



The Rivers
C.of E. Academy Trust

Equality and Diversity Information and Objectives

Date approved by Board of Trustees:	N/A
Date of last review:	25 th November 2019
Next review due:	30 TH June 2024

Purpose of Equality and Diversity Information and Objectives

The purpose of this document is to define the MAT's commitment to equality and diversity and represents a common set of values and objectives, and a consistent approach to communicating, implementing and monitoring those values and objectives.

The MAT and its schools are committed to equality in both employment and education provision. We aim to ensure that pupils, parents, advocates, trustees, staff, contractors, partners, clients and those who may potentially join the MAT community, are treated fairly, and with dignity and respect.

This document encompasses the following protected characteristics: age; disability; race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex (including transgender); gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; sexual orientation; and marriage and civil partnership (for employees).

The MAT recognises that it is also unlawful to discriminate by association or perception, e.g. treating a pupil unfairly based on the protected characteristics of their parents or other family members.

This document recognises the four types of unlawful behaviour; direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Every possible step will be taken into account in the aim of ensuring individuals are treated fairly and decisions are based on objective criteria.

Links with Other Policies or Legislation

This statement applies to every policy, procedure and guidance document that is produced in relation to pupils, staff, parents and advocates.

This statement is underpinned by the Equalities Act 2010.

Equality Statement

The MAT will ensure that equal opportunities and the principles of fairness underpin all aspects of policy, procedure, education provision, consultation and decision making.

The MAT aims to provide high-quality education, making sure services are easily accessible. We will improve what we do by continuing to consult with staff, pupils, parents, advocates and their communities and partners about equalities issues. We will promote equal opportunities in our contact with parents, staff, advocates and external organisations.

We will make every effort to create equality of opportunity in order to ensure that opportunities are accessible and fair to everyone. Every person has the right to be treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, culture, religion, and nationality or caring responsibilities. Where necessary, we will implement reasonable adjustments, or additional support, to ensure equality of access to an education and suitable working environment.

Our staff and advocates who agree and deliver our education provision will recognise diversity and demonstrate a proactive approach in their day-to-day work. They will ensure that everyone is treated fairly, recognising special needs and understanding differences.

Behaviour will follow our high standards of conduct (staff and pupils) and the learning environment we provide will be safe and accessible for those studying and working.

The MAT will adhere to statutory Government legislation and give consideration to other relevant guidance, which aim to make sure that everyone is treated with equity.

The MAT will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against members of the academy community.

Employment

The MAT is committed to ensuring that employees have equal access to jobs, training, and professional development opportunities

All employment policies refer to the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010.

The MAT recognises that the Act extends beyond the protected characteristics of an individual employee and has broader responsibilities to employees and situations that maybe covered by the Act. For example, an employee with parental or caring responsibilities for a disabled dependent may have rights under the Act which the Academy would need to consider.

All recruitment will be within the provisions of the act, and applications will be monitored to report on recruitment activity, in line with the act.

Age is a protected characteristic in relation to employment but does not apply to pupils in the academies/schools.

Employees who are in breach of this policy will be dealt with under the academy's disciplinary policy.

Pupils

The MAT and its schools will ensure that pupils are provided with appropriate support to recognise their individual needs. This includes protection under the Act extending the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils.

All policies relating to the provision of education, the curriculum, and behaviour for learning, attendance, exclusion, medical treatment and Child Protection and safeguarding policies should consider the provisions and duties of the Act.

The MAT will ensure that all service providers that are contracted to provide services to pupils, staff or visitors will comply with Equalities legislation.

Where services are deemed not to meet MAT/Academy standards in relation to equal opportunities and fairness, contracts may be terminated.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for making sure schools follow all of its equality and diversity guidelines and/or policies and meet their legal responsibilities with respect to equality.

The Headteacher/Head of School is responsible for:

- Giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality and diversity;
- Putting the MAT's equality and diversity guidelines/policies into practice;
- Ensuring that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination;
- Actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination related to protected characteristics perpetrated by pupils, other staff or visitors;
- Keeping up to date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training;
- Dealing with complaints from parents, pupils and the community in line with the Academy's complaints procedure, and ensuring that appropriate staff deal with the relevant stage of the complaint.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Respecting others in their language and actions;
- Observing the MAT's equality and diversity guideline and objectives.

Complaints

The MAT will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful (or potentially unlawful) discrimination.

Any complaints will be investigated in accordance with the MAT's grievance or complaints policy, whichever is appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Any reviews to this document will be consulted on and brought to Trustees.

Monitoring the implementation of this document is the responsibility of each school.