



# Equality Statement

Policy Information	
Policy Owner	Executive Headteacher
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Approving Committee	
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<b>Review Actions</b>	
Review 1 – April 2025	Updates to content, format and grammar to include procedures and processes of reporting.

## Adoption of the Policy

This Policy has been adopted and reviewed by the Local Governance Committee of ACE Tiverton Special School, on behalf of the Trustees of Transforming Futures Trust.

Signed

Date: April 2025

**Introduction:** We are committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and well-being outcomes. You can view the policy and action plan here. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against students or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. The Act introduced requires all schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

Public Sector Equality Duty requires us a school to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The Two "specific duties" requires us to:

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

The action plan and statement demonstrate these two specific duties. 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.

Our Equality Statement is based on the principles above and aims to ensure that all students and members of staff of our School family are provided with opportunities to fulfil their potential whatever their sex, race, colour ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, ability, disability or religious belief.

Our Aims:

- To provide high quality education and support which meets the special educational and personal needs of pupils within the school through:
  - Working closely with each individual, identifying and developing strengths as well as tackling areas of development.
  - Establishing open and supportive relationships with parents.
  - Setting and monitoring learning targets which are challenging and achievable.
  - Taking a positive lead in the development of pupils' cultural, spiritual, moral and social development.
    - Enabling the pupil to take a measure of control and responsibility for her/his learning and be a partner in that process.
    - Empowering students to make positive, informed choices.
    - Promoting positive student achievement in all areas of school life.

- Providing a multi-disciplinary setting to provide curriculum access to a wide range of needs.

**Equality into Policy and Practice:** As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways.

**Admissions and Exclusions:** Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

- Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

**Equality in Teaching and Learning:** We provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. We do this by:

- Ensuring equality of access for all students and preparing them for life in a diverse society
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community without stereotyping
- Promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Providing opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seeking to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Utilising teaching approaches appropriate for the whole school population which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

The achievement of students will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

**Equal Opportunities for Staff:** All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability, in compliance with the law. We are keen to ensure that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

We do this by:

- Treating all those within the school community (e.g. students, staff, governors, parents and the community) as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experience.
- Creating and maintaining a school ethos which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices.
- Encouraging everyone in our school community to develop a positive self-image and high self-esteem by forging positive relationships.
- Having high expectations for everyone involved with the whole school community.
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing each other's similarities and differences and facing equalities issues openly and honestly.
- Monitoring and reviewing all the above to secure continuous improvement in all we do.

- Ensuring all elements of the school curriculum supports the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development of children and therefore encourages them to respect and value difference and diversity.

#### **Employer Duties:**

- As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.
- Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

#### **Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:**

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

#### **Our Equality Objectives are:**

- To promote cultural understanding and awareness of different cultures and beliefs.
- To monitor and promote the involvement of all groups of students in the life of the school, including leadership opportunities.
- To ensure personalised progress for all individual and groups of students; especially students eligible for free-school meals, looked after children and students from different heritage groups.
- To further improve accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access through technology and personalisation of curriculum.
- To monitor any use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by students in the school and put in place interventions to ensure this is targeted.

**Equality and the law:** There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2006).

**Race Equality:** This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- i. Eliminate racial discrimination.
- ii. Promote equality of opportunity.
- iii. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

#### **Under our specific duty we will:**

- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils.

- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

**Disability:** This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

**Definition of Disability:** The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) 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 DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Legal Duties:** The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them. Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

**Gender Equality:** The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment. Promote equality between men and women. Under our specific duty we will prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them.

**Sexual Orientation:** The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination

unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

**Community Cohesion:** The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

**Consultation and Involvement:** It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forum meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting.
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / INSET.
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school.
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Role of Trustees:** The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils. The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability. The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

**The role of the Head teacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities):** It is the Head teacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan, and they are supported by the governing body in doing so. It is the Head teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations. The Head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities. The Head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life. The Head teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

**The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching:** All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan. All staff will strive

to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images. All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the head teacher. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

**Tackling Discrimination:** 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 any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances. Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / head teacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the head teacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

