



Equal Opportunities

Policy 2026/27 (update)

Review Timetable

The Policy will be reviewed every year, as set out below	
LGB Date of Ratification	1 September 2026
Review Interval	Annually
Date of Last Review	20 June 2026 (interim review) 1 September 2026
Date of Next review	1 September 2027
Owner & Attached Governor	Ellie Jacobs and Victoria Espley





Equal Opportunities Policy

Statement of Intent

North Oxfordshire Academy is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure that every member of the academy community is treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and is not discriminated against unlawfully.

We strive to celebrate diversity, ensure that pupils are valued and supported equally irrespective of background or personal circumstances, and provide equality of opportunity to promote the highest standards of personal and academic achievement.

Equality of opportunity applies to all members of our community – pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and the wider community.

Pupils are educated to celebrate diversity, have respect for their own and other people's rights and have awareness of other people's differing lifestyles, perspectives and opinions.

All staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups.

Procedures are in place to ensure that all forms of discrimination, bullying and/ or harassment of staff or pupils are dealt with promptly, firmly and fairly in line with relevant United Learning guidance such as antibullying and dealing with racist incidents. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant School policies. Other key related documents that support our Equality Policy include our antibullying policy, safeguarding and child protection policy, whistleblowing policy, and SEND policy.

Our code of conduct allows all stakeholders to remain safe from emotional and physical harm and to develop as learners and positive contributors to the community and our society. It also enables the school to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. We believe that it is important to meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all so that all pupils are prepared for full and positive participation in a culturally diverse society of people with a wide range of needs, opinions and abilities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Accessibility Plan, Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and SEND Policy.





Equality Objectives (2025–2029)

As part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010, schools are required to publish clear, measurable objectives every 4 years. Our objectives for 2025 to 2029 are set out below.

1. Reduce attainment gaps between disadvantaged groups and their peers
2. Monitor and reduce disparities in behaviour, exclusions and attendance
3. Increase representation of underrepresented groups in staff recruitment
4. Ensure all pupils understand protected characteristics

Progress is reviewed annually.

Definitions

- **Direct discrimination** - Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** - When a policy or practice applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular group with a protected characteristic.
- **Harassment** - Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation** - Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination.

Legal Framework & Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

This policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010. The academy complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty and has due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different groups





Protected Characteristics

This policy applies to all protected characteristics defined within the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Commitment to Equality by Protected Characteristic

Race, Ethnicity, Religion and Belief

The academy:

- Promotes equality and actively challenges racism and discrimination
- Prepares pupils for life in a diverse and multicultural society
- Encourages respect for religious beliefs and cultural practices
- Makes reasonable adjustments for religious observance, including diet and dress
- Ensures incidents of racism are recorded, monitored and addressed promptly

Staff are trained to identify and respond effectively to racist incidents and promote positive relationships between different groups.

Sex and Gender Equality

The academy:

- Promotes equality between males and females
- Challenges gender stereotypes in curriculum and wider school life
- Ensures equitable access to opportunities and resources
- Monitors outcomes to ensure no group is disadvantaged





Gender Reassignment

The academy:

- Supports pupils and staff who are transgender or questioning their gender identity
- Ensures individuals are treated with dignity and respect
- Does not tolerate discrimination by perception or association
- Works in partnership with families and external professionals where appropriate

Sexual Orientation

The academy:

- Promotes respect regardless of sexual orientation
- Challenges homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and behaviour
- Provides an inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ pupils and staff

Disability Equality

The academy recognises a wide range of disabilities, including physical, sensory and mental health needs.

We are committed to:

- Making reasonable adjustments in line with anticipatory duty
- Ensuring full participation in school life
- Supporting individuals to achieve their full potential
- Providing appropriate support and access arrangements

Age, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership

The academy ensures fair and equal treatment in employment and education regardless of age, marital status or pregnancy.

We support:

- Flexible working where appropriate
- Fair treatment in recruitment and employment practices
- A supportive environment for staff and pupils during pregnancy and maternity





Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct (verbal or physical) that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Harassment may be related to a protected characteristic, including but not limited to: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It may also include bullying linked to inequalities of status, power or position.

