



**Education
Partnership
Trust**

Creating outstanding schools
which transform learning, lives
and communities

EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES POLICY



Document Control

This document has been approved for operation within:	All Trust Establishments
Date effective from	April 2026
Date next review due by	April 2030
Review period	4 Years

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy applies to all aspects of the Education Partnership Trust (the 'Trust') and its schools. The Trust will promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination with particular regard to Protected Characteristics as outlined by the Equalities Act 2010.
- 1.2. The Trust is committed to promoting fairness and equality in everything that it does and acknowledging the diversity of the people who make up our communities. Equality involves a fair environment in which everyone can participate and is given the opportunity to achieve. Diversity recognises and values differences between individuals and groups to create a positive and inclusive culture for the benefit of our schools.
- 1.3. The Trust believes that every individual within our schools has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity, understanding, tolerance, and respect and to be in an environment free from abuse, offensive behaviour, prejudice and unlawful discrimination.
- 1.4. In seeking to eliminate direct or indirect discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment, the Trust and its schools will actively promote policies and procedures aimed at realising the full potential of every individual. The Trust will endeavour to maximise resources to ensure that opportunities are open to all.

2.0 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- 2.1 This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:
 - The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty (the 'PSED') and protects people from discrimination
 - The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED and to publish equality objectives
- 2.2. The PSED is a duty on public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work and covers the following 'Protected Characteristics':
 - Age (not applicable with regard to learners)
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion/belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 2.3. The Trust aims to meet its obligations under the 'General Duty' of the PSED by having due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - 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

- 2.4. Having 'due regard' means being aware of, and properly considering these three aims, how they relate to the function being exercised and then deciding what weight to give them. This means, for example, that whenever decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications. The amount of due regard given shall depend on the circumstances of the decision being made.
- 2.5. The 'Specific Equality Duty' assists public bodies in responding to the General Duty. There are three specific duties that public bodies are required to carry out:
 - To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objective at least every 4 years.
 - Publish information on general duty compliance with regard to people affected by their policies and practices every year.
 - Publish gender pay gap information.

3.0 DELIVERING ON THE DUTY

- 3.1. Through this policy the Trust will develop, consult on, set and publish 'Equality Objectives' as set out at section 8. All Trust schools will adopt this policy and all school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the Equality Objectives.
- 3.2. The Trust will ensure that:
 - The equality information and objectives as set out in this policy are published and communicated throughout the Trust, including to staff, pupils and parents.
 - The published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years.
- 3.3. The Trust will publish an 'Equalities Statement' to demonstrate compliance with the Specific Equality Duty.
- 3.4. Schools will report annually to the Trust on the operation and effectiveness of this policy and in particular on the actions taken to ensure achievement of the Equality Objectives.
- 3.5. To fulfil the duty to have 'due regard' to equality considerations, schools must, whenever decisions are being made or policies developed, give thought to equality implications. This means that:
 - Decision makers in Trust schools must be aware of this duty when making a decision and assess whether it may have particular implications for people with particular Protected Characteristics
 - Schools must consider the equality implications before and at the time that they develop policies and take decisions and should keep them under continuous review.
 - Schools will carry out these assessments seriously, rigorously and with an open mind.
- 3.6. Each school's governing body will ensure that their school complies with the appropriate legislation by ensuring this policy and any related procedures are implemented. They will scrutinise the school's approach to equalities to ensure both the General Duty and Specific Equality Duty under the PSED are fully complied with.
- 3.7. The Headteacher of each school will implement this policy and any related procedures, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

3.8. The Headteacher of each school is responsible for ensuring that the school's commitment to equality is reflected in:

- The attitudes and behaviour of staff.
- Arranging appropriate training and ensuring that knowledge and understanding of the Equality Objectives is promoted among staff and pupils.
- Their willingness to acknowledge and tackle examples of unacceptable behaviour.

4.0 ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

4.1. The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions. For further detail, refer to the Trust's Equality Policy which can be found on the Intranet.

4.2. Where relevant, the Trusts' policies include reference to the importance of avoiding unlawful discrimination and other prohibited and/or unlawful conduct.

4.3. Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and receive regular refresher training.

5.0 ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

5.1 As set out in the [DfE guidance](#) on the Equality Act 2010, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying).
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times).
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies).

5.2. In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the Trust will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing.
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information.
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying).
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular Protected Characteristics, identifying any issues or trends which could affect our own pupils.

6.0 FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

6.1 The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a Protected Characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of the Trust's curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other

curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.

- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we will also invite external speakers to contribute.
- Working with each school's local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. All pupils are encouraged to participate in each school's activities, such as sports clubs. Each school also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
- The Trust has developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about Protected Characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

7.0 EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN DECISION-MAKING

7.1. The Trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

7.2. The Trust always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

7.3. Each school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show that its equality duties have been actively considered. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

7.4. A school should not wait until after they have taken an action, made a decision or implemented a policy. It should consider equality implications before and during the process. This is often called the 'anticipatory nature of the duty'.

8.0 EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

8.1 This policy is supported by Equality Objectives, fulfilling our Specific Equality Duty. These objectives are reviewed every four years in line with this policy.

8.2. *Objective 1: Overarching Objective*

To ensure The Heights, Burnley is continually improving our inclusive practice detailed in the EPT Trust Inclusion Strategy.

8.3. *Objective 2:*

To improve attendance for disadvantaged pupils.

Why we have chosen this objective: we have identified that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to have lower attendance rates, which directly impacts their access to learning and contributes to widening educational gaps. By improving attendance, we aim to ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and benefit fully from the curriculum.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: extend targeted support for families such as Early Help Assessments, strengthen communication between school and home, and introduce early intervention strategies to address persistent absence. We will also provide incentives, pastoral support, and work closely with external agencies where needed.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

Attendance for disadvantaged pupils is beginning to improve, with increased engagement from families and a reduction in persistent absence. Monitoring systems are more robust, and targeted interventions are having a positive impact, although further work is needed to sustain and accelerate this progress.

9.0 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- 9.1 This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout all Trust schools.
- 9.2 The Trust will monitor the operation and effectiveness of arrangements referred to in this policy at each school.
- 9.3 The Trust will review this policy every four years in consultation with each school.
- 9.4 This policy will be approved by the Trust.

10.0 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- 10.1 This document links to the following policies:
 - Equality Policy
 - Dignity at Work Policy