



Equal Opportunities Policy

SEPTEMBER 2023

VERSION 2.0

CONCORDIA MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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1. Document Control

Amendment History

Version No.	Date	Comments
1.2	16.08.22	Review
2	September 2023	Annual review with minor changes

Review Dates

Next Review Date
September 2024

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Name	Role
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2. Introduction and Legislation

Within Concordia Multi Academy Trust we recognise the need to celebrate and value the diversity of society as we prepare our children to contribute to life now and in the future.

Equality of opportunity for all our children and the staff, who work within our Trust, is an essential principle. Every person matters within our schools and will be given every opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.

We seek to ensure that our schools respect the individuality of all pupils, employees, Representatives of the Local Academy Board, Trustees and visitors irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or background, thus upholding the Trust's commitment to provide a service which ensures equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination for all.

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

[The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination.

[The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives.

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#). It also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Our Legal Duties Legislation relating to equality and discrimination is laid out in the Equality Act 2010 as protective characteristics (see appendix 1).

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies.

- ◁ Accessibility plan
- ◁ Admissions policy
- ◁ Equality Information and Objectives Statement
- ◁ Complaints Procedures and Policy
- ◁ Grievance Policy
- ◁ Data Protection Policy
- ◁ Flexible working policy
- ◁ Pupil and Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policies
- ◁ Special Educational Need and Disability Policy

3. Aims

Our Aims

Our Trust aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having regard to the need to:

- ⦿ Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- ⦿ Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- ⦿ Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

How we achieve intend to achieve our aims

- ⦿ Promoting the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education we provide in our schools
- ⦿ We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no child or adult is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion, sexual orientation, race or any other protected characteristic.
- ⦿ Ensuring that all our children have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school/Trust
- ⦿ All applications to join the school, whatever background or special needs that a child may have, are encouraged to join the school
- ⦿ Constantly striving to remove any forms of indirect discrimination or prohibited conduct that may form barriers to learning
- ⦿ Providing positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all
- ⦿ Challenging stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs (e.g. – when talking about gender identities/gender roles)
- ⦿ Celebrating the cultural diversity of our wider community and show respect for all minority groups
- ⦿ Being aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance
- ⦿ Ensuring that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Role of the Headteacher

- ◁ To promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- ◁ To implement the school's Equality policy supported by the Local Academy Board and in conjunction with the Trust policy
- ◁ To ensure all staff are aware of the Trust policy on Equal Opportunities, and that the staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- ◁ To ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.
- ◁ To ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities
- ◁ To promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and involve the SENDCO in curriculum development
- ◁ To promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life, e.g. through assemblies and displays around school
- ◁ To treat all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness
- ◁ To monitor the success in achieving the objectives and report back to the LAB
- ◁ To report incidents and keep accurate records and information

The Role of the Class Teacher and other school staff

- ◁ To ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect
- ◁ To pay due regard, when selecting teaching materials, to sensitivities of all members of the class and not to provide material which is racist or sexist in nature
- ◁ Strive to provide material that gives positive images of all ethnic minorities and that challenge stereotypical images of minority groups
- ◁ When planning and delivering the curriculum, to use this policy to guide them, both in the choice of study themes and in how to approach sensitive issues
- ◁ Actively support all support staff in challenging incidents of prejudice or racism, encouraging them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination
- ◁ To know that bullying or name calling is not tolerated and to report any incidents to the Head teacher immediately informing them of actions taken to enable them to make a decision on next steps
- ◁ Track and monitor any instances of discrimination and deal with these in a consistent manner, making a report to the headteacher as necessary and following up with pupils as required.

The Role of Trustees

We have set out our commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and we will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the Trust community are treated fairly and with equality.

Our Trustees will:

- ◁ Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated directly to schools
- ◁ Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- ◁ Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives to the Local Academy Boards

The role of Local Academy Board (LAB) Representatives:

- ◁ Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- ◁ Follow Trust wide processes and complete the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion proforma (see Guide to Local Governance) and share with the whole LAB board
- ◁ Meet with the designated member of staff for equality or the Headteacher twice a year and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- ◁ Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- ◁ Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- ◁ Report back to the Local Academy Board regarding any issues

The role of Pupils

Pupils will

- Not discriminate or harass any other pupil or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the head of year or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

5. Fostering Good Relations

Our schools aim to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of the curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) 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
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and carefully chosen external speakers may be invited to contribute
- Schools work with their local community. This may include inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, each school council is encouraged to have representatives from different year groups and to be formed with pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs and other extra-curricular clubs. Schools also work with parents/carers to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- Schools are encouraged to develop links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, to help inform and develop our approach.

6. Equality of Opportunity

Racial Equality

We strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination. Should an alleged racist incident occur it is investigated immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident. We also do all we can to support the victim, and if necessary, their families too, in overcoming any difficulties they may have. Any incidents involving racial abuse or language, will be recorded onto our safeguarding reporting platform (CPOMS) and tagged for future reference and monitored by leaders.

Sexual Orientation, gender identity and gender equality

All schools within the Trust teach about Relationship, Health and Sex Education.

Parents and carers are informed each year the content and have the opportunity to discuss the content of the lesson with the class teacher or senior leadership team (see RHSE policy and plan). Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the elements of sex education that are not on the national curriculum. Our schools have followed statutory requirements and consulted with parents/carers.

Through the teaching of PSHE, our schools talk about different types of relationships and family set-ups and seek to address misconceptions that children may have. They use the correct, agreed vocabulary when discussing LGBTQ, both in class, through the curriculum and during assemblies. Through using resources/opportunities, in particular from No Outsiders, children learn about the need for equality and inclusion of trans, non-binary as well as Cis people, i.e. –inclusion regardless of gender identity. Within our Trust there are infant and primary schools, so teaching is age appropriate.

