



## Single Equalities Policy

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“Learning together, to be the best we can be”

# 1. Introduction

1.1. This policy outlines the Trust's approach to ensuring equality for all, under the one umbrella including:

- Race
- Disability
- Gender & gender identity
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Age
- Religion & Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Special Educational Need
- Community cohesion

1.2. This document is designed to communicate the following:

- Our Diversity statement;
- Our intention to promote community cohesion;
- Our particular provision for Special Educational Need
- Our desire to fully meet statutory requirements;
- Our legal responsibilities in terms of race, disability, gender & gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

1.3. Inclusiveness is at the heart of our equality plans and we are keen to ensure that we are an inclusive organisation that supports and promotes "Equality for All" within our own and the wider community. We therefore welcome the Equalities duties of schools.

1.4. The purpose of this document is to show how our Trust promotes equality for disabled pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. We believe in treating everyone fairly and we are committed to creating an environment in our academies which is appropriate and accessible to all.

1.5. We aim to encourage and listen to local views and involve local people in the work of our academies. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole school communities working together - learners, staff, governors, and parents / careers. All academy staff and members of the academy

community have a responsibility to treat everyone fairly and to promote arrangements for people with disabilities.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy relates to all academies and settings across Nexus MAT and supersedes any local policies and procedures that have been in use prior to the academy conversion. Where required, an individual Nexus MAT academy – in agreement with the Trust Chief Executive Officer - may publish a supplementary policy guidance document or procedure in line with this policy, to ensure that any idiosyncrasies associated with that specific academy are covered in their local policy library.

## 3. National and legal context

- 3.1. The Equality Act 2010 which came into force in April 2011 has brought together all the current discrimination laws into one. All academies have duties to promote race, disability and gender equality. Academies also have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across groups within the community.

- 3.2. The 3 aims of the general duty are:

- 3.2.1. To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- 3.2.2. To advance equality of opportunity between people who shared a protected characteristic and those who do not, by taking steps to meet their needs where they are different from the needs of others.
- 3.2.3. To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by encouraging participation in activities where it is disproportionately low.

## 4. Equal opportunities for staff

- 4.1. 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 appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and in compliance with the law. We are concerned, where possible, that staffing reflects the diversity of the community.

4.2. We need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within the workforce.

4.3. Equality aspects relating to race, religion or belief, gender, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity and age are considered where appropriate when making appointments, changing staffing structures or allocating responsibilities, to ensure decisions are not discriminatory.

4.4. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

4.4.1. Monitoring of recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;

4.4.2. Continued professional development opportunities for staff;

4.4.3. Pay is relative to experience and responsibility not to gender or sexual orientation.

## 5. Equality and the law

5.1. There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by a school.

5.1.1. **Race equality** - the general duty requires a school to:

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

5.1.2. **Disability** - the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 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 general duty requires schools to have due regard to the following:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and others

- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people in relation to their disability
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

**5.1.3. Gender** - the gender equality act places a general duty on schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment
- Promote equality of opportunity between male and female pupils and male and female staff.
- The Trust is legally obliged to publish an annual gender pay gap report.

**5.1.4. Sexual orientation** - The Equality Act (sexual orientation) 2007 made discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation unlawful - for schools this relates to admission and treatment of, and services to pupils.

**5.1.5. Age** - Nexus Multi Academy Trust is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for people of different ages. Age equality means promoting equal participation in society of people of every age.

**5.1.6. Community cohesion and British values** - Schools and their governing bodies have a duty to promote community cohesion and promote British values. This involves fostering good relations between pupils and from different races, faiths or beliefs and different socio-economic backgrounds.

## 6. Tackling Discrimination

**6.1.** 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 discriminatory incidents; know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and support the full range of diverse needs according to pupils' individual circumstances.

**6.2.** Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors, can take many forms including verbal, physical abuse, name

calling, exclusion from groups of activities, unwanted looks or comments, jokes or graffiti. A racist incident is defined as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

### 6.3. Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur:

- Physical assault because of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- Use of derogatory names, insults or jokes
- Racist, sexist, homophobic graffiti
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic badges or insignia
- Bringing discriminatory material into school
- Verbal abuse or threats
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to race, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations or groups
- Ridicule and individual
- Refusal to cooperate with others on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### 6.4. Any act of discrimination by or against a pupil, employee, governor or volunteer will be treated with zero tolerance and will be responded to using the Trust's behaviour management policy (for pupils and/parents) or the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

## Appendix A: Equality Objectives 2023-27

| Objectives                                                                                                                                                        | Focus                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| 1. Academies ensure a broad, culturally diverse and personalised curriculum is in place.                                                                          | Undertake a curriculum review in all academies with a specific focus upon statutory entitlement and breadth of offer through intent, implementation and impact.        |
| 2. Academies ensure pupils increase awareness and are protected and helped to keep themselves safe from all forms of discrimination                               | Academies can evidence positive approaches to empowering pupil voice and best practice is shared.                                                                      |
| 3. Ringfenced grants are used to have optimal impact upon Learning outcomes of vulnerable groups utilising evidence-based practice and research.                  | Evidenced based research is integral to planning and eligible pupils' progress is routinely tracked.                                                                   |
| 4. Enhance the accessibility of information regarding provision and pupil outcomes for parents / carers and increase involvement in how to best support learning. | Academies pro-actively seek and use parental feedback to improve the offer. Academy is engaged with the Family Support Network group.                                  |
| 5. Academies ensure their curriculum model meets the needs and interests of their pupils and reflects diversity and locality                                      | Academy is part of the Nexus Diversity network group and linked focus and actions.                                                                                     |
| 6. Academies recognise that emotional health and wellbeing influences pupils' cognitive development, communication and learning behaviours.                       | Audit academy approaches regarding behaviour, engagement and SEMH.<br><br>Academies accessing and using the SEMH Competency framework and the self-evaluation toolkit. |