

Policy Title:	Equalities Policy (No change)
Version:	1.2
Member of Staff Responsible:	Chief Executive Officer
Status:	Statutory
Date adopted by Trust Board:	31 st March 2025
Date for review:	March 2026
Date reviewed:	27 th March 2023 5 th February 2024

Change Record		
Version	Date	Description
1.1	27/03/23	Changes to 1.2, 2.1, Appendix 1 Additional Appendix 2
1.2	05/02/24	Changes to 2.10, 4.2, 5.3. Section 11 added Section 11 added to give more detail/introduce the Public Sector Equality Duty and reference Appendix 2
1.3		
1.4		
1.5		

Primitas Learning Partnership promotes the safeguarding and welfare of all children in its care; all policies are developed and formulated with this in mind

EQUALITIES POLICY

1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Primitas Learning Partnership (PLP) is committed to equality of opportunity and aims to be a Trust where everyone:
- is respected and respects others;
 - has a voice and exercises choice;
 - participates in the life of their Academy the wider life of the Trust;
 - achieves their individual potential;
 - develops skills essential for life.
- 1.2 The name, vision and values of PLP clearly demonstrate how Equality is at the very heart of who we are, how we want to operate and what we want to achieve as a Multi-Academy Trust. The Trust therefore has the highest of expectations of every one of its academies, with regards to their daily responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 (**See Appendix 1**) as they strive to fulfil their Public Sector Equalities Duty (**See Appendix 2**)
- 1.3 The threefold purpose of this policy is to ensure that:
- Unlawful discrimination (either direct or indirect) and other undesirable behaviour, including harassment or victimisation does not occur.
 - No-one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of the recognised Nine Protected Characteristics (see Paragraph 1.4)
 - Equality of opportunity, positive relationships amongst all and diversity are proactively promoted and celebrated.
- 1.4 We are committed to giving due regard to the Nine Protected characteristics in the way in which work with all stakeholders
- Age
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy or maternity
 - Marriage and Civil Partnership
- 1.5 In addition to the Equality Act 2010, the following legislation also informs our Equality Policy:
- The Children and Families Act 2014
 - SEND Code of Practice 2014

2. ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

- 2.1 The Trust recognises that discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly or less favourably than another person. There are various ways in which discrimination can be said to occur under the Equality Act 2010 and the Trust is committed to eliminating all such forms:
- 2.2 **Direct discrimination:** where an individual or group receives less favourable treatment with some unjustifiable reason because of their race, gender, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, maternity or trade union activity (all of which are considered 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010).
- 2.3 **Indirect discrimination:** applying unjustifiable requirements and conditions which have a disproportionate impact on an individual of a particular group.
- 2.4 **Discrimination by perception:** where a person is treated less favourably and is thought to have a protected characteristic even when they do not.
- 2.5 **Discrimination by association:** where a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- 2.6 **Victimisation:** where an employee or prospective employee is treated badly because they have done something in relation to discrimination legislation e.g. raising a grievance or supporting a colleague doing so.
- 2.7 **Harassment:** unwanted conduct on the grounds of the various protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 which violates a person's dignity and creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment and may be intentional or unintentional. Harassment may occur as a result of persistent treatment or an isolated incident.
- 2.8 Primitas Learning Partnership will not tolerate any form of discrimination as outlined above, from 2.2 to 2.7, from anyone associated with the Trust:
- employees (which incorporates full and part-time paid workers, board members, local governors, consultants, contractors, trainees, volunteers, casual workers, agency staff);
 - students;
 - pupils;
 - parents;
 - any members of the public that has dealings with any Primitas Academy.
- 2.9 We will tackle discrimination through monitoring and responding to equality outcomes data and by reporting and/or dealing with all incidents of discrimination when and wherever they occur, alongside our statutory duty to record all incidents of racism.
- 2.10 Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on inequality will be investigated using the Trust's usual procedures. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence.

- 2.11 Our procedure for dealing with incidents of harassment and discrimination are shared with employees through induction, regular training and feedback.
- 2.12 Incidents of discrimination will be reported to help the Trust monitor incidents and take appropriate action. A summary of incidents will be reported to the Governing Body of the Academy where the incidents occurred and monitored by the Trust Board.

