THE NEW GUILD TRUST

Equality Policy

POLICY

This policy has been adopted on behalf of all academy schools in The New Guild Trust:

Moorpark Junior School
Jackfield Infant School
Alexandra Junior School
Alexandra Infants' School

Approval and Review

Committee to Approve Policy	Trust Board
Date of Trustee Board / Academy Committee Approval	March 2026
Chair of Trustee Board / Academy Committee	Mrs L Eagle
Signature	*L. Eagle*
Accounting Officer	Mrs K Peters
Signature	*K. Peters*
Policy Review Period	12 months
Date of Policy Review	March 2027

Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Changes	Reason for Alterations
Initial	Jun 2019		
	July 2020		
	Jan 2022	No change	
	Feb 2023	'Board of Directors' replaced with Trustee Board	
	Feb 2024	Updates to technical guidance for schools EHRC document	
	Feb 2025	Inclusion of contractors and volunteers under harassment protections	Amendments to Equality Act 2024
	Feb 2026	Updated legislation and guidance regarding inspection framework for 25/26 for each academy to note	

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- Sex
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This Equality Policy replaces the:

- Race Policy
- Disability Equality Policy
- Gender Equality Scheme
- Equal Opportunity Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out in detail how The New Guild Trust intends to comply with the Equality Act 2010 along with outlining the Trust's approach to inclusion.

At The New Guild Trust staff are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for **all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the Trust, irrespective of ethnicity, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and age for staff.** We will adhere to the legal definitions of these protected characteristics as set out by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Code of Practice, updated September 2023.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all those connected to the Trust feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life. The achievement of pupils will be monitored by ethnicity, sex, age and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2. Mainstreaming Equality into Policy and Practice

Whilst the Trust operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice which is highlighted throughout this Policy, specific actions are set out in the School Development Plan.

3. Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps, including providing targeted support where appropriate;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the Trust's population and local community without stereotyping and expose pupils to a range of thoughts and ideas;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for all pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Seek to involve the community around the Academy Schools in the celebration and raising awareness of cultural issues.

4. Admissions and Exclusions

The New Guild Trust admissions and exclusion policies are delivered with guidance from Stoke-on-Trent City Council, but please see individual school policies for specific details relating to these issues.

5. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at THE NEW GUILD TRUST. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and incompliance with the law.

6. Employer Duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in our employment practice and advance equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as age, sex, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and religion and belief are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:
- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff;
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff, which are monitored as part of the performance management process;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

7. Equality and the Law

The New Guild Trust will ensure it does not unlawfully discriminate against its pupils, prospective pupils, staff, job applicants, contractors, volunteers or parents/carers in the performance of its duties, policies and practices.

Discrimination means treating someone less (or more) favourably than a “comparator”. Harassment (which is one form of discrimination) means violating someone’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Victimisation means discrimination because of a previous complaint.

We recognise that discrimination can occur in the following ways and will actively work to alleviate it:
- Direct discrimination;
- Indirect discrimination;
- Discrimination arising from disability including failure to make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids and services;
- Harassment;
- Victimisation.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 The Role of the Trustee Board

The Trustee Board sets out its commitment to equal opportunities in this Policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the Trust is fully inclusive to pupils, and prospective pupils, and responsive to their needs.

The Trustee Board seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our Academy Schools on grounds of the protected characteristics and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the Academy environment gives access to people with disabilities, and strive to make Academy communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.

The Trustee Board welcome all applications to join the Trust, whatever a child's socio-economic background, ethnicity, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, or pregnancy.

The Trustee Board is liable for any breaches of legislation. It is also liable for the actions of its employees and agents of the Academy Schools, unless it can show that it took all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation taking place.

8.2 The Role of the Headteacher

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the Trust's Equality Policy and s/he is supported by the Trustee Board in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy and that teaching and non-teaching staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all Appointment Panels give due regard to this Policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment and training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principal of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and other opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

8.3 The Role of All Staff: Teaching and Non-Teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils and members of staff are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the Trust's Equality Policy.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of bullying, prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of non-teaching staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discrimination incidents.
- Staff are personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment, whether or not the employer is liable.
- However, an employee is not liable in relation to disability discrimination in Academies.

9. Review of Progress and Impact

This Policy has been agreed by our Trustee Board. The New Guild Trust has a rolling programme for reviewing policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Policy annually as part of school improvement planning.
The Academy Schools within The New Guild Trust make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

10. Individual Academy School's Equality Policy

Please read each individual school's Equality Policy to identify how they intend to meet the Trust's Equality Guidelines within the next 2 year plan. In line with the Ofsted Inspection Framework, each

school promotes equality, respect and understanding of protected characteristics through its curriculum, behaviour expectations and school culture.

Appendix 1: Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics for the Trust's provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Age and marriage and civil partnerships are NOT protected characteristics for the Trust's provisions, but do apply to staff.

Disability

- A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.
- In relation to physical impairment: conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses) diabetes, asthma epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered.
- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis.
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met (see below).
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a Consultant Ophthalmologist, are automatically treated as disabled under the Act.
- Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia. The other tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are the length the effect of the condition has lasted or will continue: it must be long term.
- 'Long term' means that an impairment is likely to last for the rest of the person's life, or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur or if the person no longer has the condition, they will be considered to be a disabled person.
- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and/or time consuming for a person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience.
- If the activities that are made more difficult are 'normal day to day activities' at work or at home.
- Whether the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, like a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer.
- The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing the glass or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with.

- This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for Academy pupils, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.
- A person will be protected because of gender reassignment where they:
- Make their intention known to someone - it does not matter who this is, whether it is someone at an Academy School or at home or someone like a doctor:
- Once they have proposed to undergo gender assignment they are protected, even if they take no further steps or decide to stop later on.
- They do not have to have reached an irrevocable decision that they will undergo gender reassignment, but as soon as there is a manifestation of this intention they are protected.
- Start or continue to dress, behave or live (full or part-time) according to the gender they identify as a person.
- Undergo treatment related to gender reassignment, such as surgery or home therapy; or have received gender recognition under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.
- It does not matter which of these applies to a person for them to be protected because of the characteristic of gender reassignment.
- This guidance uses the term 'transsexual person' to refer to someone who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Act lists pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity means a person's:
- Colour, and/or
- Nationality (including citizenship), and/or
- Ethnic or National Origin

A racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

A person has the protected characteristics of ethnicity if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'.

Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

Religion or Belief

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

A religion need not to be mainstream or well known to gain protection as religion. However, it must be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within religions may be considered a religion. Cults and new religious movements may also be considered religions or beliefs.

Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. 'Religious belief' goes beyond beliefs and adherence to a religion or its central articles of faith and may vary from person to person within the same religion. A belief which is not a religious belief may be a philosophical belief, such as humanism or atheism. A belief need not include faith or worship of a God or Gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world.

For a belief to be protected by the Equality Act:
- It must be genuinely held.
- It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment.

- It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
- It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society.
- It must be compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

Sex

A person's sex refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to either boys or girls.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

- Some people are only attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men).
- Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people).
- Some people are only attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people).

Everyone is protected from being treated worse because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian or heterosexual. Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with manifestation of that sexual orientation.