

Equality Plan

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Our equality vision and the values that underpin school life across our schools

The IMAT Vision and Aims

Inspiring and nurturing our children and their community to be the very best that they can be.

The Inclusive Multi Academy Trust was established in 2016 with a vision to inspire and nurture our children and their community to be the very best that they can be. We are a group of primary schools that work in partnership to ensure higher standards for our children whilst maintaining our own identities. We are a non-competitive MAT where each school has an obligation to support the betterment of every child in the Trust through collaboration at all levels. The MAT leadership team is focused on continuous school improvement and is driven by outstanding leadership to ensure better financial value, provision and resourcing. Our schools all share the belief that a nurturing approach is key to success and much of what we do is underpinned by this. Happy children and happy staff thrive and that is what we strive to achieve.

The Trust consists of three schools: Beechfield, Cherry Tree and Laurance Haines who work together to share specialist best practice and work collaboratively to support and challenge each other. All three schools are situated within a mile of each other and of Watford town centre, which has excellent transport links to Central London/major airports and the M25 and M1. Each school is richly diverse and children with different languages, cultures and religions learn together in harmony. Our Trust ethos is a nurturing one; we put the mental health and wellbeing of our children, parents and staff at the centre of this. We know that this approach leads to well rounded, happy children who strive to achieve their best in all aspects of school life.

We actively seek to eradicate all discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ability, religious or cultural background, sexual orientation or appearance. Although this list of the areas of potential discrimination is wide-ranging, it is not exhaustive and incidents of discrimination on any other grounds will be taken equally seriously.

We are fully committed to these principles and we have identified practical priorities and plans of specific action in order to promote equality in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age and socio-economic circumstances.

In fulfilling our legal obligations, we are guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, 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.

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 must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in 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
- Transgender, support and protect people who are questioning their identity

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 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.
- Respecting the dignity of transgendered people, and an absence of harassment or bias.

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, transgender and 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 our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.
- transgender and cisgender people

School Uniform

The same School uniform guidelines apply equally to all pupils, irrespective of their gender, transgender, race, disability, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare.

2: School Context

The characteristics of our schools

Please refer to the individual school local equality statements for school context.

3: Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme

Our Trust is committed to meeting its public sector equality duties (PSED) as detailed below.

1.1 Our General Duty under the Equality Act 2010:

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Specific Duties of the Act enable schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The specific duties require schools to:

- Publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- Each school, to set every four years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for the schools provisions are:

- Age (for staff only)
- disability
- ethnicity and race
- gender (sex)
- gender identity and reassignment

- pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for staff only)

Disability

The disability provisions in this Act are different from those for other protected characteristics in a number of ways, including a more complex definition of what constitutes discrimination. Schools may, and often must, treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils by making reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled pupil can benefit from what they offer to the same extent that a pupil without a disability can.

The schools in the Inclusive Multi-Academy Trust implement their individual accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Provision for disabled pupils is closely linked with the existing provisions for pupils with special educational needs. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010. We will provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. However this duty is not due to come into effect until a later date, following further consultation.

An Inclusive Curriculum

Our schools deliver an inclusive curriculum which supports good practice in educating pupils about equality and diversity. It contributes to the schools' ethos in providing a fun, engaging and varied curriculum through:

- teaching and curriculum provision that supports high standards of attainment, promotes common values, and builds pupils' understanding of the diversity that surrounds them
- lessons across the curriculum that promote common values and help pupils to value differences and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- a programme of curriculum-based activities whereby pupils' understanding of community and diversity is enriched through fieldwork, visits and meetings with members of different communities
- teaching strategies for pupils for whom English is an additional language to enable them to achieve at the highest possible level in English.

The school curriculum supports the development of personal, social and cultural identities in all pupils, teaches pupils respect and value for diversity and celebrates cultural diversity

4: Roles and Responsibilities and Publish Information

1.2 Commitment to action

The Inclusive Multi-Academy Trust, supported by the Headteachers and Local Governing Committee from each of the schools, are responsible for ensuring the implementation of this plan.

The headteachers from each school retain the overall responsibility for ensuring that their specific action plan is delivered effectively. All staff across the schools are responsible for delivering the plan both as employees and as it relates to their area of work.

