



ACET

SINGLE EQUALITY

POLICY

PHASE	JUNIOR & SECONDARY
POLICY LEAD	DOMINIC CURRAN (PRINCIPAL ASTON ACADEMY)
DATE OF APPROVAL BY TRUSTEES	25 JANUARY 2021
DATE OF RECEIPT BY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY	FEBRUARY 2021
FREQUENCY DATE	ANNUALLY
NEXT REVIEW DATE	DECEMBER 2021

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Introduction

What does 'equality' mean?

Whether you are a large multinational company, a small business or a school, it pays to know about equality and diversity in the workplace – to act within the law and to make the best of your business and educational opportunities.

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.

Background and influences

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.

Furthermore, closing the gap between the progress and attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers is central to the Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures¹ and the recognition of diversity and promotion of inclusive and equality practices will be central to achieving this vision.

Equality Scheme

Why we have developed this Equality Scheme

This Equality Scheme for ACET 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.

¹ Building Brighter Futures. Department of Children, Schools and Families, 2007

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Our equality scheme is inclusive of our whole academy communities – students, staff, parents/carers and visitors - who have been involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Scheme is to set out how our practice and policies can address discrimination, promote inclusive practice and ensure that those in our community requiring extra support receive it.

Equality Act 2010

ACET welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010, which include:

- to eliminate discrimination
- to advance equality of opportunity
- to foster good relations

We understand the principles of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

Legal Duties

A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 covers the groups listed below:

- age (for employees not for service provision),
- disability
- race
- sex (including issues of transgender)
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

In order to meet our general duties, the law requires us to carry out some specific duties. These are to:

- Publish equality Information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions **(We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child)**
- Prepare and publish equality objectives

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To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as the trust. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above. However, where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group, we will include work in this area.

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.

In fulfilling our legal obligations 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.

- the participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children and young people and their parents
- preparation for entry to the academies
- trust policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of 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 academies' arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of students for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of students

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- extended learning tasks
- access to academy facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum
- academy sports
- employees' and staff welfare (Whistle Blowing policy, Safer Recruitment etc.)

Our Ethos/Mission

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our academy community, within all aspects of academy life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- **Shared Humanity.** 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
- **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 academy and within our local community**
- **Excellence.** We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- **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 Mission Statement

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.

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Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

ACET is opposed to all forms of prejudice, and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. If incidents still occur, the academy's leadership team will address them immediately.

The roles and responsibilities within our academy communities

Our Principals will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, students and visitors are informed about the Equality Scheme
- oversee the effective implementation of the scheme
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the scheme
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the academy's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the scheme and report to the Local Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the Leadership Team (LT) is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Local Governing Bodies will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Scheme
- support the Principals in implementing any actions necessary
- inform and consult with parents/carers about the scheme

Our Leadership Teams will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this scheme
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the scheme
- with the principals, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the Academy Improvement Plan

Our Pupils/Students will:

- be involved in the on-going development of the scheme through the pupil and student councils, and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the scheme

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Our parents/carers will:

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the on-going development of the scheme
- have access to the scheme through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the scheme
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the scheme
- be informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child

Our academy staff will:

- be involved in the on-going development of the scheme
- be fully aware of the Equality Scheme and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole academy issue and support the Equality Scheme
- make known any queries or training requirements

We will ensure that the whole ACET community is aware of the Single Equality Policy and our published equality information and equality objectives by publishing them on the academies' intranet and external websites.

Breaches

Breaches to this statement will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other academy policies are dealt with, as determined by the Principal and Local Governing Body.

Monitor and Review

Monitoring is the responsibility of our Leadership Teams and our governors and will take place annually.