



Blue Coat Church of England Academy

Equality and Diversity Policy

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Prepared by:		V Owen
Ratified by the Governing Body on:		
	Signature	
Principal	<i>DJ Smith</i>	D.J. Smith
Chair of Directors	<i>Parker</i>	L. Parker
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“Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.” John 13:16

“Central to Christian theology is the truth that every single one of us is made in the image of God. Every one of us is loved unconditionally by God. We must avoid, at all costs, diminishing the dignity of any individual to a stereotype or a problem. Church of England schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value”. Justin Welby - Valuing All God’s Children

Aims

Blue Coat Church of England aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due 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

We are committed to the promotion of equality. In doing so, we realise the valuable contribution that all members of the community can make to our school. Our policies and practices are regularly reviewed to consider the different needs and contributions of students, staff, parents and governors.

Diversity is a strength. We value and celebrate diversity and will oppose all forms of prejudice and promote positive attitudes. Central to this fundamental principle is working to ensure that all students and staff feel safe and develop in an environment that is supportive of academic and emotional needs. We expect this commitment and respect to be demonstrated by all visitors to the school. Discriminatory behavior will be challenged and dealt with.

Blue Coat Church of England Academy will implement legislation, national agreement and guidance on all equality issues, through our ethos, processes, practices and curriculum attempt to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not share it;

Foster understanding and acceptance across all characteristics between those people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Stereotypes will be challenged at every opportunity.

Legislation and guidance

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

The following are ‘protected characteristics’ under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability

- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools.](#)

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out those rights in the UK which are protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. Human rights are based on the core principles that are relevant to day to day life, and protect freedom to control one's own life and fulfill one's potential through: being safe and protected from harm, being treated fairly and with dignity, living the life you choose, and taking an active part in the community and wider society.

Equality and Diversity at Blue Coat Church of England Academy

We are committed to the promotion of equality in all areas of school life. In so doing, our aim is to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good community relations.

Equality in the context of school life involves all people involved in the development of the School and covers areas such as:

- Progress, attainment and assessment;
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- Pupils' personal development and pastoral care;
- Teaching and learning;
- Admission and attendance;
- The Curriculum;
- Staff recruitment and professional development;
- Partnerships with parents, carers, and communities.

This policy provides a framework for action to address the nine protected characteristics.

We are committed to:

- Actively tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunities and good community relations;
- Encouraging, supporting and helping all students and staff to reach their potential;
- Working with parents and carers and with the wider community to tackle discrimination and to follow and promote good practice and making sure our Equality and Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed.

In positively taking forward our objectives on equality and diversity we:

- Outline the responsibilities of all those involved with the School;
- Set out the processes we shall use to assess our policies and practices;
- Identify how we will monitor the work that we do;
- Publish results each year to show our progress.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will:

- 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, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Principal

The Principal will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors
- Make sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out:
- Take appropriate action in cases of harassment and/or discrimination and/or victimisation;
- Ensuring the schools appointment and personnel procedures reflect all aspects of good practice in terms of equal opportunities and safeguarding

All school staff are responsible for:

- Being able to recognize and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Being aware of their own preconceptions and ensuring that they do not inadvertently discriminate;
- Promoting equal opportunities and good community relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of age, gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership (for post 16 students and employees);
- Acting in ways that are in accordance with equality legislation, policies, protocols and good practices

- Treating everyone they come into contact with, with dignity and respect
- Ensuring that they do not discriminate or induce others to practice discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- Recognising and reporting behaviour that undermines equality and diversity.

Visitors (including parents/carers) and contractors are responsible for:

- Refraining from discriminatory conduct;
- Knowing and following our Equality and Diversity Policy.

All students whether they have protected characteristics or not are responsible for:

- respecting each other;
- treating each other without prejudice or discrimination;
- knowing and following our Equality and Diversity Policy.

The Curriculum

Blue Coat Church of England Academy offers a broad and balanced curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of our students. Emphasis is placed on academic progress and students and staff are required to be sensitive to the racial, religious, cultural, social, personal, ethnic and linguistic beliefs and background of others.

Our curriculum and our staff will encourage students to question assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices regarding not just the protected characteristics identified in the 2010 Equality Act but in many other aspects of the world in which we live. Our curriculum will, through its range of experiences and breadth of study, promote respect and understanding of diverse and different groups, societies, cultures and religions. Diversity is a strength and will be celebrated in our School using a variety of methods such as work, displays, assemblies and lessons.

