

Parkside Academy



Equality Policy

January 2016
(review January 2018)

Equality policy statement

Rationale

We, at Parkside Academy, are committed to eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advancing equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between different groups within the Academy and local community.

We recognise our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that no pupil, staff member, parent or carer or any other person through their contact with school receive less favourable treatment. This includes the protected characteristics identified within the Act of age*, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marriage or civil partnership and gender reassignment. *Age is not a protected characteristic in relation to pupils in a school.

We further recognise our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion alongside the duties described in the Prevent Duty 2015.

We believe that these duties are essential reflecting 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.

Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by six principles:

Principle 1: All members of the school community are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, their parents, carers and all members of staff, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity or orientation.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities do not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of the kinds of barrier 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 or orientation

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- 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 equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

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

Principle 5: We consult and involve widely so that our wider community may benefit

People affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life. We therefore consult and involve, as appropriate:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys.
- gay people as well as straight people.

Principle 6: 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

Ethos and organisation

We ensure the principles 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, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The Academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to earlier:

- 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.

*The Academy is fully aware of its role under the Prevent Duty 2015 to protect its pupils from radicalisation and extremism and has referral and support mechanisms in place (see Prevent Policy)

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, recorded and dealt with.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver appropriate curricula and lessons that reflect the principles above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

The Assistant Headteacher (Pupil Support), Mrs Sarah Robson, has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy whilst the Headteacher, Mrs Linda Davies, is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination or harassment.

The definition of harassment, in cases relating to employees, is that provided by ACAS: thus 'harassment is unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that individual'. Harassment and unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

Concerns and complaints

In the first instance, a senior member of staff should be informed. If issues or concerns remain unresolved, these should be raised in accordance with the Academy's Complaints Policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy is regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups and that there is no disadvantage to particular

sections of our community. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate. The named member of staff, Mrs S Robson, and the governor responsible for equality will monitor specific outcomes. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.