

**Equality Policy
and
Equality Objectives 2023-2027**

The Bishop of Winchester Academy



Sapere Aude

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			Previously approved on 13.12.22 by full Trust Board; Previous review: Nov 2022; Review due: Nov 2023.
2	Lent 2025	CWA	Addition of a control table., integration of Equality Objectives. Insertion of contextual paragraph within the introduction section to set out ideological position regarding the value of diversity. Addition of information about breach of policy. Punctuation and grammar corrections. 11.2: Correction made to the protected characteristics. 11.4: Corrections to document titles. Objectives: improvements to phrasing. Policy approved on 08.07.25, subject to inclusion of new section on 'Fostering good relations' and 'Equality considerations in decision-making', both now integrated.

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Sponsors Statement

All The Bishop of Winchester Academy (TBOWA) policies exist to support the Sponsors' vision, Christian ethos and values that are embedded in the day-to-day and long-term running of the academy. Each policy evidences the commitment of the Sponsors to the principles and values of honesty, respect, hospitality, compassion, love, forgiveness, self-discipline, creativity and hope. This policy contributes to the development of young people and the community through all Academy activities.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As a Church of England Academy, the Christian ethos of love, respect, care and forgiveness for all members of the community, will be promoted throughout The Bishop of Winchester Academy.
- 1.2 We recognise that by valuing and promoting equality and diversity for all employees and job applicants and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services, we will be able to deliver an excellent education for the young people in our academy.
- 1.3 We believe it is our duty to ensure our workforce reflects the diverse nature of both the community we serve, and wider society. We are committed to building a diverse academy, that nurtures and develops talent for all, in an inclusive environment, so that it is attractive to people from all backgrounds. We value diversity and recognise the varied contributions that a diverse workforce brings to an organisation. We are committed to drawing on different perspectives and experiences of individuals. This will add real value to what we do and will better enable us to deliver our strategic objectives.
- 1.4 At the Bishop of Winchester Academy, we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We aim 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; and foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 1.5 We will ensure that we do not discriminate against any member of the TBOWA community based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics).
- 1.6 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

2 Scope and purpose

- 2.1 This policy covers Trustees and all individuals working at all levels and grades in the academy including the Principal, Academy Leadership Team, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, volunteers, casual workers and agency staff (collectively referred to as **employees** in this policy).
- 2.2 This policy applies to all aspects of the employment relationship and covers job advertisements, recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment. It also applies to former employees for example in the provision of employment references.
- 2.3 The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach to equal opportunities, how we will tackle discrimination and how we will put our commitment into action and comply with the law, to ensure that equality and diversity is promoted in the workplace and our employees are not subject to and do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

3 Legal Framework

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.

This policy is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: 'The Equality Act 2010 and Schools' and complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4 Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 Our Trust Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with equality legislation. Day-to-day operational responsibility including regular review of this policy, has been delegated to the Principal.
- 4.2 All leaders must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities, awareness, recruitment and selection best practice.
- 4.3 All employees must be aware of this policy and have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and not to discriminate against or harass other people including employees, former employees and job applicants treating them with dignity at all times. They should also apply this to how they treat members of the public in the provision of services and should support the academy in meeting its commitment to provide equal opportunities for all and promoting diversity in the workplace.

5 Forms of discrimination

- 5.1 Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- 5.2 Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics as set out above. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. It will only be exceptional circumstances that this will apply in our academy.
- 5.3 Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but puts people with a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.
- 5.4 Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership are not protected directly under the harassment provisions. However, pregnancy and maternity harassment would amount to harassment related to sex, and harassment related to civil partnership would amount to harassment related to sexual orientation.
- 5.5 Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.
- 5.6 Discrimination by association is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with

another individual who has a protected characteristic.

- 5.7 Discrimination by perception is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that a person has a particular protected characteristic irrespective of whether they do have that protected characteristic (this does not include marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity).
- 5.8 Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as parents and carers, clients or customers.
- 5.9 Part-time and fixed-term staff should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

6 Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 Making pupils aware of our behaviour and anti-bullying policies
- 6.3 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
- 6.4 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 (We have PACE visit)
- 6.5 Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with differences between 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.
- 6.6 We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

7 Equality considerations in decision-making

- 7.1 The academy ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. We consider equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and make decisions and continue to review these on a continuing basis.
- 7.2 The academy always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the academy considers whether the trip:
 - 7.2.1 Cuts across any religious holidays
 - 7.2.2 Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
 - 7.2.3 Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

