



**Batley** Multi Academy Trust

# **Our Trust approach to Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity**

**Batley Multi Academy Trust**

**Approved by:** Board of Trustees

**Ratified:** September 2023

**New Trust policy:** September 2023

**Next review due by:** September 2025

**Reviewed by:** CEO

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Batley Multi Academy Trust (“the Trust”) is committed to equity, valuing diversity and inclusivity and actively supports practices that promote genuine equity of opportunity and inclusivity for all staff and young people across our family of schools.
- 1.2 The Trust is committed to promoting a positive and diverse culture in which all staff and young people are valued and supported to fulfil their potential, irrespective of any protected characteristic.
- 1.3 The Trust recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to promoting the equity and diversity of all those we work with, especially our employees, young people and visitors. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and its subsequent provisions.
- 1.4 The following groups have been identified as key recipients in terms of the implementation of this policy:
- Children Looked After or Children in Need
  - SEND
  - Children at risk of exclusion
  - Children missing in education
  - Children with medical conditions affecting attendance at school
  - Are young carers
  - Children within, or at risk of joining, the criminal justice system
  - Children with mental health issues
  - Children in receipt of free school meals
  - Children living in areas of deprivation
  - Are gender questioning or going through transition
  - Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
- 1.5 This policy and all associated procedures apply to all staff (including volunteers and young people on placement), young people and visitors at our schools and should be read in conjunction with the following policies (of which may be school-specific):
- SEND
  - Admissions
  - Uniform
  - Behaviour
  - Suspensions and exclusions
  - Complaints
  - Employment policies
  - Accessibility plan
- 1.6 Failure to comply with these policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action. Discriminatory treatment, bullying or harassment of staff or young people by visitors will also not be tolerated.

## **2 Compliance**

2.1 This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces previous policies relating to race, gender and disability equality. It has been designed to help the Trust meet the public sector equality duty to:

2.1.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

2.1.2 Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2.1.3 Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2.2 The Equality Act 2010 defines nine protected characteristics:

- Age (as an employer but not applicable to young people)
- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

2.3 Staff, Trustees and layers of local governance will:

- Actively promote equality of opportunity in all areas of school life.
- Ensure that members of each school community know their rights, and respect the rights of others.
- Aim to ensure that prejudice or discrimination in all its forms is actively rejected.
- Raise awareness of equality issues for all members of each school community, and through our links with the local community.
- Establish strategies to ensure equal access to the curriculum and enable each individual to fulfil their potential regardless of the protected characteristics.
- Adhere to the Batley Ethical Leadership Charter.

2.4 Equity and diversity principles based on the above aims will be embedded in our daily practices, policies and the processes of decision-making, including:

- Admissions, induction and attendance.
- Young peoples' progress and achievement.
- Young peoples' personal development and wellbeing, particularly in relation to safeguarding.
- Parent/carer involvement.
- Working with the wider community.
- Behaviour management.

- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development.
- Curriculum access and participation.
- Teaching styles and strategies.

### **3 Publication of Information and Equality Objectives**

- 3.1 The Trust acknowledges its legal duties to publish information on compliance with the three strands of the public sector equality duty and, in addition, to publish specific and measurable equality objectives.
- 3.2 The Trust will work across its family of schools to analyse data and existing practices to set out the actions taken in compliance of the equality duty and to inform the setting of relevant equality objectives to support the development of each school and its community. These will be set out in each school's Accessibility Plan.
- 3.3 The information on the equality duty will be updated annually and the objectives every 4 years. Each Accessibility Plan is published on each Trust school's website and these plans highlight the school's equality objectives.

### **4 Roles and responsibilities**

- 4.1 The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for this policy and for ensuring compliance. The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all equity, diversity and inclusivity matters at each school is the Headteacher.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to:
- Treat colleagues, young people and visitors with dignity and respect; and avoid behaving in any manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
  - Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality, equity and diversity.
  - Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities.
  - Report any issues associated with equality, equity and diversity in accordance with this policy.

