



Equalities Policy

2023/24

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Introduction

At Edison Pace School we are committed to promoting fairness and equality in everything we do and in doing so acknowledging the diversity of the people who make up our school community and beyond.

Equality involves a fair environment in which everyone can participate and is given the opportunity to achieve. Diversity recognises and values differences between individuals and groups to create and support a positive and inclusive culture.

We believe that every individual within our school has the right to be treated with dignity, understanding, tolerance, respect and fairness and to be in an environment free from abuse, offensive behaviour, prejudice and unfair discrimination.

In seeking to eliminate direct or indirect discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment, we will actively promote policies and procedures aimed at realising the full potential of every individual. We will endeavour to maximise resources to ensure that opportunities are open to all.

This policy does not mean that everyone will be treated equally, but it does mean that everyone should expect to be treated fairly. Different people may be treated in different ways depending on their requirements, needs and abilities.

This policy applies to all aspects of school operations including;

- Staff recruitment and staff training;
- The curriculum, teaching and learning and classroom practice;
- Student admissions, behaviour and attendance;
- Student attainment and progress;
- Student personal development and wellbeing;
- Partnerships with parents and communities.

This policy is intended to apply to every individual within the school, including visitors when appropriate. We will promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination with particular regard to protected characteristics as outlined by the [Equalities Act 2010](#).

The Legal Framework

Discrimination can take the following forms:

- Direct discrimination – where a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or a family members) actual or perceived protected characteristics.
- Indirect discrimination – by applying a provision criterion or practice which disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Victimisation – where an individual has exercised their rights under equality legislation (or has indicated that they intend to do so) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. This also applies to a person supporting (or indicates that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under legislation.
- Harassment – defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.
- Disability discrimination – including direct or indirect discrimination, any unjustified, less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation and provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law.

The different responsibilities on public bodies in relation to equalities have been brought together in to a single 'Equality Duty'.

The Equality Duty is a duty on public bodies to consider the needs of all individuals in their day-to-day work.

The duty covers the following 'protected characteristics':

- Age (not applicable with regard to learners)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Equality Duty has two main parts: the 'General' Equality Duty and 'Specific Equality Duty'. The '*General Equality Duty*' has three aims. It requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- 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.

Having 'due regard' means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

The '*Specific Equality Duty*' assists public bodies in responding to the 'General Equality Duty'.

There are two specific duties that public bodies are required to carry out;

- Set and publish one or more equality objectives; and
- Publish annual information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty responsibilities.

Admissions

Edison Pace School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the school's Admissions Policy. The school accepts applications from, and admits, pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic.

Religious Belief

Edison Pace School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from all religions and faiths (or no religion or faith)

Reasonable Adjustments

The school has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with a disability or highlighted need in their EHCP. This is done to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison to those students without disabilities or EHCPs. The SENDCo will inform parents about any reasonable adjustments they can make for the student. The school also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments (case by case consideration) for staff or students who request to be known as gender neutral, gender fluid, transgender, or if they were undergoing gender reassignment.

The Head and Senior Leaders also monitor and review the physical environment to consider what reasonable and proportionate steps can be taken to alleviate any substantial disadvantage caused by a disability or need on an EHCP. The school has an Accessibility Plan in place.

Delivery on the Duty

Through this policy Edison Pace School will develop, consult on, set and publish 'Equality Objectives' (see page 6).

We will publish an 'Equalities Statement' to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty (see page 6).

Edison Pace School will report annually on the operation and effectiveness of this policy and in particular on the actions taken to ensure achievement of the Equality Objectives.

We will produce and publish an Accessibility Plan and ensure appropriate resources are made available to fulfil the requirements of the Accessibility Plan.

To fulfil the duty and have 'due regard' to equality operations we must, give thought to equality implications whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed. This means that:

- We must be aware of this duty when making a decision and assess whether it may have particular implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- We must consider the equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and take decisions and keep them under review on a continuing basis.

A template Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 1) will be completed by the Headteacher when required to evidence its duty to have due regard.

The Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with the appropriate legislation. They will scrutinise the school's approach to equalities to ensure that both the general and specific duties under the equality duty are fully complied with.

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders will implement this policy and any related procedures, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

The Headteacher has responsibility to ensure the school's commitment to equality is reflected in:

- The attitudes and behaviour of staff;
- Arranging appropriate training;
- Their willingness to acknowledge and tackle examples of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff must:

- Deal with incidents, knowing how to identify failure to provide equality of opportunities, fair treatment and unfair discrimination;
- Lead by example with their attitude and behaviour;
- Be willing to acknowledge and encourage good practice by people they manage;

- Undertake appropriate training to enhance their awareness and ability to promote equality of opportunity for all stakeholders and to tackle discrimination.
- Recognise that each individual has to uphold the law and the principles of fairness and equality.

Parents, visitors and contractors should, where appropriate, be made aware of this policy.

Equality Objectives

This policy is supported by equality objectives, fulfilling our 'Specific Equality Duty'. These objectives are reviewed every 4 years in line with this policy.

Our objectives are based upon the evidence we have collected and school priorities.

Focus	Equality Objective
Enrichment	All students with SEN participate in enrichment activities across the curriculum at the same levels as others.
Attendance	To monitor absence on a case-by-case basis to improve and support students' individual needs.
Attainment	To develop the school's curriculum offer to enable students access to a range of subjects at a level where they can achieve success.

Annual Equalities Statement

We will publish an Annual Equalities Statement in order to fulfil the 'Specific Duty' to publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty responsibilities. This information will be published on the school website.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Senior Leaders will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the arrangements referred to in this policy.

The Headteacher will review this policy every four years through consultation with staff and analysis of whole school data.

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Policy or Decision:	
Carried out by (name and position):	
Date:	

Considerations with regard to groups that may be affected:

Groups with protected characteristics	Is there a possibility that the policy could have a:-		Positive impact: Comments	Negative impact: Please provide details as to why reasonable adjustments are not being made
	Positive Impact?	Negative Impact?		
Age (adults only)				
Disability				
Gender reassignment				
Pregnancy and maternity				
Race				
Religion/Belief				
Sex				
Sexual orientation				