



THE SAINTS ACADEMIES

Equality Policy

September 2026 – September 2027

Policy owner	Executive Headteacher
Approved by	Local Academy Council
Effective from	September 2026
Review date	September 2027
Earlier review	Where there is a significant change in legislation, case law, statutory guidance or Trust arrangements



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1. Policy statement

The Saints Academies are committed to providing an inclusive environment in which every pupil, member of staff, parent/carers, visitor and other member of the school community is treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

The primary aim of The Saints Academies is to enable all pupils to participate as fully as possible in every aspect of school life, developing confidence, recognising strengths and supporting every child to achieve their full potential.

The Saints Academies will:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity;
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- promote respect for diversity and challenge prejudice, stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour;
- remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people because of protected characteristics;
- take account of the different needs of individuals and groups;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and staff;
- ensure that equality considerations are embedded in decision-making, policies, curriculum planning and school improvement;
- monitor relevant information and outcomes to identify and address inequalities.

This policy applies across all areas of academy life, including admissions, education, curriculum, teaching and learning, behaviour, attendance, exclusions, trips and activities, access to facilities and services, employment, professional development and relationships within the school community.

Part One – Promoting Equality in Our Academies

2. Our commitment to equality

The Saints Academies will take reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that all pupils can participate fully in school life.

We will:

- Provide a welcoming and inclusive environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Take reasonable steps to meet the needs of individual pupils and staff, including making reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
- Plan ahead to improve accessibility and reduce barriers to participation.
- Ensure that teaching, learning and the wider curriculum promote equality, respect, responsible citizenship and understanding of diversity.
- Challenge prejudice, discriminatory language, stereotyping, bullying and other behaviour that undermines equality or dignity.



- Monitor pupil progress, attainment, attendance, exclusions, participation and other relevant outcomes where appropriate, considering protected characteristics and other relevant factors.
- Use equality information to identify potential disparities and inform school improvement and equality objectives.
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and know how to recognise, challenge and report discriminatory behaviour.
- Provide appropriate training and professional development relating to equality, inclusion, disability, safeguarding, prejudice-related incidents and reasonable adjustments.
- Ensure that extra-curricular activities, educational visits, residential visits and other opportunities are planned so that pupils are not unreasonably disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic.
- Consult pupils, parents/carers, staff and other relevant stakeholders where appropriate when developing or reviewing equality arrangements.
- Work with external agencies, professional advisers and partner organisations where specialist advice or support is required.
- Monitor prejudice-related incidents and take appropriate action in accordance with the school's behaviour, safeguarding and complaints procedures.
- Review accessibility arrangements and maintain appropriate Accessibility Plans.
- Consider equality implications when developing or reviewing other school policies and when making significant decisions.

3. Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination because of the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Some protected characteristics apply differently in education and employment. In particular, the Equality Act provisions relating to age and marriage/civil partnership do not generally apply to pupils in the provision of education, but they remain relevant to staff and employment.

The academies will comply with the Equality Act 2010 in all circumstances in which its provisions apply.



4. Equality of opportunity

Equality does not necessarily mean treating everyone identically.

The academies recognise that people may have different needs and that removing disadvantage may require different or additional support.

We will therefore seek to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered because of a protected characteristic;
- meet the particular needs of people where those needs are different;
- encourage participation where participation is disproportionately low;
- provide reasonable adjustments where required by law;
- use evidence to identify and address barriers to equality.

Where lawful, the academies may use positive action to address disadvantage, meet particular needs or encourage participation where this is permitted by the Equality Act 2010.

Any positive action will be proportionate, evidence-based and consistent with the requirements of equality law.

5. Disability and reasonable adjustments

The academies recognise their anticipatory and continuing duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

We will take reasonable steps to avoid disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils who are not disabled.

This may include:

- changes to policies, practices or procedures;
- reasonable changes to physical arrangements;
- auxiliary aids and services;
- accessible information;
- adaptations to teaching and learning;
- additional support for participation in activities and educational visits;
- appropriate communication with pupils and parents/carers.

The academies will maintain and implement Accessibility Plans which address:

- increasing disabled pupils' access to the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment to increase access for disabled pupils; and
- improving the provision of information to disabled pupils.

Accessibility planning will be reviewed regularly and appropriate resources will be allocated to implement agreed actions.

The academies will also make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff where required.



6. Curriculum, teaching and learning

The curriculum will provide appropriate opportunities to:

- promote equality and respect;
- develop understanding of different backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and experiences;
- challenge prejudice and stereotyping;
- develop pupils' understanding of rights and responsibilities;
- promote respectful relationships;
- prepare pupils for life in a diverse society;
- support all pupils to achieve their potential.

Curriculum planning will take account of accessibility and the needs of pupils with SEND.

The academies will ensure that equality considerations are appropriately reflected in curriculum resources and teaching materials.