### **5 Duty to make reasonable adjustments**

- 5.1 The Trust will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments where there is a need to ensure that a person with a disability has the same access to everything as a person without a disability has, as far as is reasonable. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by those with a disability as far as is reasonable.
- 5.2 The duty to make reasonable adjustments covers all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, classroom organisation and timetabling, access to facilities, clubs and visits, sports and policies.

- 5.3 In making reasonable adjustments, the Trust is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for young people with disabilities. Staff will carefully consider any proposals made by parents/carers and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.
- 5.4 The Trust will monitor the physical features of each school premises to make these as accessible as practically possible.
- 5.5 Parents/carers should notify the Headteacher in writing if they are aware or suspect that their child has a disability and provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information about their child's disability upon request. Providing such information will enable the school to support the young person as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. Every school will have due regard to any request made by a parent/carer or young person (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of an individual's disability as confidential.

## **6 Admissions policy**

Admissions criteria are defined under the Trust's Admissions policy and are applied consistently to every young person, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

## **7 Religious Beliefs**

The Trust respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, young people and parents/carers, and each school will comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice wherever possible. An example where a request may be refused is if the religious observance takes place during lesson time. Whilst the school will explore other ways to accommodate the request, such as amended timetabling, this may not always be possible.

## **8 Curriculum delivery**

- 8.1 The curriculum is crucial to tackling inequalities for young people including gender stereotyping, preventing bullying and raising attainment for certain groups. The principles of equity and diversity are embedded in our academic and social curriculum. Positive and proactive steps will be taken to prevent discrimination against, or victimisation of, any young person in the provision of education or access to any benefit, facility or service including educational trips, work experience and leisure activities.
- 8.2 The Trust recognises and promotes awareness of the possibility of bias (for example gender or racial), and work to eliminate such bias in both teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum to avoid stereotypes and bias.

- 8.3 The Trust may take positive action to give young people of a particular racial group, or young people with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the needs of the young people in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.
- 8.4 All young people are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other young people, irrespective of any protected characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the Trust, and young people are encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

## **9 Suspensions and Exclusions policy**

The decision to suspend a young person for a fixed period or permanently exclude is a last resort and will be made in accordance with the relevant policy. That policy applies to all young people and any suspension decision will take into account our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## **10 Gender Identity**

- 10.1 The Trust is mindful of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 towards young people identifying as transgender and non-binary. In respect of young people identifying as transgender or non-binary, the Trust will be sensitive to their individual needs whilst also recognising the needs and sensitivities of other young people. Young people who have confirmed that they have commenced the process of transitioning, and therefore fall under the protected characteristic of gender-reassignment will be provided with appropriate pastoral care and support.

## **11 Recruitment and selection**

- 11.1 All employees, whether part-time, full-time, temporary or permanent will be treated fairly and equally. We will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Selections will be made on the basis of aptitude, ability and/or merit, where appropriate.
- 11.2 Where appropriate, the Trust will endeavour to make all reasonable and effective adjustments during the recruitment and selection process. Where recruitment and selection is carried out by a third party, on behalf of the Trust, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure they adhere to the principles of this policy.

## **12 Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination and harassment**

All incidents of discriminatory treatment, bullying and harassment must be reported to senior staff and recorded as soon as is reasonably possible (and in any event within 24 hours of the incident). All bullying-related incidents (confirmed or otherwise), will be addressed in accordance with our HR policies.

## **13 Complaints and grievances**

If an individual believes that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised, they are asked to follow our complaints or grievance procedure (as appropriate).

## **14 Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review**

14.1 The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this 'Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy' in each school is the Headteacher.

14.2 Additional support would also be provided to any parent/carer or significant person, wishing to know more about the policy and procedures outlined above. A copy of this policy document is available for inspection on each school's premises during office hours and an electronic copy is posted on each school's website.

14.3 The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle by a representative working party consisting of the following stakeholders:

- Young people
- Parents/carers
- Staff
- Local Governance
- Trustees
- Community representatives

14.4 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored via an assessment of progress against the targets identified in each school's Accessibility Plan together with stakeholder views. Following this, recommendations will be made for changes to the policy and action planning for the future to continue to improve the culture of equity, diversity and inclusion for all within the Trust.