8 Applying our policy to recruitment

- 8.1 We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities. All applicants are able to view our recruitment privacy notice, available on our website, which sets out how we will gather, process and hold personal data of individuals. Our recruitment processes are set out in our Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- 8.2 Job selection criteria as set out in the person specification will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job. Short listing of applicants should be done by more than one person wherever possible and will be carried out objectively against the requirements of the job.
- 8.3 Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.
- 8.4 We will take reasonable steps, where appropriate depending on the situation, to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market.
- 8.5 Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, other than where it is necessary to;
 - 8.5.1 establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments),
 - 8.5.2 establish if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable an applicant to have a fair interview or assessment,
 - 8.5.3 carry out equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process),and noting that:
 - 8.5.4 job offers will be conditional upon a satisfactory medical check in accordance with our obligation under Keeping Children Safe in Education, where a school must verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities in accordance with the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 8.6 Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.
- 8.7 We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance, name or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original specified documents before employment starts to satisfy current immigration legislation.
- 8.8 To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our academy, we monitor diversity data as part of the recruitment process and as set out in our Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's success at recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

9 Applying our policy to training, promotion, pay decisions and conditions of service

- 9.1 All employees will be provided with a copy of our Workforce Privacy Notice which sets out how we will collect, hold and share personal data of individuals during their employment.
- 9.2 Employees training needs will be identified through the appraisal process. All employees will be given appropriate access to training for their job and in order to enable them to progress within the academy.

- 9.3 Pay and promotion decisions will be based on an employee's performance (where relevant), skills and experience and as detailed in our Pay policy.
- 9.4 We provide free access to an independent and confidential Employee Assistance Programme for all staff.
- 9.5 Our benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all employees who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.
- 9.6 Relevant national and local conditions of service, as applied to our employees, will meet the requirements of equal opportunities.

10 Applying our policy when terminating employment

- 10.1 We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- 10.2 We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and sanctions are applied without discrimination.

11 Disability discrimination

- 11.1 Disability discrimination includes direct or indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate the effects caused by a disability.
- 11.2 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- 11.3 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your line manager or HR to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager or HR may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 11.4 We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled employees or job applicants at a substantial disadvantage compared to other employees. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for employees who have a disability.

12 Breaches of this policy

- 12.1 If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter through our anti-harassment policy. If you are uncertain which applies or need advice on how to proceed you should speak to the Director of People and Culture.
- 12.2 Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.
- 12.3 Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Equality Objectives 2023 –2027



1. The Bishop of Winchester Academy is committed to:
 - Promoting equality of opportunity
 - Eliminating discrimination and harassment
 - Valuing diversity and promoting positive relationships
 - Providing an inclusive education
 - Monitoring the progress and attainment of all students and to giving additional specific intervention to those who need extra support to reach their full potential
 - Meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

2. The Equality Act (2010) protects individuals against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on the nine protected characteristics. For schools, this means that it is unlawful to discriminate against students and staff or treat them less favourably because of their:
 - Age: Protection against discrimination based on age, encompassing all age groups.
 - Disability: Protection against discrimination based on physical or mental impairment.
 - Gender reassignment: Protection against discrimination for those who are changing or have changed their sex.
 - Marriage and civil partnership: Protection against discrimination based on marital status.
 - Pregnancy and maternity: Protection against discrimination during pregnancy and related to maternity leave.
 - Race: Protection against discrimination based on ethnicity, nationality, or national origin.
 - Religion or belief: Protection against discrimination based on religious or philosophical belief.
 - Sex: Protection against discrimination based on gender (male or female).
 - Sexual orientation: Protection against discrimination based on a person's sexual attraction to others.

3. The Public Sector Equality Duty places additional duties on organisations such as academy trusts. The duties include working proactively to eliminate discrimination based on the nine protected characteristics. This requires us to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other prohibited conduct under the Equality Act (2010).
 - advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups.
 - foster good relations between people from different groups.

4. We are required to:
 - Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty. This is done via our equality objectives and related policies, statements and strategies:
 - Curriculum Statement
 - Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Examinations Policies
 - SEND Information Report and Policy
 - Pupil Premium Strategy
 - Publish Equality Objectives which are specific and measurable

5. 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 all.



Equality Objectives 2023 – 2027

Objective 1

To continue to provide an environment that welcomes, protects and respects everyone within the academy community.

Objective 2

To continue to close the gaps in progress and attainment between all students; especially boys and girls, disadvantaged students, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Looked After Children, and students from different heritage groups.

Objective 3

To ensure that all students are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the Academy particularly focusing on developing leadership opportunities.

Objective 4

To eradicate the use of homophobic, sexist, racist and other discriminative language by students in the Academy

Objective 5

To enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of all employees to realise their full potential.

These objectives are updated quadrennially.