Diocese of Norwich
St Benet's
Multi Academy Trust

Happisburgh CE Primary Academy
St Mary's CE Primary Academy

Equality and Diversity Statutory Duties and Objectives

Policy Type:	**Trust Policy**
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Person Responsible:	**Chief Executive Officer**

Summary of Changes

Page Ref	Section	Amendment	Date of Change
Title	Title	Policy title updated to reflect the content	May 2021
5	Roles and Responsibilities	Paragraphs updated with new hyperlink to Trust website	Feb 2021
6	5 - Publishing Equality Objectives	Equality Objectives updated for 2020-21 as agreed by Trust Chair and CEO	Feb 2021
8	10 - Disseminating the Policy	Means of dissemination simplified to remove the need for paper copies	Feb 2021
	Throughout	Reviewed February 2023, no changes.	Feb 2023

Our Christian Ethos and Values
All policies within the St Benet's Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as "the Trust"), whether relating to an individual academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our Christian ethos and values.

Our academies are open to all and accepting of all regardless of faith. Our passion and ambition are to see children and young people in all our academies achieve excellent educational outcomes alongside developing and growing into their potential as individuals made in the image of God.

Our culture is one of high aspiration for all. This is rooted in our Christian values as demonstrated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We have a desire to see our academies acknowledged as places of aspiration, high quality learning, achievement and hope making a significant contribution to the communities they serve.

Overall accountabilities and roles
The Trust has overall accountability for all its academies and staff. Through a Scheme of Delegation for each academy it sets out the responsibilities of the Trust, its Executive Officers, the Local Governance Committee and the Principal / Head Teacher. The Principal / Head Teacher of each academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Trust.
All employees of the Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

1. Introduction

The St Benet's Multi Academy Trust Board is deeply committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and actively promotes this with its staff, governors, volunteers, pupils, parents/carers and all in the academy community.

All our academies are inclusive where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

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.

2. Scope

This policy encompasses the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Trust does not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination (see the section on linked policies for related policies).

3. Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles

- All learners, staff, trustees, governors and volunteers are of equal value and shall be enabled to develop to their full potential.
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.
- We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.
- We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.
- Equality is central to our academy's Christian ethos which follows the example of Jesus and the New Testament.
- We aim to support social justice and social mobility preparing pupils for life in a diverse society.

We will provide training, guidance and information to enable all in the academy community to play their part in the implementation of this policy.

4. The legal context

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 no-one should be discriminated against or treated less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity, age, marriage and civil partnerships.

The Act requires all public organisations, including Academy Trusts, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties:

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or "general duty"

This requires all public organisations, including Academy Trusts, to
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.

Two "specific duties"

This requires all public organisations, including Academy Trusts, to:
- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

We understand from time-to-time further legislation and guidance is published by Government and

relevant legal bodies and we will continually monitor and implement relevant policy and practice to ensure compliance.

Roles and Responsibilities

All directors, trustees, governors, staff, volunteers, pupils/students and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan.

In addition, the St Benet's Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Trust prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews an Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Duty.

Information on how St. Benet's is meeting these statutory duties can be found here: https://www.stbenets.org/about-us/model-policies/.

Each Local Governing Body is responsible for the implementation of this policy and will delegate the day-to-day operational responsibility to a named senior manager, usually the Executive Headteacher, in our federation this is Laura Watts.

Each academy will produce an Equality Impact Statement each year. The template for this can be found in **APPENDIX 1** and should be published on the academy website.

All visitors to the Academy, including volunteers, parents and carers, are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information to enable them to do this.

5. Publishing equality objectives

The objectives which we identify represent the Trust's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for the different groups. We produce equality data analysis which informs our discussions about the Equality Objectives, available here: https://www.stbenets.org/about-us/model-policies/.