3. DEMONSTRATING EQUALITY

- 3.1 In line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Primitas Learning Partnership fully embraces the expectation to be proactive and not just reactive. As well as taking action to challenge and eliminate discrimination whenever and wherever it occurs, we are also committed to proactively promoting harmonious relationships, celebrating diversity, giving due regard to and intentionally planning opportunities raise awareness of the Nine Protected Characteristics.
- 3.2 We believe that each Primitas Academy must be a safe place for everyone and we are committed to this ideal by proactively creating the right culture and not just reacting when things go wrong.
- 3.3 Primitas Learning Partnership has the highest of expectations of every one of its academies, with regards to proactively fulfilling their day-to-day responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010. (See Appendix 1)
- 3.4 Our Accessibility & Equality Action Plan will reflect specific priorities and our rigorous monitoring will help us proactively review and evaluate progress towards meeting our duties in line with the Equality Act.

4. EMPLOYMENT AT THE TRUST

- 4.1 Primitas Learning Partnership is committed to the employment policies and practices which are fair to and which support professional development for every member of staff, including part-time, agency and supply.
- 4.2 The aim is to create an environment where Members, Trustees, Governors and Employees:
- Apply equality and fairness in employment practices. All decisions including advertising of vacancies, short listing, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of need.
 - When terminating employment apply fair and objective criteria that is not discriminatory in any way. Disciplinary penalties and the management of sickness absence will be applied without discrimination based on a protected characteristic.
 - Monitor the conditions of service of fixed term, agency workers and part time employees to ensure they have access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities.
 - Consider flexible working requests under the Primitas Policy and decisions are based on organisational need and not direct or indirect discrimination of any protected characteristic.
 - Draw the attention of management or the appropriate trade union to suspected acts or practices which affect equal opportunities. The Trust will ensure that recruitment procedures are fair, honest and open, with academies monitoring staff recruitment, retention and career development by ethnicity, gender, disability and age.
- 4.3 All staff have a right to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. All complaints relating to employment must be made at first informally and if necessary the next

step should be through the formal grievance procedure. Any member of staff who deliberately or knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action. All complaints are assumed to be made in good faith unless there is evidence to the contrary.

- 4.4 If an accusation is found to have been made maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken against the person making the false complaint.

5. SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

5.1 Gender, Gender Reassignment and Sexual Orientation.

The Trust is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on gender, including gender change, sexual orientation or marital status. This will include any unequal treatment based on pregnancy/maternity.

5.2 Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic origin)/Religion or Belief

The Trust is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, colour, religion/belief, ethnicity or national origin. There may be situations in the Academy which require special consideration and where a genuine occupational qualification may apply, for example to justify the employment of a particular sex. However, these situations will be unusual and exceptional and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

5.3 Disability

The Trust is opposed to any discrimination against people with disabilities based on assumptions on their ability or otherwise to carry out the duties of a post in the Trust. All candidates with disabilities who meet the essential criteria for a post will be considered for short listing. Usually the Trust will short list up to at least three candidates for any one job. Decisions on short listing will be based on the application form and letter only judged against the essential criteria only. Provision will be made for adjustments to the recruitment process and/or working conditions or environment where this is practicable. The definition of disability is “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. The impairment must have lasted or will last at least 12 months or last the rest of an individual’s life. This does not mean that people with “disabilities” do not have “abilities” that are valuable within a working environment. Medical advisers may be consulted to support employees with disabilities, reasonable adjustments may be recommended and where practicable implemented.

5.4 Age

The Trust is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination, based on age towards any employee before, during or after employment.

All employees have the right to be treated fairly regardless of age, and not be subjected to any practice, which may disadvantage them because of being a particular age, unless objectively justified. The Trust must not subject any employee to harassment that violates an employee’s dignity, nor victimisation because they have made or intend to make a complaint of discrimination on the grounds of age. This right continues after the working relationship ends.

5.5 Membership of Recognised Associations

The Academy also recognises its statutory obligation not to discriminate on the grounds of:

- Trade Union
- Political Affiliation
- Professional Association

5.6 Dignity at work

The Trust is committed to the principles of dignity at work for all staff in the Trust. This includes the right to be treated with respect by all managers and colleagues. Any person who fails to act in accordance with this principle will be investigated in accordance with the Academy's procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action.

5.7 Training

The principle outlined in relation to fair and equal treatment will also apply to selection for training. Details of training opportunities will be made available to all staff, who will be given the opportunity to request training on courses which they believe to be relevant to their role and personal development as identified through the annual performance management cycle. There can, of course, be no guarantee that all such requests will be met. Priorities for training allocation will be based on the Academy's development plan and budget allocations. All staff will be trained annually about Equality Act legislation.

6. SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS LINKED TO GENDER AND GENDER REASSIGNMENT

- 6.1 We believe that boys and girls should have equal access to all aspects of Academy life, including the curriculum, subject choices and extra-curricular activities.
- 6.2 It may be necessary for students to receive different treatment in order to ensure equality of opportunity and the Academy will pursue strategies to ensure that students achieve to their full potential.
- 6.3 The Trust will examine its practices to ensure that students are given opportunities to achieve and that stereotyped expectations do not limit the experiences available.
- 6.4 All teaching staff are actively encouraged to break down stereotypical expectations in all areas of curriculum planning and delivery. Through our CPD programme we will raise awareness and use of appropriate teaching and learning styles.
- 6.5 All careers, advice and guidance will be fully inclusive and staff will be advised to promote equal opportunities for all students, based on guidance issued by the Equality Act 2010. Explicit guidance will be given to avoid gender stereotyping.
- 6.6 Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on gender, transgender or gender reassignment will be investigated and, where proven, directly challenged. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence.
- 6.7 For any person who is directly associated with the Trust who expresses their choice for gender reassignment or a change in identity from their birth gender, we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they

cannot be subject to unlawful discrimination. Furthermore, we will be vigilant and do all that we can to ensure that the individual is not subject to harassment or victimisation.

- 6.8 Whilst we will recognise and promote an individual's decision to be informally known by a different pronoun/name in recognition of their preferred identity, all formal correspondence will be linked to the legal name of the person, as directed by the Gender Recognition Act 2004.
- 6.9 When the person who identifies in this way is a current student at the Academy, any reasonable adjustment will always involve parental communication and engagement, with the intention of all parties supporting the new chosen identity.
- 6.10 Our Accessibility & Equality Action Plan reflects specific priorities and we will monitor and evaluate our progress in meeting planned actions.

7. DISABILITY

- 7.1 Primitas Learning Partnership is fully committed to the duties placed on schools in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.
- 7.2 Primitas Learning Partnership accepts the legal definition of a disabled person as someone:

'If a person has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.'
- 7.3 The Equality Act 2010 identifies a number of conditions such as cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis which are deemed to be disabilities from the time of diagnosis. The Equality Act 2010 identifies mental health conditions as falling within the remit of a disability.
- 7.4 We promote disability equality in our policies, procedures and curriculum even if this results in more favourable treatment within the parameters of 'reasonable adjustment'; this policy details steps to help the Academy meet these requirements, and further updates to this policy will be made as guidance is received.
- 7.5 We will consider the needs of all people in the Trust including:
 - Students who may be disabled but not have a statement of special educational need nor be on any stage of special needs assessment.
 - Teachers and other Academy staff.
 - Members, Trustees and Governors.
 - Professionals from other agencies.
 - Parents.
 - All visitors to the Trust.
 - All visitors to the Academies within the Trust.
- 7.6 In addition, the Trust will ensure that discrimination does not occur and that disabled people will not be placed at substantial disadvantage compared to others who are not disabled. We will seek to support all students and employees with health conditions or resulting disabilities whether or not they are covered by the Equality Act 2010.

- 7.7 We will ensure that our policies, in particular in relation to admissions procedures, do not place disabled students at a disadvantage.
- 7.8 The Trust will undertake an annual audit of facilities and access for disabled people, focusing on access to buildings, facilities and the curriculum. It will maintain updated written information on facilities and services and produce a plan to develop accessibility which is regularly updated.
- 7.9 Teachers will take specific action to enable the effective participation of students with disabilities by:
- planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for satisfactory completion of tasks;
 - planning opportunities, when necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum;
 - identifying aspects of their programmes of study and attainment targets that may present specific difficulties for individuals;
- 7.10 Our Accessibility & Equality Action Plan reflects specific priorities and we will monitor and evaluate our progress in meeting planned actions.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.1 The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team of each Academy, alongside Members, Trustees and Governors will oversee the effective implementation of the policy and ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy. This includes employer-related recruitment and training.
- 8.2 The Headteacher of each Academy will report to their Governing Body annually on the implementation of this policy, analysis of equality outcomes data for their school and the Accessibility and Equality Action Plan. The Governing Body will review the action plan with the Headteacher and will approve updates, taking into account the analysis of outcomes data. They will also keep up-to-date with any developments regarding equalities legislation and resulting policy developments.
- 8.3 The Executive Headteacher will report to the Trust Board annually on the implementation of this policy by all Primitas academies and the Trust Board will monitor the effectiveness of the local governance with regards to scrutinising and reviewing the Accessibility and Equality Action Plan.
- 8.4 All Trust staff will be made fully aware of the Equality Policy, how it relates to them and how they have a key responsibility in upholding this on a daily basis. They will be involved in the further development of the policy and objectives as appropriate. They will be encouraged to actively support the policy and expected to act in accordance with it and express any queries or training requirements.
- 8.5 Students will be expected to actively support the policy and informed of Academy expectations to act in accordance with it.
- 8.6 Parents will be encouraged to actively support the policy. They will also be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child.
- 8.7 The Trust Board is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Policy.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