Curriculum

Through our PSHE and citizenship teaching (overview on school websites) schools provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. They do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs.

Religious Beliefs

Within our Trust, we recognise that people can face discrimination because of attitudes in society towards the faith communities to which they belong. In Britain, we acknowledge that faith-based hate crime has been on the increase in recent years; in our local area, this has not been an issue. We follow the locally agreed RE syllabuses, or a syllabus of similar nature and content, and the programme of teaching is available on school's websites.

The Trust also recognises that a person's religious (or similar) beliefs may mean that they have different needs, demands and expectations, which require flexibility.

Disability

To be read in conjunction with the school local offer and accessibility plan

Reasonable adjustments:

The schools are required to improve access to the curriculum, our buildings and our other services to disabled people. This also means that they need to take a proactive stance and anticipate what may be needed in the future for disabled users. To enable all children to access the curriculum:

- ◁ School visits are planned accordingly and individual children's needs are risk assessed
- ◁ If necessary, staff allow for the additional time required by some disabled pupils to access tasks e.g. use equipment in practical work
- ◁ Staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education
- ◁ Teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils
- ◁ Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation
- ◁ Accessibility plan is produced
- ◁ 1:1 teaching assistants work with a range of children with complex needs and seek advice from the SENDCO and external agencies to support them appropriately

School buildings are maintained to high standards and meet the needs of all pupils within the current classes. Any further adjustment requirements should be made to the COO and they will process and make adjustments as required.

Schools have:

- ◁ Areas to which pupils, staff and visitors have access and are well lit
- ◁ Emergency and evacuation systems are set up to inform ALL pupils, including pupils with SEN and disability.
- ◁ Alarms with both visual and auditory components would be considered if a child was admitted with such needs.

7. Tracking and monitoring of Vulnerable Pupils

Within our Trust we work hard to ensure that all pupils, no matter what their protected characteristic, additional or special needs, have the opportunity to progress and develop academically and socially.

Children on the SEND register receive individual targets written in conjunction with parents/carers and any other agencies e.g. SALT. Most pupils on the SEND register have a pupil profile which is updated each term with targets linked to longer term outcomes. The SENDCO in our schools closely monitors the delivery of intervention programmes across all key stages within the school and liaises with class teachers, support staff and parent/carers to ensure the highest standard of provision. Provision and support are tailored to support the requirements of the pupils and the provision is closely monitored by the Local Academy Board and leadership team, as well as reported to Trustees.

Children with English as an additional language are welcomed into our schools. Pupils in receipt of pupil premium are tracked and provided with additional support to enable them to reach their full potential.

Schools carry out internal analysis of groups of pupils and use this to identify any areas for improvement for specific groups and to inform future planning.

Schools report termly to the Local Academy Board on incidents of bullying (including homophobic, transphobic, racial and any other type of bullying). This information is shared with the Trustee Board by the CEO.

8. Collecting and using information

The Trust will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- ◁ Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in teaching methods.
- ◁ Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally.
- ◁ Taking action, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics.

The Trust will build an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime. The Trust will obtain the following information from their staff:

- ◁ Recruitment and promotion
- ◁ Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- ◁ Pay and remuneration
- ◁ Training
- ◁ Return to work of women on maternity leave
- ◁ Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities
- ◁ Appraisals
- ◁ Grievances (including about harassment)
- ◁ Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- ◁ Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

If requested the Trust will provide the statutory information required with regards to equality responsibilities, i.e. information about gender pay gap? or the fair treatment in the application of pay policies

9. Appendix 1 – Protective Characteristics

- ◁ **Age** - A person of a particular age or a range of ages. Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work. The admission of pupils out of their chronological age is considered on an individual basis and we would work alongside the admissions teams and other external agencies as appropriate.
- ◁ **Disability** - A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (see accessibility plan and SEN local offer on the website). It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. Long-term illnesses such as HIV and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.
- ◁ **Gender reassignment** - 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people who identify as a different gender to the one they were assigned at birth. Non-binary (people who feel both male and female or feel like neither gender) will also be treated equally in our school community. 'Intersex' is not covered by the Act but the school will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as all other children.
- ◁ **Marriage and civil partnership** – Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.
- ◁ **Pregnancy and maternity** - Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.
- ◁ **Race** - A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies as well as White British people.
- ◁ **Religion and belief** - Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination does not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum-based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.
- ◁ **Sex** - A man or a woman.
- ◁ **Sexual orientation** - A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school environment as it is in a secondary school. For example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary school or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils.

10. Appendix 2 Trust wide Equality Objectives 2023 - 2027

- To narrow any gaps in attainment for pupils with additional needs, disadvantaged or with any protective characteristic
- To continue to develop and promote greater understanding and acceptance of the protective characteristics including LGBTQ
- To ensure that all pupils are encouraged to participate in visits, residential and after school/extra-curricular activities and provide analysis at school level
- To analyse attendance data annually, at both school and trust level, to demonstrate how pupils with different characteristics are performing (SEND and ethnicity) – end of July 2024
- To analyse attainment data annually, at both school and trust level, to demonstrate how pupils with different characteristics are performing – end of July 2024
- To undertake an analysis of recruitment data and trends regarding race, gender and disability and report to the People committee – end of July 2024
- To carry out an ethnicity review of personnel working within the Trust workforce including a gender review analysis – end of July 2024
- All members of staff and LAB/Trustees that are involved in recruitment and selection to attend training on equal opportunities and non-discrimination – end of July 2024