

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy



EPWORTH

EDUCATION TRUST

Written by:	J Buckley
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Mission Statement

The Epworth Education Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust established with the aim of providing outstanding learning and opportunities for the children within its care.

Children are our nation's most precious resource. Their school life and learning experience will shape them for the whole of their lives

Safeguarding Statement

At the Epworth Education Trust we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in the Safeguarding Policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors

Version Control
Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Section	Reason for Change
6/3/23	J Buckley	1		New policy to combine 2 policies – Inclusion & equal opps

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of school life, and Epworth Education Trust expects all employees, pupils, parents/carers and members of the wider school community to be treated equitably and with respect.
- 1.2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are not one singular concept; they are three different concepts. **Equality** is about providing equal access and protecting against discrimination; it is underpinned by legislation. **Diversity** is simply difference, and we are all different from each other. **Inclusion** is a feeling, an emotion; it is affected when people feel safe, trusted, valued, respected, and have a sense of belonging. We will only be able to reap positive benefits from greater diversity if we build inclusive cultures first.

Having equal opportunity means we get invited to the party. When we attend, we add more diversity to the party. Inclusion is feeling free and comfortable to dance at the party, to invite someone else to dance, or indeed, not to dance at all: that is inclusion.

2. Purpose

2.1. The aims of the policy are:

- to promote equal treatment within the Trust for all members of the Trust community;
- to communicate the commitment of the Trust to the promotion of equal opportunities;
- to create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination;
- to foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the Trust; and
- to actively promote and safeguard the welfare of children, staff and others who come into contact with the Trust.

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all:

- Pupils of Trust schools and their parents/carers
- Other members of the community which the Trust and its schools serves.

3.2. All of these groups are expected to adhere to the principles set out in this policy.

4. Regulatory Framework

4.1. This policy has been prepared to meet the Trust's responsibilities under:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, March 2014)
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Children Act 1989;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);
- Children and Families Act 2014.

5. Guidance and Advice

5.1. This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Equality Act 2010: explanatory notes (2010);
- The Equality Act 2010 and Schools: departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (DfE, May 2014);
- Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, July 2014);
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, January 2015);
- Advice and Guidance: How can we stop prejudice-based bullying in schools? (Equality and Human Rights Commission);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE);
- Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, February 2019);
- Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education guidance (DfE, June 2019)

6. Associated policies

6.1. The following Trust and school policies, procedures, documents and resource material are relevant to this policy:

- Admission Policy and arrangements;
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy;
- SEN information report;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) statement and objectives;
- Relationships Sex and Health Education Policy (Trust)
- Complaints Policy (Trust)
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Policy
- Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Allergen and Anaphylaxis Policy

7. Discrimination under the Equality Act 2010

7.1. The Equality Act 2010 brings together previous legislation to protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The act covers nine 'protected characteristics' which qualify for protection from discrimination under the act. These are as follows:

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

7.2. Whilst not a protected characteristic under the Act, the Trust will not discriminate on the grounds of trade union membership or activities as set out in the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

7.3. The Trust also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has special educational needs or learning difficulties, or because English is an additional language.

8. Forms of Discrimination

8.1. Discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability and may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Under the Act, there are three main types of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination** (including direct discrimination by association and direct discrimination by perception): Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in" because of their race. This would be a decision based on grounds of their race and would be direct discrimination. Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a pupil is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that pupil.
- **Indirect discrimination**: indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which is applied to all but puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex.
- **Discrimination arising from disability**: discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, where a pupil with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend a school trip because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

8.2. Under the Act, it is also unlawful to subject pupils or staff to harassment, or victimisation.

9. Equality information

9.1. As part of the Trust and its schools' obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the Trust will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are:

- Its employees, and
- People affected by its policies and practices.

9.2. In addition, each school will publish its equality objectives which are monitored annually and updated at least every 4 years.

9.3. For further information see the Trust PSED Statement.

10. Equality, Diversity and inclusion in the School Environment

10.1. The Epworth Education Trust is committed to providing an environment that enables full curriculum access that values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. They are committed to taking positive action in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to disability and to developing a culture of inclusion, support and awareness within the school.

10.2. Admissions

10.2.1. The Trust treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and each School's Admissions Policy. Each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the Schools' selection criteria.

10.2.2. All schools within the Trust accepts applications from, and admits, all prospective pupils irrespective of their disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief) or special educational needs.

10.2.3. In accordance with each school's terms and conditions, parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child's health, allergies, special needs or disabilities or other circumstances which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School.

10.2.4. The Trust monitors the admission and progress of students from different backgrounds

10.3. Educational Services

10.3.1. The Trust affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services, facilities irrespective of any protected characteristic subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare.

10.3.2. The Trust will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

10.3.3. In addition, to ensure inclusiveness, the Trust actively seeks to remove barriers to learning and participation for other groups of children such as:

- More able children
- Children in public care
- Children with medical needs
- Young carers
- Children at risk of disaffection

10.3.4. In both curricular and extra-curricular activities, pupils are encouraged to explore the viewpoints and values of different cultures that make up contemporary society and to benefit from the richness of experience that the exchange of cultural expectations and knowledge can bring.

