

Equality Policy

For The Hawksmoor Learning Trust

	Signed:	Date:
Date adopted by Trustees:	on behalf The Hawksmoor Learning Trust	January 2022



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Introduction

The Hawksmoor Learning Trust is an inclusive partnership of schools 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 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. Embedded in our Trust values is the concept of 'Partnership'. We are committed to promoting equality and inclusion within our schools and local community.

Key Aims and Objectives of our Equity Policy

Our overarching aims are to:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, gender identities, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles:

All learners are of equal value. Whether or not they are have a disability 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.

1. We recognize, respect and value difference, and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our schools.
2. We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
3. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school communities to feel a sense of belonging within the schools and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
4. We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
5. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
6. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across schools in the Trust.

Purpose of the Policy

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 schools cannot discriminate against pupils/staff or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also "protected characteristics" but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools 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 schools 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 schools to: -

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how our schools are meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how our schools are complying with the

Public Sector Equality Duty provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included, where necessary, on our schools’ websites.

There are references and relevance in other linked policies including Behaviour, Admissions, SEN and Anti-bullying policies, as well as minutes of meetings involving governors.

The Equality Act also applies to the Trust in its role as employer. All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process. Equality policy and practices are covered in all staff inductions. All temporary staff are made aware of the Single Equality Policy and practices.

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 pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.

We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for pupils with a disability – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of pupils without a disability and stop them being placed at a disadvantage compared to their peers.

Trustees, Local Governors and Head Teachers ensure 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 school.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender.

Behaviour, Exclusions & Attendance

Individual school Behaviour Policies take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act.

Each school is committed to making reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. Trustees and Local Academy Boards closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing Prejudice & Prejudice Based Bullying

All forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stands in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality is challenged in our schools:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief
- Prejudices around gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Bullying incidents are treated equally seriously. Records of different prejudice-related incidents are maintained in each school and reported to the Local Academy Board and Trustees about the numbers, types, and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents in each of our schools and actions taken.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur and would need to be challenged and reported are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults, and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into school.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g., food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

That our schools are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

Each school in our Trust:

- Ensures the needs of the school population are known very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- Has procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through pupil admissions systems home visits.
- Collects data and monitors progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils. This data is used to support school improvement, taking action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate Literacy and Maths skills.

Each school collects and analyses data:

- On the school population by factors such as: gender and ethnicity.
- On the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability.
- By year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English.

- On inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English.
- Analyses and reports on standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

Gender Pupil Premium Ethnicity Free School Meals	EAL All SEN/D Looked after Children
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Each school:

- Collects, analyses and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.
- Avoids 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'.
- Uses a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.
- Provides support to pupils at risk of underachieving.
- Is alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability, and sexuality.

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies /provision, our schools are committed take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between, for example:

- People with and without a disability
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.
- Girls and boys.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

Each school has an Accessibility Plan designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment and improve the availability of accessible information to pupils with a disability.

Positive Action

We take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantages faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and across the curriculum.

We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, gender identity, and disability, avoiding stereotyping.

We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.

We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events and acknowledge the importance of learning from primary sources.

Other ways we address equality issues

We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed, e.g., Governors Meetings.

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our pupils.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the School Council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school (Pupil Attitude Survey).
- Analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings.

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/ School Development Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a 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 an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives. This is referenced within our School Development Plan.

Consultation, Implementation, Monitoring and Reviewing

This policy is regularly reviewed and actively promoted and disseminated via a number of sources including the school website, newsletter, governors meeting, staff meetings and discussed in child friendly language with the Student council.

Implementation, monitoring, and reviewing are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy that sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

The roles and responsibilities within our school communities:

The role of the Trustees

- Ensure the Trust fulfils its statutory duty with regard to the Equality Act.
- Review and ensure the effectiveness of the THLT Single Equity Policy by analysing equalities data provided by the Executive Group.

The role of the Executive Group

- Report on equalities objectives and outcomes to the Trustees across schools in the Trust; evaluate and make recommendations.

The role of Local Academy Boards

- Ensure the implementation of the Trust Single Equality Policy.
- Approve a school-based equity objectives and an accessibility plan.
- Monitor school-based equality outcomes to ensure effectiveness of provision in ensuring equalities duties are fulfilled.
- Do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender, gender identity and disability.

- Seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at the school on grounds of race, gender, gender identity or disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- Welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender, gender identity or disability.
- Ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The role of the Headteacher (or senior leader responsible for Equalities)

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness and ensures that records are maintained.

The role of all staff in THLT schools: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the Trusts Single Equity Policy and the school's Equality Plans.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender, gender identity and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record all incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

Visitors

All visitors to our schools, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. The Hawksmoor Learning Trust is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils, and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Safeguarding

The Hawksmoor Learning Trust considers safeguarding and child protection as paramount and is fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all children within our Trust Schools. We believe that students have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any student in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems. See Trust Child Protection Policy.

APPENDIX 1

Check list for School Staff and Local Governors

The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training.	
This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides.	
The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders.	
The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties.	
The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when their trends or patterns indicate a need.	
The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.	
The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy.	
The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy.	
The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.	
All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the School Council.	
The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern.	
Minority ethnic, pupils with a disability and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies.	
The school environment is increasingly as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school.	
Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in accessible parts of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered.	
The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information.	
The Governing Body is increasingly representative of the community it serves. Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who have a disability.	

APPENDIX 2

Template for Equality Objectives and Action Plan

At The Hawksmoor Learning Trust, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents, and carers receiving services from our schools, irrespective of race, gender, gender identity, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the trust feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

- The equality objectives and action plan will be posted on each school's website in conjunction with the THLT Equality Policy.

APPENDIX 3

Statement On The Single Public Sector Equality Duty

We have the highest aspirations for every child and place great value upon celebrating both individual achievement and personal development as children learn and grow with us. Our Trust ethos of 'Building Excellence' is underpinned by the themes of 'Quality, Enthusiasm and Partnership' in all that we do, and we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards.

Our policies help to ensure that this happens for all the children in our schools – regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion/belief, attainment, or background. The Trust and each school have a responsibility to carry out the Equality Duty. A copy of our Single Equality Policy is available to download from each of our schools' websites.

Each school also produces an Equalities Action Plan which is reviewed annually by the Local Academy Board and Trustees as part of the Equality Duty.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced 9 major Acts of Parliament as well as almost 100 sets of regulations dealing with equality and discrimination. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all types of discrimination which are unlawful. The Act covers all aspects of school life to do with how a school treats pupils and prospective pupils, parents and carers, employees, and members of the community.

The Hawksmoor Learning Trust takes these obligations seriously: everything a school does must be fair, non-discriminatory, and not put individuals or groups of people at a disadvantage. In particular, it must not discriminate, harass or victimise a pupil, potential pupil or nay member of the community in relation to:

- Admissions.
- The way it provides education for pupils.
- How it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- Excluding a pupil.
- Recruitment.

Governance

The Trustees and Local Academy Board are responsible for ensuring that the school meets the requirements of equality legislation through the following steps:-

Ensuring the school takes all reasonable steps to ensure that its employees do not carry out unlawful discriminatory actions of behaviour.

- Supporting and guiding the school to have "due regard" for equality in all its functions.
- Ensuring the school complies with the Equality Duty.
- Reviews the Equalities Action Plan on an annual basis.

APPENDIX 4

Accessibility Action Plan 2021-23

- The accessibility action plan will be posted on each school's website in conjunction with the THLT Equality Policy.