



# PIONEER ACADEMIES COMMUNITY TRUST

## Equality and Diversity Policy

<b>Review/Approve</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
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# Equality Policy

## 1. Introduction

All academies within Pioneer Academies Community Trust are committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We believe all people are of equal value and are entitled to equality of opportunity and that our diversity enriches our communities.

We recognise that all individuals have fundamental human rights and welcome the diversity of the community, living, working and learning in the Barnsley area. As a service provider and employer the PACT Board is committed to promoting equality and tackling social exclusion and, as such, will integrate equality into all activities.

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy has been devised to enable our academies to meet their general duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct under the Equality Act 2010
- Promote equality of access and opportunity within our schools between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people of different backgrounds irrespective of their disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, culture, gender status, age or marital status.

We do this by:

- Providing a secure environment in which all of our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Providing positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities
- Reviewing our knowledge and understanding of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity
- Making inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities in the academy

## 3. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Gender
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Age
- Marriage or civil partnership

#### **4. Guiding Principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations as stated above, we are guided by the following principles

##### ***Principle 1 – All learners are of equal value***

All learners and potential learners are of equal value and benefit equally from school policies, practices and programmes, whatever their ability, ethnicity or national identity, religious background, gender or cultural identity

##### ***Principle 2 – Relevant differences are recognised***

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability – so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity – so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender - so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity

##### ***Principle 3 – We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging***

We intend that our policies and programmes promote

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment

##### ***Principle 4 - We observe good practice in relation to equality when dealing with staff recruitment, retention and development***

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender or sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

##### ***Principle 5 – We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist***

- In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies and programmes, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between:
  - Disabled and non-disabled people
  - People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
  - Girls and boys, women and men

***Principle 6 – Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement***

We aim to engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. These groups and individuals include:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men

***Principle 7 – Society as a whole should benefit***

Policies and programmes benefit society as a whole, locally, nationally and internationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life for:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender

***Principle 8 – We base our practices on sound evidence***

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- Disability
- Ethnicity, religion and culture
- Gender

***Principle 9 – Objectives***

- We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published in relation to
- Disability
- Ethnicity, religion and culture
- Gender

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

## 5. Implementation

### *Curriculum*

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles set out above.

### *Admissions*

- We welcome admission applications from the whole community
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system (refer to admissions policy)
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our schools on the basis of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, being a member of the travelling community or an asylum seeker or having spent convictions
- We discourage discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents/carers and will take appropriate action
- Displaying of openly racist insignia, distribution of racist material, name-calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the school premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner
- We do not discriminate against a child with disability or refuse a child entry to our school because of any disability
- We have ensured that support plans or action plans are developed for children and parents / carers with disabilities so that they can participate successfully in the activities offered by the school
- We try to reflect the diversity of members of our community in all our publicity and promotional materials
- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether written or spoken

### *Ethos and Organisation*

We ensure the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents
- working with the wider community

### *Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying*

We are opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to above:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are
- directed towards religious groups and communities, for example

- Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

We keep a record of any prejudice-related incidents including the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

#### *Food and Dietary needs*

- We work in partnership with parents / carers to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children are met as far as is reasonably possible
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them

#### *Employment*

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against explicit and fair criteria
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and posts are open to all
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service – this ensures a fair selection process
- All job descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications
- We may use the exemption clauses of the Race Relations Act and the Sex Discrimination Act where this is necessary to enable the service to best meet the needs of the community

## **6. Responsibilities and Accountabilities**

### **The Trust Board is responsible for:**

making sure that the academies complies with legislation, and follow this policy and any associated procedures.

### **The Local Governing Body is responsible for:**

Monitoring the implementation of the policy.

### **The Head Teacher is responsible for:**

- Ensuring the implementation of the policy and making sure that any related actions and procedures are complied with.
- Giving a consistent and high profile lead on Equality and Diversity

### **Academy Leaders are responsible for:**

- Putting the academy Equality and Diversity Policy and procedures into practice
- Supporting staff training and ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities and have the knowledge and skills to necessary to carry them out

**All staff are responsible for:**

- Promoting equality and diversity and avoiding unfair discrimination
- Actively responding to and challenging incidents of unfair discrimination related to protected characteristics carried out by staff, pupils, parents or visitors
- Keeping up to date with equality legislation and attending training when necessary

**7. Monitoring and Review**

We will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy through:

- Analysis of data on the attainment pupils with protected characteristics and those from vulnerable groups and address any issues of differential progress and achievement
- Analysis of attendance data of pupils with protected characteristics and those from vulnerable groups and address any issues of differential progress and achievement
- Analysis of exclusions and other aspects of behaviour policy by protected characteristics
- Monitoring of the curriculum, teaching and learning, and teaching resources to ensure that pupils' experiences are broadened and they are prepared for life in a diverse society
- Incidents of racist and homophobic behaviour and the way
- Analysis of participation in extended learning activities
- Work force census
- Levels of parental engagement from different groups

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every two years. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation might require a review of the policy before the two years stipulated.

In considering the effectiveness of this policy consultation will be undertaken with staff, governors, pupils, and parents / carers.

**8. Equality Objectives**

**We aim to provide the highest possible education for all our pupils. The ethos of our academy clearly reflects our commitment to fully including and respecting and supporting all members of our academy communities.**

We have set the following objectives:

1. To ensure that the curriculum effectively supports the needs of all children, with particular reference to SEND and vulnerable groups.
2. To remove barriers to learning and close attainment and progress gaps between different groups of pupils
3. Continue to improve accessibility across school for all pupils, staff. parents and visitors
4. To provide a balance of positive gender role models for all pupils
5. To promote understanding of issues associated with mental health and well-being and provide support / interventions as appropriate