Responsibility for	Key person
Trust Equality Plan	IMAT
Disability equality (including bullying incidents)	Headteachers and Pastoral Leads
SEN/LDD (including bullying incidents)	Pastoral Leads/IMAT SENCo
Accessibility	Headteachers, Site Manager and SENCo
Gender equality (including bullying incidents)	Headteachers and Pastoral Leads
Race equality (including racist incidents)	Headteachers and Pastoral Leads
Equality and diversity in curriculum content	Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Pastoral Leads
Equality and diversity in pupil achievement	Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, phase leaders
Equality and diversity – behaviour and exclusions	Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Pastoral Leads
Participation in all aspects of school life	Senior Leadership Teams
Impact assessment	Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers, Local Governing Committee
Stakeholder consultation	Headteachers, Pastoral Leads and IMAT SENCo
Policy review	IMAT
Communication and publishing	IMAT

Commitment to review and publish

The IMAT Equality Plan will be reflected in the individual School Plans. Its implementation will be monitored within the school's self-evaluation and other review processes. Each school is committed to reviewing, publishing and updating the action plans, which are published on their school website. The Equality Plan is published on each schools' website and on the IMAT website. Paper copies and translations will be available from the office upon request.

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:

Pupils' Attitudes, Values and Personal Development

In the Trust we celebrate diversity and make sure that we:

- Enable our pupils and staff to develop a critical awareness of diversity and equality
- Enable our pupils and staff to have the confidence and skills to challenge instances of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination
- Equip our pupils and staff to understand that reason, logic and sensitivity have to underpin the means of resolving arguments and conflicts
- Ensure a willingness by pupils and staff to learn from different cultures, backgrounds, faiths and beliefs
- Recognise the importance of language to a person's sense of identity and belonging and consider pupils' language abilities as a teaching and learning resource and a strength
- Ensure that pupils have the opportunity to receive the support and guidance they need on an individual basis and take account of the personal and cultural needs specific to that individual
- Ensure that pupils have the skills to communicate effectively (including the ability to listen and discuss) and to defend their own opinions.

Teaching and Learning

We ensure that:

- Teaching methods and styles take full account of the needs of pupils' background experiences
- Teaching methods encourage positive attitudes to difference, cultural diversity and equality
- The diversity of cultures and backgrounds represented in the school is seen as a positive resource for teaching and learning
- All pupils are fully aware that staff have very high expectations of them and are continually challenged to reach higher standards
- A positive ethos of mutual respect and trust is fostered amongst pupils and staff, in which all members of the school community feel valued and safe
- Classrooms and other common spaces in the school, where work is displayed present positive and challenging images that are non-stereotypical and reflect the multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural society and world
- Learning is a collaborative and co-operative enterprise.

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.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff from discrimination on the grounds of gender, transsexual status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with a person who is not disabled. This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures.

We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators. We will provide regular training for staff to enable them to deal effectively with any discriminatory incidents.

5: Engagement – Participation and Involvement

Involving our learners, parents/carers and other stakeholders

Trustees welcome the participation and involvement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities. Trustees are committed to encouraging the Local Governing Committees to contribute to the development and review of all policies and practices affecting the life of the school and its impact within the wider community. Each school consults stakeholders including local governing committee members, staff, pupils, parents and others with particular interests to contribute to the Action Plans.

6: Using information

Equality Impact Assessments, data and other information

Equality Impact Assessments support the schools to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help the schools to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life. The schools collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender. We value more qualitative information which may be given to us through a variety of mechanisms. We conduct student voice activities such as anti-bullying questionnaires. The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action. We use data termly to assess the progress of vulnerable groups. Teachers analyse their in year data and highlight in pupil progress meeting vulnerable groups or vulnerable pupils. The headteachers analyse data and report to the Local Governing Committee and the Herts Improvement Partner. Behaviour incidents regarding discrimination and equality

issues are recorded on SIMS and dealt with promptly by the SLT. For specific procedures please refer to IMAT/schools policies (Behaviour policy, Anti-Bullying policy and Inclusion policy).

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