Our Trust Equality Objectives for 2024-2025 are:

1. We will undertake a detailed review of all data supporting the Equalities Policy and related policies and identify the core data for:
   a. The Trust
   b. Each academy

2. To take action to advance equality of opportunity, and further move towards the eradication of prejudice-related bullying in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that there is an open culture of reporting and that every case is thoroughly investigated, and restorative approaches used to bring about behaviour changes.

3. We will take action to ensure we are an employer of choice with an active recruitment policy to recruit from under-represented groups and develop our equality profile of all staff to help us understand and address key equality issues in our workforce.

4. To monitor levels of parental and pupil engagement (especially the most disadvantaged) in learning and school life, across all activities to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. And then to ensure all pupils are given similar opportunities with regards to enriching extracurricular activities.

Our Federation Equality Objectives for 2025-2026 are:

1. To take action to advance equality of opportunity, and further move towards the eradication of prejudice-related bullying in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that there is an open culture of reporting and that every case is thoroughly investigated, and restorative approaches used to bring about behaviour changes.
2. To monitor levels of parental and pupil engagement (especially the most disadvantaged) in learning and school life, across all activities to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. And then to ensure all pupils are given similar opportunities with regards to enriching extracurricular activities.
3. To raise awareness of aims and objectives of policy by sharing with staff and the wider community. Provide further staff training in all aspects of equality & diversity to support staff understanding and awareness, introduce all aspects of statutory RSHE into the PSHE curriculum and continue to build a shared understanding of this work with parents/carers so they can support this at home.
4. To promote and celebrate diversity, as well as challenging and addressing misconceptions of stereotypes, throughout all aspects of our curriculum.
5. To ensure that the school promotes role models and heroes that young people positively identify with, who reflect and broaden the school's diversity in terms of race, gender and disability etc:
6. Ensure tolerance and respect towards individuals who identify with any of the protected characteristics:
   - Ensure regular analysis of any negative behaviour incidents to identify any patterns related to protected characteristics, e.g. racism, and ensure any necessary action is taken to mitigate this, e.g. further education, involvement of parents/carers etc.
   - Utilise collective worship to promote equality and diversity and to tackle issues of discrimination or oppression for any protected groups

- Provide Mental Health and Wellbeing support to all children, and those who identify as needing additional support
- Respond to world news/current affairs issues (related to any individuals/protected characteristics) through assemblies (Picture News) or PSHE sessions
- Continue to promote the school's position regarding equality through communication channels with parents/carers so that there is a shared appreciation of diversity and/or British Values

These objectives will be reviewed annually.

We note also that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

6. What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our students and the way we provide access for students to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils / students – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled students and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Executive Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We 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.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the Academy

- We actively promote equality and diversity though the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- We ensure that our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.
- The Academy's Behaviour Management Policy takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for students with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from Academy for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.
- The Academy challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

7. What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- We know the needs of our pupils very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our admissions meetings.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support Academy improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.
- We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able".
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.
- We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.
- We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of students with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the Academy's Equality Objectives.

8. What we are doing to foster good relations

- We work closely and openly with parents/carers.
- We communicate and engage with a variety of community groups including the local Church.
- We enable employers and other groups to work with pupils in the academy to broaden and deepen their educational experience.
- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and SRE 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
- Working with our 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
- We communicate and engage with a variety of community groups including the local church
- We develop links with other schools in our cluster and locally

9. Monitoring and reviewing the objectives

The Trust reviews and updates the equality objectives every two years. We will publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the Trust website.

10. Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available:

- On the Trust and academy websites.
- As part of induction for new staff.

11. Monitoring and reviewing the policy

The Trust Board annually evaluates the success of the Trust's equalities work and will review the whole policy every three years.

12. Links to other policies

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, see APPENDIX 2, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in other aspects of academy life such as the Academy Improvement and Development plan, web sites, newsletters and other policies e.g.