10.3.5. Each school within the Trust will:

- Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination;
- Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School; and ensure that it reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive practices
- Endeavour to meet the needs of all children and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language, a disability and/or special educational needs receive necessary educational and welfare support;
- Teach in groupings that allow children of differing progress to still experience success
- Encourage all pupils to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other pupils, irrespective of their protective characteristic Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the Trust, and pupils will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes. Each school's PSHE and relationships education/ relationships and sex education curriculum encourage respect for other people, with particular regard to the Protected Characteristics.
- Ensure that all children are included, valued and supported;
- Ensure that publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about minority racial groups;
- Recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, on the grounds of sex or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the Trust's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias. Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources should demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity, to encourage children to value and respect others;
- Challenge any bullying, cyber-bullying or any other inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff;
- Foster and encourage positive attitudes and behaviour towards all members of the community through the planned teaching of relevant knowledge, skills and values;
- Celebrate cultural diversity through school events, such as dance, drama and music;
- Ensure that, although assemblies are broadly Christian, they emphasise the importance of values such as respect, open-mindedness and tolerance;
- Provide careers guidance that does not promote stereotyping in employment and encourages pupils not to be influenced by such factors when choosing a career;
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum, including being able to participate in a full range of extra-curricular activities and trips;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support;
- Ensure the same School Uniform Policy applies equally to all pupils,

irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, or religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, each school will consider reasonable requests to alter the uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Hairstyles, jewellery and headwear will also be taken into account.

- Record all incidents of discrimination and report to the relevant body

10.3.6. The Trust where necessary can modify or disapply the National Curriculum and its assessment arrangements. Our trust policy is to only do this in exceptional circumstances. The trust makes every effort to meet the learning needs of all its children, without recourse to disapplication or modification. We achieve this through greater differentiation of the child's work, or through the provision of additional learning resources. When necessary, we also support learning through appropriate external specialists. In such cases teachers work closely with these agencies to support the child.

10.3.7. In exceptional circumstances we may decide that modification or disapplication is the correct procedure to follow. We would only do this after detailed consultation with parents and the Local Education Authority. The school's governor with responsibility for special educational needs would also be closely involved in this process. We would ensure that every effort had been made to provide the necessary support from within the school's resources before considering such action.

10.3.8. Should we go ahead with modification or disapplication, we would do so through section 364 and/or section 365 of the Education Act 1996

10.4. **Religious Belief**

10.4.1. Although the Epworth Education Trust's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, the Trust is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of its schools communities

10.5. **Children with Disabilities or Medical Needs**

10.5.1. The Trust is committed to providing an environment that allows children with disabilities full access to all areas of learning.

10.5.2. Teachers modify teaching and learning and adapt resources as appropriate for children with disabilities. They may give children extra time to complete tasks, and give children with disabilities opportunities to develop skills in practical aspects of the curriculum.

10.5.3. Teachers ensure that the work for these children:

- takes into account their pace of learning and equipment they use
- takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, vision aids
- is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials
- allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other

- activities linked to their learning
- uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities

10.5.4. Where children have certain chronic medical needs such as asthma, diabetes or allergies, we as a school work with parents to ensure strategies are in place to enable the children to take as full a part in school life as possible. We meet their needs through:

- allowing medication to be administered by school staff where they agree to undertake this responsibility
- establishing procedures to ensure there is someone available to do this
- setting up any necessary training for identified staff
- providing alternatives when a child may be at risk from a certain activity
- informing all staff of identified children and their medical needs

10.6. Reasonable adjustments

10.6.1. The Trust has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils, such as, allowing (where applicable) extra time with examinations, providing visually impaired pupils with text in larger font and providing reasonable adjustments to the school uniforms for disabled pupils.

10.6.2. Each school within the Trust:

- will inform and consult with parents about the reasonable adjustments, if any, the school are legally required to make for their disabled child.
- recognises that they have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for the public where services are provided to the public e.g. parents' evenings and school concerts.
- is not legally required to make physical alterations as part of the reasonable adjustments duty. However, the school monitors and reviews the school's physical features to consider what reasonable and proportionate steps can be taken to alleviate any substantial disadvantage caused to disabled pupils. All schools within the Trust have an Accessibility Plan and an Access Audit in place and a hard copy can be made available by the school office upon request.
- provide auxiliary aids and services for those disabled pupils who are put at a substantial disadvantage as part of the school's reasonable adjustments duty. The Trust carefully considers any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to each school.

10.6.3. Further information on each school's reasonable adjustments duty can be found in their SEND Policy.

10.7. Provision for special diets

10.7.1. Special diets are an important part of the catering provision we offer within the Trust. The kitchen teams will deliver food that will cater for alternative diets for children with intolerance to specific foods and to those who require an alternative due to religious beliefs.

10.7.2. The Trust will ensure it caters safely for:

- Ethnic minority groups
- Vegetarians & Vegans

- Food intolerance
- Food allergy
- Food aversion
- Medical conditions

10.7.3. The Trust requires the catering teams to ensure menus always include a meat and a vegetarian option at every service and to ensure that specific dietary requirements, for example vegan, Halal, Kosher, or allergy requirements are fully accommodated.

10.7.4. Where necessary, staff may provide advice, training and guidance to parents and school teams on all aspects of the provision of meals. Catering teams will ask the parents of children with special dietary requirements to complete a form detailing their needs.

10.8. **Concerns and complaints**

10.8.1. The Epworth Education Trust will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment. Pupils who feel they are being discriminated against should talk to a member of staff. Alternatively, if parents or pupils feel this policy has been breached they should raise their concern or complaint through the School's Complaints Procedure which is available on the School website and upon request.

11. Training

11.1. The Trust ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

11.2. The level and frequency of training depends on the role of the individual member of staff.