**Introduction**

***Equality*** is the current term for ‘Equal Opportunities’. It is based on the legal obligation to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. Equality protects people from being discriminated against on the grounds of group membership i.e. gender, race, disability, gender orientation, religion, belief or age.

Over recent years, schools have (in line with other institutions and public bodies) been working towards an improved understanding of the diverse nature of their communities. Much of this work is in response to new legislation that places an increased duty on schools and other settings. Legislation requires schools both to eliminate direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment and to promote equality for students, staff and others who use school facilities. These developments reflect the growing awareness of the need to view different equality strands beneath one umbrella, rather than seeing them as separate factions competing with each other for time and resources.

At ACET, our Equality Scheme brings together schemes and action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, meeting the statutory duties in these areas. However, it goes far beyond these strands to include sexuality, religion and faith, age and every aspect which has the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community such as against those with special educational needs, or potential language barriers. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments.

**ACET Mission Statement**

ACET is committed to providing quality learning and teaching enabling everyone to reach their full potential, whatever their age, ability, gender or ethnicity.

Every person in our community is unique. We work together in an environment of mutual respect, and consideration, valuing everyone’s contribution.

Through our partnership with the local and wider community we aim to support our young people in successfully taking their place in society.

All adults in school have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**Public Sector Equality Duty**

We recognise that the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) has three aims:

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

We also recognise our obligation to advance equality by:

1. Removing or minimising disadvantages
2. Taking steps to meet different needs
3. Encouraging participation when it is disproportionately low

**Eliminating Discrimination**

At ACET, we eliminate discrimination by:

* Adopting a Single Equality Policy
* Regularly reviewing the curriculum in all key stages to ensure that it meets the needs of all of our students/pupils, and that it promotes diversity and equality
* Ensuring all students/pupils are given equal entitlement to progress and success
* Continuing to work to our robust behaviour policy in each of our academies

**Equality Objectives**

As a trust, our objectives for 2020/2021 are as follows:

* To review and update policies within the trust to promote equality for all staff, students/pupils and visitors in our academies
* Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement for all groups of students/pupils
* Continue to improve accessibility across the academy sites for students/pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities;
* Monitor the incidence of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist behaviour or language in our academies;
* To promote cultural understanding and awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our academy communities;