7. Bullying, discrimination and prejudice-related incidents

The academies will not tolerate bullying, discriminatory behaviour, harassment, victimisation or prejudice-related incidents.

All staff are expected to:

- model respectful behaviour;
- challenge inappropriate or discriminatory language and behaviour;
- respond appropriately to incidents;
- report incidents in accordance with academy procedures;
- support pupils who experience discrimination or prejudice.

Prejudice-related incidents will be recorded and monitored so that patterns and trends can be identified.

Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy and other relevant procedures.

8. Staff recruitment, development and employment

The Saints Academies are committed to equality of opportunity in employment.

- promote fair and transparent recruitment;
- welcome applications from a diverse range of candidates;
- avoid unlawful discrimination in recruitment, selection, promotion, training, pay, working conditions and termination of employment;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff;
- provide appropriate equality training;



- monitor relevant employment information where appropriate;
- ensure that staff understand their responsibilities under equality legislation.

Health-related questions will not be asked of applicants before an offer of employment except where permitted by the Equality Act 2010, including where a question relates to an intrinsic function of the role or another lawful exception applies.

9. Educational visits and extra-curricular activities

The academies will plan educational visits, residential visits, clubs, sporting activities and other opportunities so that pupils can participate as fully as reasonably possible.

Staff will consider accessibility, medical or additional needs, reasonable adjustments, cost and other potential barriers when planning activities.

Where participation data identifies a significant disparity associated with a protected characteristic, the academy will consider whether additional action is required.

10. Consultation and engagement

The academies will seek the views of pupils, parents/carers, staff and other relevant stakeholders where appropriate.

Consultation may inform:

- equality objectives;
- accessibility planning;
- policy development;
- curriculum planning;
- school improvement;
- the review of equality-related incidents and trends.

Consultation will be proportionate to the decision being made and the people likely to be affected.

Part Two – Legal Duties

11. Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection against unlawful discrimination and places duties on schools and other public authorities.

The academies will comply with the Act and with relevant statutory duties and guidance.



The law protects people against discrimination relating to protected characteristics and recognises different forms of unlawful discrimination.

12. Definitions of protected characteristics

Age

Age refers to a person belonging to a particular age or age group. The protected characteristic of age applies principally in relation to employment and does not generally apply to pupils in the provision of education.

Disability

A person is disabled where they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Equality Act also provides specific protection against discrimination arising from disability and requires schools to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Cancer, HIV infection and multiple sclerosis are treated as disabilities from the point of diagnosis for the purposes of the Equality Act.

Gender reassignment

Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. A person has this protected characteristic where they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process, or part of a process, for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. Protection does not depend upon a person having a diagnosis of gender dysphoria, nor does it require medical treatment. The academies will comply with the Equality Act in relation to pupils and staff who have this protected characteristic. Any individual circumstances involving gender reassignment or gender questioning will be handled sensitively, consistently with equality law, safeguarding duties and the academy's other relevant policies and procedures.

Marriage and civil partnership

Marriage and civil partnership is a protected characteristic. The protection applies to employment and does not generally apply to pupils in the provision of education.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy and maternity are protected characteristics. The academies will not unlawfully discriminate against a pupil or member of staff because of pregnancy or maternity. Protection includes relevant circumstances connected with pregnancy, childbirth and maternity and, where applicable, breastfeeding.

Race

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. The academies recognise that racism and racial prejudice can affect individuals and groups in different ways and will challenge racist behaviour, language and stereotyping.



Religion or belief

Religion or belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs and, where applicable, a lack of religion or belief. The academies will respect lawful differences of religion and belief while maintaining their educational and safeguarding responsibilities. The academies' arrangements for collective worship, religious education and other curriculum activities will comply with the relevant statutory requirements.

Sex

Sex is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. For the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, the terms 'sex', 'man' and 'woman' refer to biological sex. The academies will comply with the Equality Act's provisions concerning sex discrimination and with any applicable exceptions and requirements relating to schools.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic. It includes a person's orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex, or persons of either sex. The academies will not unlawfully discriminate against a pupil, parent/carer or member of staff because of sexual orientation or because of the sexual orientation of someone with whom they are associated.

13. Forms of prohibited conduct

Direct discrimination

Treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Applying a provision, criterion or practice which places people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with others, unless the provision, criterion or practice can be objectively justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim where the law permits such justification.

Discrimination arising from disability

Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something arising from their disability, where the legal conditions for such protection are met and no applicable justification exists.

Victimisation

Subjecting a person to a detriment because they have carried out, or are believed to have carried out, a protected act under the Equality Act 2010.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, where the relevant legal provisions apply.



Discrimination by association or perception

In circumstances covered by the Equality Act, protection may apply where a person is treated less favourably because of their association with someone who has a protected characteristic or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.

The academies will take appropriate action where discriminatory behaviour occurs, whether or not the conduct ultimately meets the legal definition of unlawful discrimination.

14. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Saints Academies are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

In exercising their functions, the academies must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct 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 between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Advancing equality of opportunity includes, where relevant:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people because of protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the different needs of people who share a protected characteristic;
- encouraging participation in areas where participation is disproportionately low.

Fostering good relations includes having regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

15. Due regard and decision-making

The academies will ensure that equality considerations are taken into account when significant decisions are made.

Decision-makers should consider whether a proposed policy, practice, decision or action could have different or disproportionate effects on people with protected characteristics.

The consideration given will be proportionate to the nature and significance of the decision and the potential equality impacts.

Equality considerations should take place at an appropriate stage of decision-making and should be based on relevant evidence where available.

Where an equality impact assessment or other documented equality consideration is appropriate, this will be undertaken in accordance with the Trust's procedures.



16. Equality information and equality objectives

The Saints Academies will publish information demonstrating compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty in accordance with the applicable specific duties.

The Trust will also publish equality objectives at least every four years and will monitor progress against those objectives.

Equality objectives will:

- be informed by relevant evidence;
- identify significant equality issues or disparities where appropriate;
- be specific and measurable wherever reasonably practicable;
- identify appropriate actions;
- be monitored and reviewed;
- be reported publicly in accordance with the Trust's publication arrangements.

The Trust's current equality objectives and annual equality information will be published separately or within the relevant Trust documentation and will be kept under review.

17. Accessibility Plans

The academies will maintain Accessibility Plans in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Accessibility planning will cover:

- access to the curriculum;
- access to the physical environment;
- access to information.

The Accessibility Plan will identify appropriate actions, responsibilities, timescales and arrangements for monitoring progress.

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed regularly and updated as required.

18. Responsibilities

Trust Board / Proprietor

- ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to comply with equality legislation;
- approve or oversee this policy in accordance with the Trust's governance arrangements;
- have due regard to equality considerations when making significant decisions;
- ensure equality objectives are established and published as required;
- monitor the effectiveness of equality arrangements.



Local Academy Council

- support the Trust in monitoring equality arrangements within the academy and exercise the responsibilities delegated to it under the Trust's governance arrangements.

Executive Headteacher / Headteacher

- implement this policy;
- ensure staff understand their equality responsibilities;
- arrange appropriate training;
- take appropriate action in response to actual or potential discrimination;
- ensure prejudice-related incidents are appropriately reported, investigated and monitored;
- ensure reasonable adjustments are considered and implemented where required;
- ensure equality considerations are incorporated into relevant decision-making;
- oversee implementation of equality objectives and accessibility arrangements.

All staff

- comply with this policy;
- treat pupils, colleagues, parents/carers and visitors with dignity and respect;
- challenge prejudice, stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour;
- report incidents appropriately;
- make reasonable adjustments within their role where required;
- participate in relevant training;
- promote equality and good relations through their words and actions.

Pupils

- treat others with dignity and respect;
- avoid discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour;
- follow the academy's behaviour expectations;
- report concerns to an appropriate adult.

Visitors, volunteers and contractors

- comply with the academy's equality expectations;
- treat members of the school community with dignity and respect;
- refrain from discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour on academy premises or while undertaking activities on behalf of the academy.

19. Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through appropriate information, which may include:

- pupil attainment and progress;



- attendance;
- exclusions and suspensions;
- behaviour and bullying;
- prejudice-related incidents;
- participation in trips, clubs and activities;
- accessibility information;
- staff recruitment, retention, training and progression;
- feedback from pupils, parents/carers and staff;
- progress against equality objectives.

Information will be used proportionately and lawfully, taking account of data protection and confidentiality requirements.

This policy will normally be reviewed annually and will also be reviewed sooner where there is a significant change in legislation, case law, statutory guidance or Trust arrangements.

20. Related policies and documents

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Recruitment and Selection arrangements
- Exclusion/Suspension arrangements
- Curriculum policies
- Attendance Policy
- Equality Objectives and annual equality information

Where a matter concerns safeguarding, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current statutory safeguarding guidance will also apply.

21. Legal and guidance framework

- Equality Act 2010;
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011;
- relevant Department for Education guidance concerning equality duties for schools and academies;
- Equality and Human Rights Commission technical guidance for schools in England;



- relevant statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- relevant case law concerning the interpretation and application of the Equality Act 2010.

The Saints Academies will have regard to relevant current guidance and will update this policy where significant changes in law or guidance require amendment.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's 2026 technical guidance for schools is currently subject to consultation. The academies will distinguish between current legal requirements and guidance that remains in draft or consultation form.

22. Approval and review

Approved	September 2026
Policy review date	September 2027
Earlier review trigger	Significant change in legislation, case law, statutory guidance or Trust arrangements
Status	For approval

Signed: _____

Chair of Local Academy Council / Trust Board

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Executive Headteacher

Date: _____