- 9.1 A range equality outcomes data will be used to monitor and analyse the following areas in each Academy for each of the nine protected characteristics:
- Student attainment.
 - Access to the curriculum and subject areas.
 - Exclusions from Academies within the Trust.
 - Exclusions from areas of the curriculum, including school trips and extracurricular activities.
 - Sanctions and rewards.
 - Staff recruitment, retention and career development.
 - Analysis of discrimination related incidents.
 - Ofsted reports on educational provision and standards.
 - Consultation with parents, students and governors.
- 9.2 This data analysis will be used to inform planning, identify priorities and to ensure that the Trust's commitment to equal opportunities goes from policy to practice in each Academy, so that we improve outcomes for all of our learners.
- 9.3 This data will inform the review of the Accessibility & Equality Action Plan which is undertaken by the LGB of each Academy on an annual basis. The Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that these reviews are carried out with sufficient rigour.
- 9.4 The Accessibility and Equality Action Plan will be shared with all staff on an annual basis as part of Equality training.

10. LINKED POLICIES

To underpin the values and ethos of our Academy's within the Trust and our intent to ensure that students at our academies are treated equally, the following policies are also a support to the Equalities Policy:

- Safeguarding Policy
- SEN Policy
- Behaviour for Learning
- Anti-Bullying
- Admissions Policy
- SMSC
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Prevent Risk Assessment
- Staff Dignity at Work policy

11. THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2011 impose a specific duty on public sector bodies, including schools, which therefore requires all our academies to publish information relating to protected characteristics of employees.

Primitas Learning Partnership is committed to adopting the aims of the PSED, in all of our academies, as stipulated in Appendix 2.

ADVANCING EQUALITY ON A DAILY BASIS

The Trust's name, vision and values are underpinned by inclusivity, collaboration and empowerment and every Academy within the Trust is fully aware of the fundamental need to adhere to these principles as a Primitas Academy. All Primitas Academies are therefore expected to pay due regard to their responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010, on a daily basis, by being committed to the following :

- Fostering a warm, welcoming and respectful learning environment, where:
 - Discrimination and inequality can be questioned and challenged, conflicts can be resolved peacefully and all stakeholders can remain free from harassment and victimisation.
 - We can work together productively, learning from each other's similarities and differences whilst striving to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning.
- Creating inclusive policies, processes and practices, compliant with all relevant legislation, ensuring that the varying needs of individuals and groups are recognised, identified, acknowledged and met, with due regard given to the Nine Protected Characteristics.
- Acknowledging that we cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same and so reasonable and fair adjustments need to be made where necessary.
- Ensuring that there is an extensive range of curricular and extra-curricular activities which allow students to explore the values and beliefs of others, develop their own personal values and beliefs, understand human feelings and emotions, investigate moral values and ethical issues and develop an understanding of how communities and society's function.
- Individualising students' curriculums and developing flexible learning arrangements to support all students.
- Holding regular assemblies which raise a wide range of moral and religious issues, focussing on respect to other peoples' values and beliefs and celebrating diversity, thereby challenging racism and valuing race equality.
- Developing transition arrangements for new intake students which take full account of their individual needs, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO of the sending school and other key staff.
- Using external support agencies to support the Academy in meeting the requirements of the Equalities Policy.
- Supporting charitable organisations and events activities which raise awareness of and promote equality.
- Analysing equality outcomes data and reviewing and updating the Accessibility and Equality Action Plan on an annual basis.
- Carrying out annual staff training on the requirements and obligations of the Equalities Act 2010 and the Accessibility and Equalities Action Plan.
- Publish information in accordance with PSED Specific Duties, to show how the school is advancing equality

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY (PSED) : EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary has been produced using two key documents:

1. *Equality Act 2010: A Quick Start Guide to PSED for Public Sector Organisations*
2. *The Equality Act 2010 and Schools: DfE Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and LAs*

Introduction and Background to the PSED

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation (such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act) with a single Act. It aimed to:

- Simplify the law, thus making compliance easier.
- Strengthen the law, thus making it easier to tackle discrimination and inequality.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which is Section 149 of the Act, came into force on 5th April 2011, to ensure that Public Bodies (including academies) intentionally consider how their activities affect different people.

