



Salterns Academy Trust

## **Equality Policy**

**Document Author:** The Chief Operating Officer (COO)

<b>Updated</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Approved Date</b>
October 2021	CFOO	Trust Board	December 2021
December 2022	COO	Trust Board	February 23
Summary of significant amendments: Confirmation that this policy relates to the trust and its schools update of section 8 Minor changes throughout to reflect updated language/practice			
Feb 24	COO	Trust Bard	March 24
Minor changes to reflect updated language/practice			

Article 2: 'The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to everyone: whatever their race, religion or abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from'

Article 7: 'Every child has the right to a legal name and nationality, as well as the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents'

Article 8: 'Governments must respect every child's right to a name, a nationality and family ties'

Article 29: 'Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment'

Article 30: 'Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live'

This policy applies to the Trust and its Schools. The trust and each of its LGB's will set their own equalities objectives that align with the requirements of this policy

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Salterns Academy Trust prides itself on its inclusive and student-centred approach to education delivery. Each of its schools are highly inclusive schools which focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

1.2 We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality, and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

1.3 As UNICEF Rights Respecting schools, The Trust and Schools recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

## **2. Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles:**

2.1 All people are of equal value. Whether or not they have a disability, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin, or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

2.2 We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, and visit here.

2.3 We foster positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

2.4 We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider

community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

- 2.5 We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 2.6 We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all students can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
- 2.7 We work to raise standards for all students ensuring we provide effective support for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of students raises standards across the whole school.

### **3. Purpose of the Policy**

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that the Trust and its schools cannot discriminate against students or treat them less favourably because of their sex, gender, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.
- 3.2 Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not normally relevant for equalities provision related to students. Where appropriate how we will address discrimination in respect of these characteristics is set out in relevant staffing policies
- 3.3 This policy describes how the Trust and its schools are meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the Trust is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.
- 3.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Trust and its schools to:
  1. Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
  2. Advance equality of opportunity
  3. Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities
  4. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
  5. Publish equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Appendix 2 shows the Equality Objectives for the Trust and each of its schools.

### **4. Development of this Policy**

- 4.1 When developing the policy, we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and the OFSTED inspection framework 2018, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

4.2 We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for students who are identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

## **5. Links to other Policies and documentation**

5.1 Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equality in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also addressed and considered in the School Improvement Plans for each school.

5.2 There are also references in the Behaviour, Admissions, Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND), Anti-bullying policies and the Accessibility Plan.

5.3 The Equality Act also applies to our role as employers, and the way we comply with this is found in our Recruitment policy.

## **6. What are we doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation?**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our students and the way we provide access for students to facilities and services
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for students with disabilities – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of other students without disabilities and stop students with disabilities being placed at a disadvantage compared to their peers
- The Headteacher of each School ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion, or training opportunities
- We consult with a range of different stakeholders in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt, and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of a school
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, or maternity

## **7. Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance <sup>1</sup>**

The Relationships & Behaviour Policy of each school takes account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate, and flexible adjustment for students with disabilities. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and act promptly to address concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> Including suspensions

## **8. Addressing racist, homophobic, and other prejudice-based behaviour**

8.1 The Trust and its schools challenge all forms of racist and homophobic behaviour and other prejudice-based behaviour which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- Prejudices around race, religion, or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes
- Prejudices around Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

8.2 There is guidance in each school's staff handbook on how incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded, and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents very seriously.

8.3 The schools keep a record of incidents of racist and homophobic behaviour and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types, and seriousness of incidents at the school and how they were dealt with. The school and governors review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

## **9. What are our schools doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups?**

9.1 We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements. We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through the admissions procedures and we collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of students and use this data to support school improvement. We also take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and numeracy skills.

We regularly produce and analyse data on:

- The school population by gender and ethnicity.
- The number of students identified with a special educational need and/or disability and by their primary need or disability
- Inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and special educational need and/or disability and those students for whom English is an additional language.
- Standards reached by different groups across all year groups

We also collect, analyse, and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

- We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future students – we are for example, sufficiently prepared for a student with a disability to join one of our schools.
- We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any students' achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able".
- We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all students.