The academy is committed to maintaining a culture free from harassment. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- staff and pupils are confident in identifying and challenging all forms of harassment
- all incidents are reported, recorded and dealt with promptly, consistently and effectively
- individuals feel supported to raise concerns or complaints without fear of victimisation or reprisal
- all members of the school community take personal responsibility for upholding dignity and respect

Good Practice

Teaching and Learning

All pupils have access to a broad and balanced mainstream curriculum

- Teachers ensure that classrooms are inclusive environments in which all contributions are valued
- Teaching is responsive to pupils' needs, with positive steps taken to include all groups and individuals
- Pupil grouping is planned and varied; allocations to teaching groups are reviewed regularly and analysed by ethnicity, gender and other relevant characteristics
- Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and take responsibility for their learning
- Teachers actively challenge stereotypes and foster critical awareness of fairness, equality and bias
- Resources and displays reflect the diversity of pupils' experiences and backgrounds, promote inclusion and are regularly reviewed

Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the backgrounds, needs and characteristics of all pupils. It builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated to ensure inclusion of:

- higher attaining pupils
- pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)





- pupils from minority ethnic groups
- pupils who are looked after or subject to safeguarding plans
- pupils at risk of disengagement or exclusion

North Oxfordshire Academy monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its curriculum provision for all groups. All areas of the curriculum promote equality, positive attitudes to diversity, and respect for protected characteristics.

All subjects contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum reflects and values diversity and encourages pupils to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Attainment and Progress

- The academy has high expectations of all pupils and is committed to enabling all to achieve their best
- All forms of achievement are recognised and valued
- Attainment and progress are monitored by pupil groups, including those with protected characteristics
- Action is taken to address disparities between groups
- Assessment processes are reviewed to minimise cultural or linguistic bias
- Pupils are appropriately supported to demonstrate their knowledge and skills
- Particular focus is given to groups that may be disadvantaged

Personal Development and Pastoral Care

- The pastoral system reflects and supports the diverse needs of pupils, including religious, cultural and social differences
- Appropriate careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is provided for all pupils
- Targeted support is provided for EAL pupils and other vulnerable groups
- The needs of Traveller, Forces and other mobile pupils are recognised and supported
- Support is provided for both victims and perpetrators of bullying or harassment, with external agencies involved where appropriate

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

- Behaviour systems are fair, consistent and applied equally
- Exclusions, attendance and behaviour are monitored by pupil group, and action is taken to address any disproportionality
- All members of the school community understand that discriminatory language or behaviour (including racist, sexist or homophobic incidents) is unacceptable and will be challenged and sanctioned appropriately

Admissions and Attendance

- Admissions arrangements are fair, transparent and compliant with the School Admissions Code





- Processes are monitored to ensure consistency and equality
- Leave for religious observance is supported where appropriate
- Attendance is monitored across groups to identify and address inequalities

Staff Recruitment

- Recruitment and selection processes are fair, equitable and compliant with statutory duties and United Learning guidance
- Steps are taken to encourage applications from underrepresented groups
- All staff are informed of this policy and receive training as part of induction
- The skills and contributions of all staff are recognised and valued
- Professional development is available to support inclusive practice
- The workforce reflects, where possible, the diversity of the community
- Recruitment and workforce data is monitored, including by ethnicity and other characteristics

Partnership with Parents/Carers and the Community

- Communication with parents/carers is accessible and inclusive
- Parental engagement is monitored to ensure participation from all groups
- Information is provided in clear, user-friendly formats
- Events and activities are designed to include all members of the community
- Facilities are accessible and available to all groups within the community

Responsibilities for Equal Opportunities Policy

The Local Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the academy complies with all relevant equality legislation, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Ensure that this policy and its associated procedures and strategies are effectively implemented and reviewed
- Monitor the impact of the policy on pupils, staff and the wider community

The Principal will:

- Work in partnership with the Local Governing Body to ensure that the policy and associated procedures are implemented effectively
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and receive appropriate training and support
- Take all incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying seriously and ensure that they are recorded, investigated and addressed appropriately
- Ensure appropriate leadership of equality and inclusion, including designated responsibility for coordinating equality work and monitoring incidents





All staff will:

- Promote equality, inclusion and respect in their work
- Identify, challenge and respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying
- Ensure that they do not discriminate against pupils, colleagues or others on the basis of protected characteristics
- Keep up to date with relevant equality legislation and academy expectations

Teaching staff (in addition to the above) will:

- Ensure that all pupils, including those from vulnerable groups, have full access to the curriculum
- Plan and deliver inclusive teaching that meets the needs of all learners
- Promote equality, diversity and respect through teaching and interactions with pupils, staff, parents and the wider community

Visitors and contractors will:

- Be made aware of, and expected to comply with, the academy's Equal Opportunities Policy
- Conduct themselves in a manner that supports the academy's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Monitoring includes analysis of attainment, progress, behaviour, attendance and participation by pupil group, including those with protected characteristics. Findings are used to inform school improvement planning and targeted interventions. Where inequalities are identified, appropriate action is taken and its impact is evaluated. Outcomes are reviewed regularly and reported to the Local Governing Body to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Publication of Information

Equality objectives are reviewed at least every four years in line with statutory requirements. Equality objectives and information are published annually.

Complaints and Reporting

Concerns are addressed through established reporting and complaints procedures.

Data Protection

All equality data is processed in line with GDPR.

