

LEAP FEDERATION



LEARNING EDUCATION ARTS PARTNERSHIP



Equality Policy

Introduction

The LEAP Federation schools are inclusive schools where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

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.

We 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.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles

All learners are of equal value - whether or not they are disabled, regardless of 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.

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 is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our schools.

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

We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our schools' communities to feel a sense of belonging within each school and its wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

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

We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential

We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole of each school in our federation.

Purpose of this policy

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 schools cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment (including transgender) or sexual orientation.

(Age, pregnancy, maternity and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.)

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

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

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools to

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty;
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the LEAP Federation schools are meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how our schools are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside subcontractors and others who work at any of the LEAP Federation schools about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1a is a checklist of key equality considerations

Appendix 1b outlines ways in which we support transgender children

Appendix 2 shows each of the LEAP Federation schools Equality Objectives for 2021 -2024 in an Equality Action Plan

Development of the policy

This policy was developed by members of the LEAP schools’ senior leadership team, in consultation with staff and governors. It is part of our federation’s commitment to promoting equalities and providing inclusive schools.

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the OFSTED inspection framework 2015, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our schools' development plans, self-evaluation reviews, the school prospectuses, school web sites and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, Inclusion and anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council from each of the LEAP Federation schools.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way our federation of schools comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

What we are 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 pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.

We are aware of the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The LEAP Federation's Executive Head and Associate Heads ensure 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 ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved 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 our schools.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all. We have removed Black History Month from our special weeks and have made a commitment to ensuring that Black History is taught all year round and woven throughout the curriculum.

We have rigorously analysed existing units of work to assess whether they are rich in content, representative and relevant. Changes have been made to our English curriculum as well as our foundation subjects to ensure that the curriculum we are delivering meets these expectations. We continue to analyse and assess the impact and value of these changes and welcome feedback from our school community.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The schools' Behaviour Policies take full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The LEAP Federation schools challenge all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes.

Expectations of behaviour and consequences are outlined in each school's Staff Handbook and the Behaviour Policy. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of each of the LEAP Federation school's population very well and collect and analyse data in order 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 our pupil admissions meetings, SEN review meetings, parent-teacher meetings and Raising Pupil Achievement Meetings.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.

At each of the LEAP Federation schools we collect and analyse data:

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender, pupil premium, SEN and EAL;
- on the % of EYFS children who are expected or exceeding goals relating to prime goals, specific goals, all goals and good level of development (GLD)
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and those of whom have English as an additional language.

We collect and analyse data in relation to the standards reached for reading, writing and maths at the end of each key stage for the following groups:

- FSM and non-FSM
- White British
- African
- Bangladeshi
- Caribbean
- English/Scottish/Welsh
- Indian
- Turkish/Cypriot/Kurdish
- Mixed Heritage
- Other ethnic groups
- Free School Meal
- Pupil Premium
- Gender
- Term of birth
- EAL
- SEN – SEN support and statements or EHC plan

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 pupils. We assess what would be required to be sufficiently prepared to include pupils with needs that we do not currently cater for.

We seek to avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupil's achievement or that seeks to define their potential as a learner, such as "less able" and use descriptions such as "currently working below age expected".

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils.

We provide support to pupils 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.

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:

- disabled and non-disabled people;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys.

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan 2021-24 designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment; and improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The Accessibility Plan for LEAP Federations' schools can be found in Appendix Two - and forms part of the Equality Action Plan.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our pupils 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 pupils.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE, SEAL and Citizenship 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.

In each of the LEAP Federation schools we promote a whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for pupils 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 pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events e.g. Black History Month

We include equalities issues in our newsletters to parents and carers.

Other ways we address equality issues

We maintain records of all training relating to Equalities.

Our monitoring records include evaluations of all aspects of Equalities.

We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed.

We monitor uptake of after-school activities to ensure equal access.

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of the LEAP Federation schools' policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well being of our pupils.

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

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community in each of the LEAP Federation schools, we:

- review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evening, and/or focus meetings or governor-parent meetings
- 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, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school;
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps/Individual Support Plans, mentoring and support;
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at the LEAP Federation Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's sub-committees.

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan (attached)/ School Development Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our federation's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

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 which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

We produce Equality Action points that show how we will achieve our objectives as part of each school's development plan.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every three years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them. We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school communities of the LEAP Federation schools and subcontractors and others who work at our schools to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training (as appropriate), guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governing body

The Governing Body of the LEAP Federation is responsible for ensuring that our schools comply with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body (the Link Governor for Social Inclusion) has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of our schools' commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of each school's work on equalities taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

The school leadership team

The school leadership team at each of the LEAP Federation schools 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 senior member of staff at each of our schools has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. S/he will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support 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 curricula and lessons 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 pupils
- support different groups of pupils 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 LEAP Federation schools as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at whole staff meetings at the start of the school year.

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.

Key Contacts

Executive Head for all three LEAP Federation schools

Kingsmead School SLT:

Headteacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head

Staff member responsible for Equality: Deputy Head

Gayhurst Community School SLT:

Headteacher, Deputy Heads, Assistant Head

Staff member responsible for Equality: Deputy Heads

Mandeville School SLT:

Headteacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head

Staff member responsible for Equality: Deputy Head

Lead LEAP governor for Equality: Chair of Governors

Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. 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 in compliance with the law.

