



Partnership Achievement Community Excellence

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# Policy for Equal Opportunities and Community Cohesion

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Agreed by Directors: March/April 2018

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Review Date: April 2019

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## Principles

### *Equality*

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, governors and directors of PACE Academy Trust to promote equality, diversity and community cohesion. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes and ensuring equality of access for all stakeholders. The schools will ensure that diversity within their communities is celebrated and valued.

Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At PACE schools, all people will be treated the same, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Single Equalities Act 2010).

### *Cohesion*

“By community cohesion we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.” (Alan Johnson Secretary of State for Education and Skills November 2006).

This policy helps to inform our Vision 2020 commitments, created by stakeholder representatives from the schools.

## Policy Commitments

PACE Academy Schools contribute towards promoting equality and cohesion in the following ways:

### *Curriculum*

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed. To achieve this we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality;
- The curriculum prepares pupils for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of pupils and families in the schools and community;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity and challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs;
- The use of images and materials, which positively reflect a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

### *Attainment and Achievement*

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that: Adults in the schools will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;

- Our schools’ Policy and Practice ensures that education within the schools meets the specific needs of every pupil and all learners are actively encouraged to engage fully in their own learning;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the school and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in attainment. Progress meetings monitor gender,

ethnicity, English as an Additional Language (EAL), Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs to ensure there are no patterns of under-attainment. If there are, appropriate action is taken.

### ***Ethos, engagement and cohesion***

At our schools, equality of opportunity is embedded into school practice;

- An open door policy allows parents, carers and children immediate access to an adult to discuss any concerns;
- The children are encouraged to behave well to each other and the people they come into contact with, as part of our schools' 'Behaviour Expectations';
- The displays around the school reflect diversity across all aspects of equality and are frequently monitored;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities (this not only includes physical access, but takes account wider access to school information and activities);
- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and off-site activities;
- Pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected. Pupils are given an effective voice for example, through school councils, which reflect the school population, pupil surveys and regular opportunities to engage about their learning and the life of the school;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils feel welcomed and included.

### ***Staff Recruitment and Professional Development***

- All posts are advertised formally, either across the Trust or nationally;
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do avoid discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels of the school;
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds;
- Equalities policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions;
- All supply staff and contractors are made aware of the equalities policy and practice; Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review.

### ***Countering and Challenging Harassment and Bullying***

- Our schools counter and challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors;
- Our schools have a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring incidents;
- Our schools report to local governing bodies and the LAs on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded in the school.

### ***Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community***

Our Schools aim to work in partnership with parents/carers. We:

- Take action to ensure all parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school;
- Maintain good channels of communication, e.g. through an open door policy and regular parent questionnaires and ensure parents' views are captured to inform practice;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that the parents/carers of newly arrived pupils e.g. EAL, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller or pupils with disabilities, are made to feel welcome.

- Provide Breakfast and After-school facilities
- Organise visits to the school from the parent and wider community (e.g. fire and community police officers);
- Organise local visits for the children;
- Carry out fundraising activities.

### Responsibility for the Policy

In our schools, all members of the school community have a responsibility for promoting equalities.

**The Directors and local governing bodies** have responsibility for ensuring that:

- The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community; The schools' equalities policy is maintained and updated regularly; and that equality schemes are easily identifiable (these may be included within the School Development Plan, the schools' Accessibility Plan or may be stand-alone documents);
- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented.

**The Headteachers/ Heads of School and Senior Leadership teams** have responsibility for:

- Providing leadership and vision in respect of equality in partnership with the governing body;
- Overseeing the implementation of the equality policy;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the equalities policy;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to any prejudice-related incidents.

**All school staff** have responsibility for:

- Modeling good practice, dealing with racist incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- Promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, ethnic or national origins, language, culture, religion or belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or social class.
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities

### Monitoring and Review

The schools' leadership teams are responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation of this policy. This includes:

Supporting positively, the evaluation activities that monitor the impact and success of the policy on pupils from different groups, e.g. SEN, Children in Care, Minority Ethnic Groups, including Traveller and EAL pupils, and Pupil Premium entitlement. This will be done through the monitoring of:

- Pupils' progress and attainment
- Policy and Practice and classroom observations
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusion data
- Attendance
- Admissions
- Incidents of prejudice related bullying and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extra-curricular and extended school activities
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Visits and visitors