Blue Coat Church of England Academy prides itself on its pastoral systems and support. All students are treated as individuals with their own strengths and particular needs. Support and guidance are given accordingly. The Academy has high expectations and operates a very clear and consistent Relationships and Behaviour Policy. This clear system of rewards and sanctions applies to all students on an equitable basis. All students who deserve reward or punishment will receive it regardless of whether they have a protected characteristic or not.

Protected Characteristics

Blue Coat Church of England Academy will adhere to the regulations and procedures established within legislation (The Equality Act 2010). The School appoints staff irrespective of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership. The School will make reasonable adjustment where a member of staff with a disability is appointed to a post.

Discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and marital status is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Age

Blue Coat Church of England Academy is an 11-19 Secondary School.

- Governors and staff involved in the recruitment of potential employees will not use age as a criterion for shortlisting or appointment.
- Everyone at the School, regardless of their age, is entitled to equal respect and their interests shall be considered equally, save in those situations covered by the Children's Act 1989 where the interest of the child are deemed to be paramount.

Gender and race

- Blue Coat Church of England promotes equality of opportunity between everyone and will eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.
- Our ethos and policy states clearly our commitment to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting diversity as a strength. This applies equally to issues of gender, colour, ethnicity, nationality and national origin.
- No student will be singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other students based on the characteristics of gender and/or race.
- Blue Coat Church of England Academy regularly monitors and checks procedures and practices to ensure that unfair treatment does not occur.
- Blue Coat Church of England Academy will:
 - (a) Identify action needed to tackle discrimination and promote equality and good gender/race relations in school activities;
 - (b) Assess and monitor the impact of this policy on students, in particular the attainment levels of students from different gender/ethnic groups and make reasonable adjustments to address any identified under-performance;
 - (c) Track data of identifiable groups at least three times per year internally and at external data points such as terminal examinations. Outcomes will be analysed, shared and discussed between staff, leadership and governors at those data points
 - (d) Record sexist/racist incidents as significant contraventions to our Behaviour for Learning Policy and deal with them appropriately

Disability

Blue Coat Church of England Academy will promote equal opportunity and make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and staff. Reasonable adjustment will be made for disabled parents/ carers and other visitors to the School. Visitors with particular needs relating to disability are asked to contact the School in advance of their visit so that access and reasonable adjustments can be discussed;

The Academy will publish and maintain an Accessibility Scheme to show how we will:

- (a) Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- (b) Improve the physical environment to enable students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- (c) Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students.

The School will make reasonable adjustments to meet a disabled student's needs. Reasonable adjustments are not defined in law however, schools are expected to provide services or auxiliary aids for a disabled student which it would be 'reasonable' to do so and if such an aid or service would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student faces in comparison to non-disabled students.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as when a person has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last for at least 12 months. It is important to recognise that having a disability is not the same as being registered disabled. Based upon the Equality Act 2010 definition there are going to be, at any single point, a number of students meeting this threshold definition. Such students are identified (known), supported, monitored and tracked through our SEND and pastoral procedures.

Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Marriage or Civil Partnership

- Religion, belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership are all personal matters. Discrimination, harassment or victimisation are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

- No student or staff member will be singled out for different or less favourable treatment based on these characteristics.
- Incidents contravening this expectation should be reported. Students should report infringements to pastoral staff and it will be dealt with within our Relationship Behaviour Policy. Homophobic, religious and belief-based incidents will be recorded and treated as significant contraventions and dealt with appropriately.
- Students and staff should note that extreme views and beliefs might be subject to the 'Prevent Duty' and as such reportable to the authorities as per the expectation of that duty.
- Staff should report any incidents of this nature to the Headteacher and Principal.

Gender reassignment

- Protection from discrimination because of gender reassignment in schools is new for students in the Equality Act 2010 although school staff are already protected through employment legislation.
- Students will not be treated less favourably because of their gender reassignment.
- School will work proactively with the student and identify need and support on an individual basis.
- Incidents contravening this expectation should be reported. Students should report infringements to pastoral staff and it will be dealt with within our Relationship and Behaviour Policy.