- We provide support and consider appropriate intervention to students at risk of underachieving.
- We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability, and sexuality.

9.2 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, for example:

- People with health conditions or impairments with those who do not
- Those with a learning disability (ies) and those who do not
- Students of different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds
- Students of different gender
- We ensure equality of access for all students to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation.
- We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan designed to:
  - Increase the extent to which students with disability can participate in the curriculum
  - Improve the physical environment
  - Respond to specialist advice to improved accessibility

9.3 We take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of students. Data is rigorously and routinely examined to focus school improvement planning. As a result, actions are planned for, and actioned, as evidenced in the School Improvement Plan and in the school's Equality Objectives.

## **10. What are our schools doing to foster good relations?**

- We teach students about the rights of children as detailed in the UNCRC
- We prepare our students for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of our students.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination through PSHEE (Aspiring Futures), Personal Development Days, Personal Development Curriculum and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population, and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity, and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes, and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for students to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, Personal Development Days, the Personal Development curriculum, Aspiring Futures programme (PSHEE) and whole school events e.g., Equalities week, Anti-Bullying week, Fairtrade fortnight etc.

- We include Equalities matters in our school magazines and through the schools' websites.
- We provide an explicit focus on Relational Practice (often referred to as Restorative Practice) which is centred around behaviours, interactions and approaches that build and maintain healthy relationships, resolving difficulties and repairing harm where there is conflict.
- We provide opportunities for student leadership at a range of levels across our schools.
- We encourage a range of clubs and groups across our schools including clubs and groups focussed on equalities issues.

## **11. Other ways we address equality issues**

11.1 We have a rolling programme for reviewing all our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety, and well-being of our students.

11.2 The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

11.3 To ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community we:

- Review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evening, parent-school forum and/or focus meetings or governors' parent-consultation meeting.
- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events.
- Review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, Aspiring Futures (PSHEE) lessons, student surveys etc.
- Carefully consider issues raised in Education and Health Care plan meetings and other support plans used.
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

## **12. Publishing equality objectives**

12.1 The trust and each of its school publishes their Equalities Objectives and Action Plan on their website. The objectives which are identified reflect the Trust strategic view and the school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review and analysis of data and other evidence. They also consider national and local priorities and issues.

12.2 We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality Data Analysis (Progress review data for example), which informs our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

12.3 Our Equality Objectives are asset set out at appendix 2 of this **policy**

## **13. Monitoring and reviewing objectives**



- 13.1 Each School reviews and updates its SIP regularly throughout the academic year and reports regularly to the Local Governing Body on progress towards achieving the objectives. We involve and consult with staff, students, governors and parents and carers.
- 13.2 Trust outcomes will be monitored by the Trust board
- 13.3 We will publish feedback to parents and carers on our success in achieving school improvement objectives through our Trust newsletter.

## **14. Roles and Responsibilities**

We expect all members of the Trust and school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance, and information to enable them to do this.

### **14.1 Trust Board**

Trustees are aware of their responsibilities and promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos, challenging prejudice, and discrimination, where necessary.

The Trust Board will ensure that:

Schools in the Trust comply with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. The Trust will also ensure that the schools' Action Plans for equality and diversity are scrutinised by the LGBs.

### **14.2 Local Governing Body**

The governing bodies are responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of each governing body has a watching brief regarding this policy.

Every Local Governing Body keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g., data) and qualitative evidence (e.g., surveys)

### **14.3 Headteachers and School Leadership Teams**

The Headteacher/Executive Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

A designated senior leader in each school (Deputy Head Teacher/Head of School) and within the Trust Central Team (COO) has responsibility for coordinating implementation of the action plans arising from this policy and for monitoring outcomes.

### **14.4 School Staff**

School staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom

- Challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- Plan and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all students
- Support different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- Keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will draw the expectations and duties of the Equality Act to the whole staff following the annual policy review.

#### **14 .5 Visitors**

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

### **15. Equal Opportunities for Staff**

15.1 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.