- Anti-bullying Policy (Pupils)
- Staff Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- SEND Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Accessibility Plan

APPENDIX 1

St Benet's MAT Public Sector Equality Duty Statement (over 150 Employees)

1. Introduction

1.1 This document describes how the St Benet's MAT Board intends to fulfil its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty with regard to its workforce. The Equality Objectives will be part of the St Benet's Business Plan and information will be published on the appropriate page of the St. Benet's website.

1.2 We will have due regard to the need to:

- 1.2.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- 1.2.2 Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- 1.2.3 Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

1.3 We will collect and use equality information to help us to:

- 1.3.1 Identify key issues.
- 1.3.2 Understand the impact of our policies, practices and decisions on people with different protected characteristics, and thereby plan them more effectively.
- 1.3.3 Assess whether we are discriminating unlawfully when carrying out any of our functions.
- 1.3.4 Identify what the key equality issues are for our organisation.

1.4 Assess performance:

- 1.4.1 Benchmark our performance and processes against those of similar organisations, nationally or locally.

1.5 Take action:

- 1.5.1 Consider taking steps to meet the needs of staff who share relevant protected characteristics.
- 1.5.2 Identify if there are any actions we can take to avoid discrimination and harassment, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.
- 1.5.3 Make informed decisions about policies and practices which are based on evidence about the impact of our activities on equality.
- 1.5.4 Develop equality objectives to meet the specific duties.
- 1.5.5 Have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty by ensuring that staff have appropriate information for decision-making.

1.6 We will work towards developing an equality profile of staff to help us to understand key equality issues in our workforce, including any evidence of pay gaps or 'occupational segregation' i.e. staff with certain protected characteristics being over-represented in particular roles, for example, women as cleaners, or at certain grades. In addition, we note that it is likely to be useful to collect and consider information, appropriately disaggregated, about:

- 1.6.1 Recruitment and promotion.
- 1.6.2 Numbers of part-time and full-time staff.

1.6.3 Pay and remuneration.
1.6.4 Training.
1.6.5 Return to work of women on maternity leave.
1.6.6 Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disability.
1.6.7 Appraisals.
1.6.8 Grievances (including about harassment).
1.6.9 Disciplinary action (including for harassment).
1.6.10 Dismissals and other reasons for leaving.

2. Publication of Equality Information

2.1 We will publish relevant, proportionate information which is broad enough to give a full picture of performance across our trust. We will demonstrate how we have used this information to have due regard to all three aims of the duty, for all relevant protected characteristics. Our information will usually fall into two main categories:

2.1.1 Information to identify equality issues. Examples of this include equality monitoring information about employees, information about the effect of our activities on people with different protected characteristics or any engagement we may have carried out.

2.1.2 Information about steps taken to have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty. For example, any records we have about how we had due regard in making certain decisions, information that was considered in that decision-making (including engagement), consideration of steps to mitigate adverse impacts, or details of policies to address equality concerns.

2.2 We note that the Equalities and Human Rights Commission would normally expect to see the following information:

2.2.1 The race, disability, gender and age distribution of our workforce at different grades, and whether they are full or part-time.
2.2.2 An indication of the likely representation on sexual orientation and religion and belief, provided that no-one can be identified as a result.
2.2.3 An indication of any issues for transsexual staff, based on engagement with transsexual staff or equality organisations.
2.2.4 Gender pay gap information.
2.2.5 Information about occupational segregation.
2.2.6 Grievance and dismissal information for people with relevant protected characteristics.
2.2.7 Complaints about discrimination and other prohibited conduct from staff.
2.2.8 Details and feedback of engagement with staff and trade unions.
2.2.9 Quantitative and qualitative research with employees, e.g. staff surveys.
2.2.10 Records of how we have had due regard to the aims of the duty in decision-making with regard to our employment, including any assessments of impact on equality and any evidence used.
2.2.11 Details of policies and programmes that have been put into place to address equality concerns raised by staff and trade unions.

APPENDIX 2

St Benet's MAT – Equality & Diversity Policy Process

