



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

EQUALITY POLICY

MARCH 2016

LGB Process Completed:	
Date ratified at Trust Board:	
Signature of Chair:	
Author/Reviewer:	

Introduction

Mercia Learning Trust has developed this Equality Statement to help us to meet our Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act's provisions cover all aspects of school life such as the treatment of:

- students and prospective students
- parents and carers
- employees
- local community

The Equality Act 2010 has simplified anti-discrimination laws by having a single equality Act. This makes it easier for people to understand and comply with the law. The 2010 Act has also strengthened protection in some situations.

The act covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The Equality Act makes it unlawful to treat someone differently, either through direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and by failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

Since 6 April 2011 all public bodies including:

- local authorities
- Schools, colleges and other state-funded educational settings including academies

have been bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Age applies to a school as an employer, but not with regard to the treatment of students and prospective students.

We are bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity; and
- (c) foster good relations

The general duty is supported by specific duties, these are to:

- Publish information which demonstrates our compliance with the duty to have due regard for the three aims of the general duty and to annually repeat this.
- Prepare and publish our specific and measurable objectives to achieve the three aims of the duty and undertake this no later than in four years time.

Leadership

Within our school all **staff and Governors** at the school are responsible for ensuring the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Eliminating harassment and bullying

The school will not tolerate any form of harassment and bullying of students or our staff

Training

We will provide relevant training by using all suitable delivery methods.

Procurement and Contractors

We will take steps to ensure that contractors working at the school operate within the requirements of our Equality Statement.

Visitors to the School

We will take steps to ensure that all visitors to our school including parents act within the requirements of our Equality Statement.

Publishing the Statement

We will publish our statement on our website, making paper copies available on request.

Reporting our progress

We will report progress against the Duty through our regular reporting mechanisms. All policies to be reviewed using the Equality Act Toolkit to ensure compliance.

Reviewing and Revising the Equality Statement

We will review and revise the Statement no later than four years from publication of this statement.

How we will meet the General Duty & Specific Duty

We are required to meet the three aims under the General Duty as set out by the Equality Act 2010 and our approach ie information and objectives set out in Annex 1 and 2.

Annex 1

Equalities Information

We have reviewed how we currently perform as a school in the context of the requirements of the General Duty and the Protected Characteristics.

In collating the equality information we have:

- Identified evidence already in school of policies and practice and identified gaps
- Explored how we engage with protected characteristics
- Analysed our effectiveness in terms of equality

Our equality evidence highlights:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Annex 2

EQUALITY ACT 2010 TOOLKIT

1. Meeting our Equality Duties

Equality legislation requires that we have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

Discrimination means treating someone less favourably than a “comparator”.

Harassment (a form of discrimination) means violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation means discrimination because of a previous complaint or supporting someone's complaint.

The extended scope of the Equality Act includes discrimination by **association** or based on **perception**

To fulfil the aims of the general duty, the school has had two sets of specific duties placed on them. These are:

- To publish information which demonstrates our compliance with the duty to have due regard for the three aims of the general duty
- To prepare and publish specific and measurable objectives which we will pursue over the coming years to achieve the three aims

The duty to publish information

The first of the two specific duties must have been completed by the school no later than 6 April 2012. It must then be undertaken at least annually.

The duty to set objectives

The second duty must have been completed by the school by 6 April 2012 and must be undertaken again no more than four years later.

2. Equality Information

Equality Objectives can be set on key improvement areas such as:

- Poor attendance
- Exclusion differentials
- Attainment differentials
- Access (physical and curriculum)
- Bullying
- Incidents based on prejudice of a protected characteristic
- Children who are missing from education
- Needs of parents/carers (eg. disabled, same-sex)
- Diversity friendly resources (eg. books)
- Staff training
- Intergenerational activities
- Workforce diversity
- Monitoring