### **What is a Discriminatory Incident?**

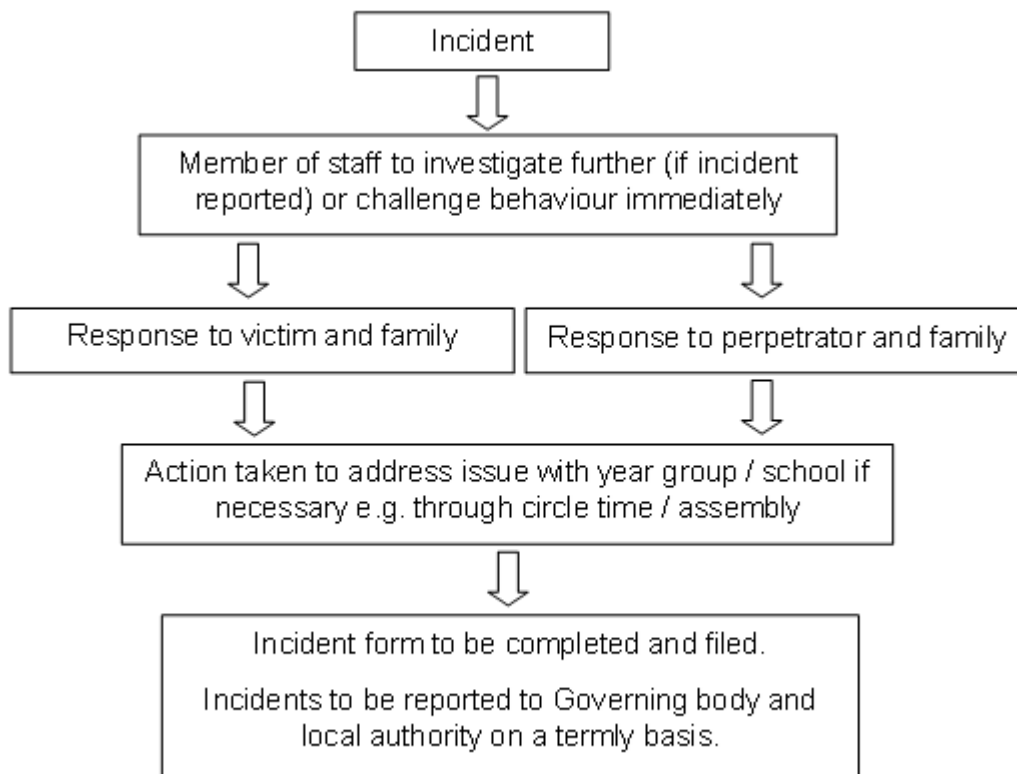
Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti. A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

**Types of Discriminatory Incident:** Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into school.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding To and Reporting Incidents**

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.



## Appendix A: Ensuring Equality of Opportunity and Participation

The school will ensure that:

- Pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed.
- All staff are aware of the school's Equality Plan.
- The talents of disabled pupils are recognised and represented in Gifted and Talented programmes, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender.
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school e.g. through involvement in the School Council (by election or co-option); class assemblies; fund raising etc;
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; PE and dance and assemblies.
- Extended school activities such as breakfast and after-school clubs take into account pupil needs and access issues and pupils attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status.
- Staff, pupils, parents and carers will continue to be involved in the future development of the Equality Plan through input and feedback from surveys, staff meetings, school council meetings, parents' evenings etc.

The School Will Provide:

- Extra and additional support for pupils who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal wellbeing, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts; that children with hearing impairment have an enhanced acoustic classroom environment.

- Additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs);
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the school to support wheelchair users).

### **Promoting Positive Attitudes and Meeting Needs:**

The school will:

- Promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the school and community in terms of race, gender and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display.
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the school and support them in their work and career development and try to reflect the diversity of the school community in its workforce.
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the governing body and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they can fully participate and contribute.
- Provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different schools and communities.
- Provide extended services, with opportunities for pupils, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups.
- Supporting disabled pupils in the period of transition between primary and secondary school to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings.
- Helping children and young people to understand others and value diversity.
- Promoting shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them.
- Developing skills of participation and responsible action – for example through the new ‘Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK’ strand of citizenship education.

### **Eliminating Discrimination and Harassment**

The school will:

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives.
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person’s race, gender or ethnicity.
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.
- Review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behaviour.

**Monitoring Impact:** The school will collect and analyse evidence and data on children’s achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement.

## **Appendix B: Check list for school staff and governors:**

- Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training? Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides?
- How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?
- Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- Are all pupils encouraged to participate in school life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the school's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / school council?
- Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis?
- Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your school community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- Does the school take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the school, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?

*Reviewed April 2025 – Review Due April 2028*