15.2 All staff appointments and promotions are made based on merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

15.3 We are also ensuring wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

15.4 As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce, including support for pregnant staff and those returning from maternity leave and for those going through menopause.

15.5 We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students, and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

15.6 We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **16. Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy**

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and adjust as appropriate carefully considering views of students, staff, governors and parents and carers.

### **17. Sharing this Policy**

The Equality Policy is available on the Trust website and linked on the schools' websites.

We will take opportunities to celebrate the work we are doing toward meeting the equality objectives through the school website, the school magazine, assemblies, staff meetings, Trust newsletter and other communications.

**18. Supporting Practices, Guidance and Advice:**

- The Equality Act 2010
- OFSTED Inspection Framework 2018
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Relationship & Behaviour Policy
- Children Looked After (CLA) Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Home/School Agreement
- School Improvement Plan
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Attendance Policy

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **Check list for school staff and governors**

- The school collects information on race, disability, and gender with regards to both students and staff, e.g., student achievement, attendance, exclusions, and staff training.
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training, and activities.
- The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, and other stakeholders.
- The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties.
- The school analyses student achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and acts when there are trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable students and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.
- A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes.
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- The school ensures that the Equality Policy is accessible through the school website.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all students to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.
- All groups of students are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution.
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of students in terms of difference and diversity (i.e., different groups) and acts if there is a cause for concern.
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community.
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and assemblies.
- The school environment is increasingly accessible to students, staff, and visitors to the school – including the acoustic environment.
- The accessibility needs of parents, students and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information.
- The Governing Body is representative of the community it serves.

- Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.
- The Trust Equality Policy is communicated to all staff.



**Salterns Academy trust has set out the following equality objectives for the period 2024-28.**

<b>Equality Objectives</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>How will the impact of the action be monitored?</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>
Improve the attainment of vulnerable groups of students, including students with Special Educational Needs, students with disabilities and those entitled to Free School Meals so that the gap between their attainment and that of other students is narrowed.	Continue to improve the quality of provision and interventions for SEND and disadvantaged students so that improving outcomes can be demonstrated over time for these groups of students.	Inclusion in school specific equality objectives  Termly through SLT meetings. Termly Governors monitoring of progress and outcomes.  Refer to School Improvement Plans which includes detailed actions and success criteria	Head Teachers supported by School senior leadership teams
Raise aspirations among children and young people, their parents and communities and raise awareness of career and higher education opportunities, to challenge stereotypes.	Ensuring careers education reflects Trust expectations and equality's messaging is embedded in this area of work.	Termly through SLT Exec SIP monitoring meetings. Termly Governors monitoring of quality of education.  Refer to School Improvement Plans which includes detailed actions and success criteria	Head Teachers supported by School senior leadership teams
Ensure that our schools deliver a curriculum (including our programme of enrichment and extra-curricular activities) that is broad and balanced and provides opportunities for all students and promotes diversity and inclusion.	Ensuring school's curriculum policies reflect the high expectations of the Trust	Annual review of and setting of curriculum policies and termly monitoring of implementation at SLT meetings and LGB meetings  Refer to school improvement plans & curriculum model for success criteria for PD Curriculum	Headteachers  LGB's for monitoring and review

<p>Maintain a rigorous anti-bullying stance so that all students and staff, including those with protected characteristics, are protected from harassment and discrimination of all kinds.</p>	<p>Ensure school culture and practice reflects policies of anti-bullying and harassment. Staff &amp; student training and awareness, appropriate support mechanisms and policies in place</p>	<p>Setting and monitoring of school policies</p>	<p>Head Teachers supported by School senior leadership teams.  LGB's in reviewing and monitoring policies</p>
<p>Ensure that our systems for recruiting, retaining and managing staff (and potential applicants) support all those in groups protected by the Equalities Act.</p>	<p>Monitoring and review of policies and practice to ensure these reflect best practice in relation to equalities issues</p>	<p>HR Reporting to Trustees and Governors</p>	<p>Trust CEO and Headteachers</p>