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, ensuring that this is promoted in all policies, procedures and activities.
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity
- Reduce and remove any inequalities and barriers that already exist.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age
- Ensure that staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the Trust schools, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and showing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equalities.

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board will:

- Ensure that the Trust complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish equality objectives.
- Ensure that the Trust's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity data is sufficiently scrutinised. Ensure that the Admissions Policies for the Trust schools do not discriminate in any way, except where permitted for Church schools.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the governing board.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

4.2 The CEO and Trust Senior Leadership Team will:

- Implement the policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their HR induction and continuous professional development.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of and are in compliance with the provisions of this policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.
- Produce an annual report on the progress of implementing the provisions of this policy.
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4.3 Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidence of harassment or bullying in the schools / Trust.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying in the schools / Trust and report any major breaches of the policy to the Head of School (CEO for the central team).

- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the Trust and schools' culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

4.4 Pupils will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to their teacher or to another member of the school staff.
- Abide by all the Trust's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

4.5 Acorn Multi Academy Trust will display information on its website to demonstrate how it is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010, and advancing equality of opportunity.

5 Uniform/dress policy

5.1 The Act does not deal specifically with aspects of pupils' and employees' appearance, but the general requirement not to discriminate in the treatment of people applies here in relation to other aspects of the policy.

5.2 Academies will ensure that uniform policies do not discriminate because of race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

5.3 The Trust and its academies will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies, such as those relating to safety or discipline.

6 Gender reassignment

6.1 The Act ensures legal protection against discrimination (direct or indirect) for everyone under the nine protected characteristics mentioned previously, including gender reassignment. 5.2. A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if that person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

6.2 All members of staff and pupils have a right to privacy, which includes the right to keep one's transgender status confidential. School staff should not disclose information that may reveal a child or other staff member's transgender status.

6.3 A glossary of terminology related to the transgender field can be found on the [Gender Identity Research and Education Society website](#)

7 Curriculum

- 7.1 All pupils will be entitled to access to a curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need.
- 7.2 When planning the curriculum, the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.

8 Promoting equality

In order to meet our equality objectives, the Trust will:

- 8.1 Ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the Trust schools will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- 8.2 Carefully monitor bullying and prejudice and deal with it accordingly, recording any incidents. Training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.
- 8.3 Provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment so they can integrate wholly in all parts of school life.
- 8.4 Provide differential schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all pupils.
- 8.5 Have a clearly defined disciplinary system, which will be consistently enforced.
- 8.6 Increase physical and other forms of access for disabled children and young people who have disabilities or other special needs to the school curriculum and take necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments, enabling pupils to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the school, including extra-curricular activities
- 8.7 Throughout the year, plan on-going events to raise awareness of equality and diversity.
- 8.8 Seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local schools as appropriate.
- 8.9 Establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning. These equality objectives will be reviewed and reported on annually.

9 Addressing prejudice related incidents

- 9.1 Acorn Multi Academy Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that pupils and staff who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system.
- 9.2 The Trust will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents from occurring.

9.3 If incidents still occur, the Trust will address them immediately.

10 Employment

10.1 Acorn Multi Academy Trust aims to employ a workforce that reflects the community which it serves.

10.2 In seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, the Trust will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job.

10.3 Staff will be expected to treat each other in a fair and respectful manner that is free from discrimination.

10.4 Reasonable adjustments will be made to working arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for employees or potential employees who have a disability or a particular health concern.

11 External Partners

11.1 External partners working with Acorn Multi Academy Trust and its academies will be required to comply with the requirements of this Policy

12 Equality Objectives

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data and other information. They focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantage. The Trust has set the following equality objectives for the four year period from May 2021 until May 2025:

Objective 1

Aim	To continue to promote understanding and respect for diversity and equality	Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Raise awareness of aims and objectives of policy by sharing with staff and the wider community● Provide further staff training in all aspects of equality & diversity to support staff understanding and awareness● Introduce all aspects of statutory RSHE into the PSHE curriculum and continue to build a shared understanding of this work with parents/carers so they can support this at home

Objective 2

<p>Aim</p>	<p>Ensure that the school promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, who reflect and broaden the diversity of Modern Britain in terms of race, gender and disability</p>	<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities to promote diversity through all aspects of the curriculum, e.g. resourcing, study of historical figures etc • Promote engagement of visiting speakers to school to broaden children's perceptions of equality and diversity • Ensure the school calendar and displays reflects opportunities to reflect and remember the importance of diversity, • Deliver a programme of assemblies, outside visitors and education trips to promote the ethos of equality to pupils and help pupils develop good relationships with people of different characteristics.
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Objective 3

<p>Aim</p>	<p>Ensure tolerance and respect towards individuals who identify with any of the protected characteristics</p>	<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure regular analysis of any negative behaviour incidents to identify any patterns related to protected characteristics, e.g. racism, and ensure any necessary action is taken to mitigate this, e.g. further education, involvement of parents/carers etc • Utilise collective worship (assembly) opportunities to promote equality and diversity and to tackle issues of discrimination or oppression for any protected groups • Respond to world news/current affairs issues (related to any individuals/protected characteristics) through collective worship (Picture News) or PSHE sessions. Continue to promote the school's position regarding equality through communication channels with parents/carers so
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		that there is a shared appreciation of diversity and/or British Values
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Objective 4

Aim	To monitor assessment and other data at regular intervals to ensure that children are not being disadvantaged by belonging to a protected group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful tracking of attainment and progress for pupils with the “Protected Characteristics”. Ensure reasonable adjustments are in place for these children. Where appropriate, work with outside agencies to achieve the best progress for our children Monitor engagement of uptake at any extra-curricular activities or enrichment provision to ensure these opportunities are accessible to all
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Objective 5

Aim	To review staff related policies and procedures to ensure they comply with the Act (e.g. recruitment, CPD, flexible working, maternity and pay policies) and the Trust offers equal opportunities to all staff	Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To undertake an initial analysis of data relating to current employees with regard to race, gender and disability and report this to the Board Finance & Audit Committee. To undertake an annual data analysis, noting any changes. Carry out equality impact statement
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13 Monitoring and review

Acorn Multi Academy Trust will review this policy every four years.

The Trust and its academies will report annually on the progress made in achieving its equality objectives.

Data to be published may include, but not be limited to: school performance, anti-bullying policies, school development plans, equality milestones and curriculum materials.

Progress will be monitored and evaluated with reference to the following:

- Reviewing pupil progress and attainment for different sub-groups (e.g. individual schools, boys vs girls, Disadvantaged/Pupil Premium, SEN and Looked after Children)

- Equal opportunities recruitment data
- Equality impact assessments
- Ofsted inspection judgements on equality and diversity
- Incident records related to harassment, bullying and prejudice related incidents
- Taking advice from relevant parties such as the Trust HR provider and Devon & Dorset Admissions teams
- Monitoring parental engagement and attendance.

The Trust's Human Resources Department will be responsible for the maintenance and reporting of equality data relating to the Trust's employees.