In essence, in order to fulfil their PSED obligations, academies must have **due regard** for the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- 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.

(The protected characteristics are: *Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation.*)

Where schools are concerned, age will be a relevant characteristic in considering their duties in their role as an employer but not in relation to pupils.

What having “**due regard**” means in practice has been defined in case law as **giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty**. In practical terms, this means that whenever significant decisions are being made, activities are taking place or policies are being reviewed/developed, consideration and thought must be given to their equality implications. The significance of those implications and the amount of thought that needs to be devoted to them will vary depending on the nature of the decision/activity/policy development.

Specific Duties

The Government has also introduced Specific Duties which are intended to help public authorities meet their general PSED obligations in a way which encourages transparency and accountability as a public body funded with public money. These Specific Duties are set out in the **Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011** and require public bodies to:

- Publish information, at least annually, to show how the school is advancing equality in line with PSED.
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.

It is important to note that the government is clear that these duties should not be overly burdensome on schools. The intention is that they are to be carried out in a flexible, light-touch and proportionate way, and not as a bureaucratic, prescriptive “tick-box” exercise. Schools have freedom to comply with the specific duties in ways appropriate to their own context and set of circumstances.

Schools will not be required to collect any statistical data which they do not already collect routinely. Schools are simply expected to scrutinise and analyse appropriate data through the filter of equality. Furthermore, it is important to note that the published information does not have to be statistical data. Many other kinds of information should be used to show how the school is fulfilling the general duty (such as key policies, curriculum information, assembly plans, minutes of meetings, surveys, details of annual training schedules etc.)

Publishing Information

Information about employees will not need to be published where a public authority has fewer than 150 employees. This means that for the great majority of schools, the only information that needs to be published is pupil-related. However, some employee-related information may be helpful to show how pupil-related equality is being considered. (E.g Info about Equalities Training for all staff.) However, broadly speaking, schools must ensure that individuals are not able to be identified through the publication of data.

Below are some suggestions from the DfE about the kind of published information which may be relevant in showing how each of the three strands of the duty is being addressed:

Strand 1. Eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act

The DfE clarifies that schools need to show that they are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and that they will comply with non-discrimination provisions. To do so, they could publish:

- Policies relating to behaviour, anti-bullying, recruitment and pay
- A note of meetings at which staff or governors have been reminded of their duties under the Act
- Evidence of staff training
- A note of how the school monitors equality issues

Strand 2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

To fulfil this aspect of the duty, the DfE suggests that academies could publish:

- Attainment data showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Information on the steps/interventions the school is implementing in response to the above data
- Evidence showing improvements for specific groups, such as a decline in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying
- Information about any initiatives, policies, activities, curriculum activities within the school designed to promote equality

NB: Attainment data won't be appropriate, and shouldn't be used, for all protected characteristics – for example, religion or sexual orientation.

Strand 3. Fostering good relations across characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The DfE suggests that schools could demonstrate that they are fulfilling this strand by publishing evidence of:

- Aspects of the curriculum that celebrate diversity and promote tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures.
- Assemblies dealing with relevant issues
- Involvement with local communities
- Twinning/collaboration arrangements with other schools
- Initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school

The regulations are not prescriptive and it will be entirely up to schools to decide what arrangements they make to publish relevant information, so long as it is readily accessible to those members of the school community and the public who want to see it.

For most schools, the simplest approach may be to set up an equalities page on their website where all this information is present or links to it are available. However, increasingly, social media is being used by schools to share and publicise appropriate equalities-related information.

When deciding what to do to tackle equality issues, schools may want to consult and engage with both with stakeholders and with individuals and organisations who have specialist knowledge which can inform the school's approach, such as disability equality groups and other relevant special interest organisations. Evidence of this engagement can also usefully be included in the published material showing how the duty has been addressed