We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible, that the staffing of the LEAP Federation schools reflects the diversity of our community.

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.

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

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.

Monitoring and reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available

- on each LEAP school's website
- as paper copies in each school's office
- on display for visitors, including parents and carers
- as part of induction for new staff.

We seek to ensure that the whole school community of each of the LEAP Federation schools knows about the policy, and has access when requested to the objectives and data.

We publish on the schools' websites copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, inclusion and special educational needs.

Complaints

Complaints arising from the operation of this policy will be dealt with in line with the LEAP Federation schools' complaints procedure.

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Signed: **Chair of Governors, LEAP Federation of schools (who is also the Governor with responsibility for Equality)**

Signed: **Executive Head of LEAP Federation**

Date: February 2023

APPENDIX 1a

Check list for school staff and governors of LEAP Federation schools:

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training.
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides.
- The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors, pupils and other stakeholders.
- The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties
- The school analyses pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils 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 subcontractors and others who work at the school to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the school council.
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action 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 class assemblies.
- The school takes part in events such as International Evening, African drumming lessons and any other events that raises awareness of issues around race, disability and gender.
- The school, as part of the LEAP Federation, is participating in the development of a curriculum that is representative and relevant to the school and wider community (LEAP's Empowerment Curriculum)
- The school environment is increasingly accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school.
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered.
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information.
- The Governing Body is representative of the communities it serves and has procedures for the election of parent governors that are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.

APPENDIX 1b

Supporting Transgender children

Definitions

Trans or transgender: people who do not identify with the sex/gender they were assigned at birth.

Transition: the social, medical or legal process of changing one's gender performance and/or presentation. May also be referred to as gender reassignment, which is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010

Usually, social transitioning is a first step, sometimes it is a way of experimenting with gender identity. A non-judgemental attitude, support and advice is essential for the child. It might include a name or pronoun change, using facilities appropriate for their gender (toilets, changing) or dressing in their identified gender.

LEAP Key principles of effective support

Practices to support trans children are embedded across school policies and curriculum in particular the LEAP Inclusion Policy, LEAP Safeguarding Policy and LEAP Behaviour with Anti Bullying policy.

This appendix to our Equalities Policy seeks to provide an additional broad overview of the needs of transgender children and their families.

In supporting transgender children we will:

- listen to child and parent views on a case by case basis and where possible follow their lead and preferences to make adjustments in order to advance equal opportunities
- Challenge any transphobic discrimination and bullying
- Promote positive attitudes to all protected characteristics including transgender reassignment through a whole school ethos, staff training and children's education (curriculum and resources)

Specific inclusive practices for children may include:

Names and pronoun changes

All pupils and staff will need to use the pupil's preferred name and pronoun. Individuals have the right to choose the name by which they are known by other children and adults, even if the change is not a legal one. Any deliberate use of the wrong name or pronoun will be challenged in order to protect the transgender child's rights.

The school system (SIMS) should be updated to include the use of the child's preferred name and can be updated to change gender (limited on school system to female or male). On transfer to a new school or for SATs entries the legal name and gender that relates to seen documentation has to be used.

Toilets

Any changes in arrangements for using toilets will be discussed with the child and their family. Dependent on the facilities that are available in each school and the age of the child, it may be possible to adapt the existing system. For children over 8 years old it is a legal requirement to provide single sex facilities but it may be possible to provide a unisex toilet in addition to these.

School Uniform

Transgender children will be expected to follow the School Uniform Policy. There is a broad range of clothing suitable for any gender.

Changing Room Facilities

Facilities and arrangements for transgender pupils will be sensitive to their needs and agreed in discussion with the child and their parents. We will also recognise the needs and sensitivities of other children. Should any child feel uncomfortable changing in front of others, the school will provide alternative arrangements e.g.: a screened off area or a separate room.

Physical Education

As part of the National Curriculum and an essential aspect of physical and mental health, it is every child's right to take part in a range of PE. There should be few situations in primary school where children are doing PE in separate gender groups. On the occasions where this does happen e.g. in single sex sports teams such as girls or boys football teams, LEAP schools will encourage trans and gender questioning pupils to participate in competitions and sport events in a manner consistent with their gender identity if they wish to do so.

Chest binding

If a pupil is binding their chest, they should be monitored carefully during particular physical activities and in hot weather. If binding causes discomfort or impairs breathing then breaks will be offered.

Curriculum

LEAP teachers are trained and experienced in avoiding discriminating between boys and girls during lessons. When boys and girls share the same experience, there is no need to make special arrangements for trans children. The LEAP PSHCE curriculum is designed to develop a strong sense of identity, self-belief and self-esteem in all children. It emphasises the importance of being kind, compassionate and accepting, always challenging stereotypes and discrimination of any kind. LEAP schools recognise that it is important that there is some specific content built into PSHE lessons that recognises transgender people as equally important members of the community and allows safe and age-appropriate discussion around the concept of transgender for primary aged children if and when it is appropriate for a class, at the teacher's discretion.