



## Single Equality

<b>Last Reviewed</b>	March 2023
<b>Reviewed by</b>	Trust Board
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<b>Lead responsibility</b>	CEO
<b>Next Review</b>	March 2027

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy represents the response of the Alban Academies Trust (AAT) and its commitment to meeting the Equality Act (2010). The policy sets out how our practice and policies are committed to:
- 1.1.1 Ensuring our schools offer an inclusive community that welcomes and celebrates differences. Full and meaningful partnership with parents and professionals and the active involvement of other members of the local community, is also highly valued. Our ethos and our values will actively seek to promote equality and tackle discrimination by:
    - 1.1.1.2 establishing a climate in which diversity is understood to be a strength of the community and is celebrated as such;
    - 1.1.1.3 ensuring that no member of the school community feels disadvantaged due to their membership of a particular group;
    - 1.1.1.4 creating a climate where people are able to speak openly about their experiences;
    - 1.1.1.5 following agreed procedures for dealing with incidents, and ensuring that all members of the school community are fully conversant with them;
    - 1.1.1.6 following the monitoring procedure to record all incidents and subsequent action;
    - 1.1.1.7 keep a formal record of all racist incidents and bullying incidents and to report on the nature and frequency of any racist incidents annually to the LA.
- 1.2 This policy incorporates and therefore replaces previous public sector equality duties such as the individual schools' Disability Equality Statement, Equal Opportunities Policy and Race Relations Policy. It therefore encompasses the following protected characteristics as defined by The Equality Act 2010 which protects students from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics:
- 1.2.1 disability
  - 1.2.2 gender
  - 1.2.3 age
  - 1.2.4 ethnicity and race
  - 1.2.5 gender identity and reassignment
  - 1.2.6 religion and belief
  - 1.2.7 sexual orientation
  - 1.2.8 pregnancy and maternity
  - 1.2.9 marriage and civil partnerships
- 1.3 This policy follows the Department for Education guidance on the actions that schools need to take to comply with equality and diversity legislation, and our definitions align with their guidance. Our General Duty under the Equality Act 2010 is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:
- 1.3.1 eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - 1.3.2 advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - 1.3.3 foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 1.4 The specific duties require the AAT to:
- 1.4.1 publish annually information quantitative and qualitative, showing compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010;
  - 1.4.2 set every three years one or more specific measurable equality objectives that further the aims of the equality duty.
- 1.5 Most importantly, this policy also supports each individual school's vision and values.

## 2 TRUST ARRANGEMENTS

This policy has been developed at Trust level and therefore covers policy that is relevant and followed by all the schools within the AAT. The Appendices contain specific actions each school is taking to deliver this policy.

## 3 PRINCIPLES

### 3.1 Principle 1: All members of the whole school community are of equal value

- 3.1.1 whether or not they are disabled
- 3.1.2 whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- 3.1.3 whatever their gender and gender identity
- 3.1.4 whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- 3.1.5 whatever their sexual identity

### 3.2 Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face in relation to:

- 3.2.1 disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- 3.2.2 ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- 3.2.3 gender, so that the different needs and experiences of all are recognised
- 3.2.4 religion, belief or faith background
- 3.2.5 sexual identity

### 3.3 Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. Our policies, procedures and activities promote:

- 3.3.1 positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- 3.3.2 positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities;
- 3.3.3 different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- 3.3.4 mutual respect and good relations between all genders, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

### 3.4 Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- 3.4.1 whether or not they are disabled
- 3.4.2 whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- 3.4.3 whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

### 3.5 Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- 3.5.1 age (for staff only)
- 3.5.2 disability
- 3.5.3 ethnicity and race
- 3.5.4 gender (sex)
- 3.5.5 gender identity and reassignment
- 3.5.6 Pregnancy and maternity and breast feeding
- 3.5.7 religion and belief
- 3.5.8 sexual orientation

### **3.6 Principle 6: We consult and involve widely**

We welcome the engagement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities when engaging with issues surrounding protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010). When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues schools will consult and engage with people affected by our decisions, parents, children, staff, members of the local community and with people who have special knowledge which can inform a school's approach.

### **3.7 Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit**

Our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life for all.

### **3.8 Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

### **3.9 Principle 9: Objectives**

3.9.1 We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7).

3.9.2 The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

3.9.3 We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 The Governing Board of each school in the Trust is responsible for:

- 4.1.1 ensuring the school stays within the law and meets all its duties, including the general and the specific duties;
- 4.1.2 ensuring the Trust's Single Equality Policy is followed and the action plan is monitored annually;
- 4.1.3 striving to ensure that the membership of the Governing Board reflects the diversity of the communities served by each school;
- 4.1.4 ensuring that there is an Action Plan that demonstrates a commitment to eliminate discrimination and promote equality;
- 4.1.5 ensuring they receive and respond to monitoring information on staff received via local governing board meetings ;
- 4.1.6 ensuring they receive and respond to reports on recruitment, retention, achievement and success rates for students from different backgrounds via the relevant Governors' committee.

4.2 The Headteacher of each school retains overall responsibility for:

- 4.2.1 giving a consistent and high profile lead on equality issues
- 4.2.2 ensuring the Trust's Single Equality Policy is implemented and reported on
- 4.2.3 ensuring that that each school's action plan is delivered effectively

4.3 Leadership Group and middle leaders are responsible for ensuring that:

- 4.3.1 they are aware of the school's statutory duties in relation to equality legislation;
- 4.3.2 current and planned policies are assessed for their impact in relation to equality;
- 4.3.3 monitoring information is collected and analysed;
- 4.3.4 targets are set on the recruitment, retention and achievement of students based upon the analysis of the monitoring information;
- 4.3.5 quality assurance procedures include scrutiny of equality issues;

- 4.3.6 sections assess performance in relation to equality issues and take action as appropriate;
  - 4.3.7 the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equal opportunities;
  - 4.3.8 curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation, assessment procedures and educational visits take account of the need to promote equality;
  - 4.3.9 each school's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about diversity;
  - 4.3.10 students and staff induction programmes reflect each school's commitment to promote equality of opportunity;
  - 4.3.11 staff, students and parents are consulted on and are aware of each school's response to equality and diversity;
  - 4.3.12 the relevant procedures are in place and action is taken against staff or students who discriminate for any reason covered by this policy.
- 4.4 Staff with specific responsibilities are responsible for:
- 4.4.1 dealing with incidents of discrimination or harassment;
  - 4.4.2 the School Business Manager is responsible for compiling an annual report on staffing in terms of equality indicators for the relevant governors' committee;
  - 4.4.3 for monitoring and reporting on the recruitment, retention and achievement of different groups of learners, and for ensuring that appropriate training is included in the Improvement Plan for each school.
- 4.5 All staff are responsible for:
- 4.5.1 challenging inappropriate behaviour by students, staff, parents and visitors;
  - 4.5.2 promoting equality and good relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for any reason covered by this policy;
  - 4.5.3 keeping up-to-date with the law on equality and taking up relevant training;
  - 4.5.4 ensuring their schemes of learning, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of equality.
- 4.6 The AAT believes that a greater level of success for pupils and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. creating a prejudice-free environment where individuals feel confident and at ease is a commitment of the trust. This environment will be achieved by:-
- 4.6.1 being respectful
  - 4.6.2 always treating all members of the trust community fairly
  - 4.6.3 adopting an inclusive attitude
  - 4.6.4 adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all
  - 4.6.5 recognising and celebrating the benefits of diversity and equality
- 4.7 Contractors, partners, service providers and site supervisor are responsible for:
- 4.7.1 complying with legislation on equality and not discriminating against any individual for any reason covered by this policy;
  - 4.7.2 following this policy and any equality conditions in contracts or agreements;
  - 4.7.3 considering access arrangements for all when planning repairs or recommending modifications to the site and buildings.
- 4.8 Parents, carers and employers, and visitors to each school have a proportionate responsibility to:
- 4.7.1 Understand and act in accordance with this policy
  - 4.7.2 Comply with school policies and regulations in respect of equality and diversity
  - 4.7.3 Make children aware of treating people with equity

## 5 MONITORING AND REPORTING

- 5.6 Each school's Single Equality Action Plan will be aligned to the AAT's equality objectives and thus shared with its staff and governors. The Single Equality Action Plan objectives will be reviewed by the schools on an annual basis and updated at least every 4 years.

5.7 Through publishing this information, we will ensure that governors, staff, students and parents are aware of the value the Trust places upon equality and diversity, the penalties that apply in the event of a breach, and our commitments under this policy. In addition to this, each school has in place the following documents providing further evidence of compliance with the Equality Duty:

- 5.7.1 Curriculum and/or Teaching and Learning Policies
- 5.7.2 SEND Policy
- 5.7.3 Sex and Relationship Policy
- 5.7.4 Termly Data checks by the Leadership Group
- 5.7.5 Prospectus
- 5.7.6 Staff Handbook
- 5.7.7 Advertisements
- 5.7.8 Application forms for prospective employees
- 5.7.9 Information pack for prospective employees

## 6. INFORMATION

- 6.1 Our Equality Impact Assessment process (EQIAs) helps us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). EQIAs help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted.
- 6.2 Accordingly we collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender.
- 6.3 We value more qualitative information which may be given to us through a variety of mechanisms. We conduct student voice activities such as anti-bullying questionnaires.
- 6.4 The Local Authority provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

## 7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 We welcome the involvement of people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities when engaging with the issues surrounding protected characteristics (Equalities Act 2010) and the involvement of a variety of people is critical to the success of equality schemes. Parents and students were consulted on the development of this policy and action plan through focus group meetings, and staff have also been invited to contribute directly.
- 7.2 Parents and carers of students with disabilities are invited to contribute directly, and we record and review the points they raise. In addition to this, they are able to meet with the SEND team at formal school parent teacher consultations, or whenever need arises.
- 7.3 We invite feedback from organisers of groups who rent our facilities for activities, and our website has details of how other site users can contact us about any issues, including equality.
- 7.4 We invite governors' input to the policy and action plan through the work of the relevant committees in each school.
- 7.5 When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, we will consult with and engage both the people affected by our decisions and with people who have special knowledge to inform our approach. Evidence of engagement will be included in material published by each school showing how the duty has been addressed.

## 8. REPORTING

- 8.1 Reporting is an integral part of the single equality policy. Actions taken as a result of equality impact assessments will be reported to the appropriate Governors' committees and Trust committees on an ongoing basis, and the analyses will inform decisions regarding staffing, curriculum and premises' development.

8.2 Progress on the action plan will be reported annually to the relevant Local Governing Board. The Single Equality Policy is reviewed every four years, or earlier if legislation changes.

8.3 Information collected will be used to:

8.3.1 report to the Local Governing Board of each school;

8.3.2 produce a summative report to the Trust Board annually;

8.3.3 support the individual school's improvement plans;

## **9. POLICY LINKS**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Safer Recruitment Policy

Equality Act (2010)

Gender Pay Gap Report