Pregnancy and Maternity

- Students and staff will not be treated less favourably because of pregnancy, breastfeeding, maternity or paternity.
- If staff feel they have been the victim of discrimination, harassment or victimisation in these issues, they should in the first instance, speak with the Principal.
- Local Authorities have a duty under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to arrange suitable full time education for any student of compulsory school age who would not otherwise receive such an education. This duty could include students (compulsory age) who become pregnant or are parents.
 - Students who become pregnant (or expectant fathers) should speak to a member of the pastoral team as soon as possible in order to access the support, guidance and provision that they might need. Blue Coat Church of England Academy will work positively and productively with expectant parents; the same applies to students who are parents joining us from other schools. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis and reasonable adjustments made to support access to education.

Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

The school has a designated member of staff (Headteacher) for monitoring equality issues. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the academy aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the academy will:

- Review attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

Fostering good relations

The academy aims 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 our 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 we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes 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, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

Equality considerations in decision-making

The academy ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The academy always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The academy actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

Reporting

We are a caring school. More often than not, issues of concern are noticed quickly. Students and staff are, in the main, happy to tell us when things are not right. We encourage students, parents and staff to report incidents to us so that they can be investigated, dealt with and resolved quickly and carefully.

The route through which an issue might be dealt with may vary according to the person reporting the issue. For example, student related issues would typically be dealt with through the Relationship and Behaviour Policy. The School also has a comprehensive complaints procedure that may be called upon.

Students are encouraged to speak to a member of the pastoral team and staff to either the Headteacher or Principal. If the concern is about the Principal, parents or staff should report the matter to the Chair of Governors (contactable via the School address and telephone number).

This reporting ladder does not apply to concerns relating to safeguarding and child protection. The referral ladder for these issues can be found in the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Equality Objectives

Our equality objectives reflect the academy's priorities and draw upon available data and other evidence. Careful analysis of this is undertaken in order to ensure that we are working to achieve improved outcomes for different groups.

Objective 1: To ensure that the Academy fully promotes diversity and develops the values of respect and acceptance regarding race, religion, gender, and ability/disability.

Why we have chosen this objective: To promote respect and understanding of diverse and different groups, societies, cultures and religions through the curriculum and a range of wider activities. This will in turn help eradicate discrimination and promote greater acceptance for all, both within the school and the wider community.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- *Enable the student Diversity and Inclusion Group to develop student led activities that promote both acceptance and understanding within the wider community.*
- *Providing students with opportunities to work with the police and other community organisations to support a reduction in hate crime and promote increased tolerance within the local community.*
- *To broaden the range of activities available to all students on Diversity Day.*

Objective 2: To ensure all staff have an up-to-date knowledge of current equality and diversity and how this impacts the school and wider community.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure we further establish a safe learning environment for all, where discrimination is effectively challenged.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- *Use safeguarding morning briefings as a route to remind and update staff on issues relating to equality and diversity.*
- *Ensure that staff know what a prejudice related bullying incident looks like and how they should respond to all such incidents.*

- *Ensure that staff are fully aware of how such incidents should be reported and that data is tracked using CPOMs reports.*

Objective 3: To use performance data to monitor student achievement and respond to variations between groups of learners, subjects, courses and key stages, trends over time and comparisons with other schools and the national picture.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure equality of opportunity for all students.

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- *Ensure consistent, high-quality Teaching and Learning is in place across all key stages.*
- *Ensure the Progress Team to identify underachieving students and support progress through targeted interventions and in class support.*
- *Use student voice to enable a greater understanding of the barriers that block achievement for all.*
- *Carry out regular quality assurance to ensure high quality provision and equality of opportunity is in place.*

Objective 4: To ensure that Blue Coat Church of England Academy is a positive environment for all students, including those of different sexual orientations or transgender students, ensuring they feel safe and accepted.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure equality and respect is the foundation of all students experience at Blue Coat Church of England Academy

To achieve this objective, we plan to:

- *Ensure that there are both PHSE and wider curriculum opportunities available which address LGBTQ+ and transgender issues.*
- *Further develop display around the academy that challenges all discrimination and stereotypes, including for LGBTQ+ and transgender students*
- *Ensure that LGBTQ+ student voice is gathered regularly to make sure that the school is fully inclusive and that students feel fully supported.*

Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Mental Health Strategy
- PHSE Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy