

People Directorate

School Equality Policy - Students



Document title	People Directorate: School Equality Policy - Students
Version number	3 - revised draft
Policy status	Approved
TSAT Board Approved	June 2026
Union Approved	June 2026
Date of issue	September 2026
Date to be revised	September 2030

Revision log

Date	Version No	Brief detail of change
Sept 2026	3	Full rewrite: simplified language; aligned with Trust DEIB work, Tactical Group feedback, Central Voice feedback and updated governance/measurement approach.

1. Our promise

Our school wants every student to feel safe, respected, included and able to belong. We believe that diversity strengthens our community and that every learner deserves fair access to support, opportunity and success.

This policy explains how we promote equality, inclusion and belonging for students in everyday school life.

2. How this policy fits with the Trust equality framework

This policy sits underneath the Trust Equality Policy. It explains what the Trust's equality commitments mean for students at school level.

Document	How it links
Trust Equality Policy	Sets the shared Trust principles, legal duties, governance and DEIB measures.
School Equality Policy - Students	This policy. Explains expectations for student equality, inclusion, curriculum, participation and student voice.
School Equality Policy - Staff	Explains expectations for staff equality, recruitment, progression, wellbeing, voice and belonging.
DEIB best-practice webpage	Provides practical examples, templates and guidance to support implementation.

Important

Student equality and staff equality are connected, but they are not the same. This policy focuses on students. The staff policy focuses on employees and applicants. Both should be read alongside the Trust Equality Policy.

3. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to all students in our school. It also guides how staff support students and how we work with parents, carers, families and the wider community.

4. Our legal duty

We meet the Public Sector Equality Duty by having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different groups.

For pupils in schools, the protected characteristics are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Age and marriage/civil partnership do not

apply to pupils in schools in the same way, but we still consider age, stage, family circumstances and lived experience when planning inclusive practice.

We also recognise wider factors that may affect belonging and opportunity, including SEND, neurodiversity, EAL, language, socio-economic background, family background, care experience, educational history, mental health, chronic illness and other personal circumstances.

5. What students can expect

- to feel safe, respected and included
- to learn without discrimination, bullying or harassment
- to have their identity, background and experiences respected
- to receive support or reasonable adjustments where needed
- to see different people, cultures and experiences reflected in school life
- to take part in school opportunities wherever possible
- to raise concerns and know they will be listened to

6. Our approach to inclusion

Our approach is supported by the Trust's 7 Principles of Inclusion. These remind us that inclusion is active and practical: difference strengthens the community, people may need different support, belonging is built through relationships, behaviour and attendance can reveal unmet needs, and reflection helps everyone learn.

Principle	What this means for students
Diversity is a strength	Students should see difference valued in curriculum, language, relationships and school life.
Equity, not equality	Students may need different support or adjustments to have fair access to learning and opportunity.
Community is a verb	Belonging is built through daily relationships, routines and shared responsibility.
Attachment is teachable	Trusted adults and positive relationships help students feel safe and ready to learn.
Behaviour is a language	Behaviour may signal unmet needs, barriers, conflict or distress.
Metacognition matters	Students benefit from understanding how they think, learn, reflect and respond.
Attendance is a window	Attendance can help us understand whether students feel connected, safe and able to engage.

7. How we make this real for students

Learning, progress and curriculum

- Monitor attainment, progress and participation to identify gaps.
- Use inclusive teaching, reasonable adjustments and high expectations for all.
- Support students with SEND, disability, neurodiversity, EAL, disadvantage and other needs.
- Develop curriculum and resources that reflect diverse identities, histories and experiences.

Belonging, voice and wellbeing

- Listen to student voice and use it to improve school life.
- Provide pastoral support that recognises individual needs.
- Support mental health, wellbeing and emotional safety.
- Make sure students know who they can speak to if they are worried.

Behaviour, attendance and relationships

- Apply behaviour expectations fairly and consistently.
- Monitor behaviour, suspensions and attendance for patterns or disproportionality.
- Respond to bullying, harassment and discrimination clearly and consistently.
- Use curiosity and support to understand barriers to attendance or engagement.

Access and participation

- Make enrichment, clubs, trips and leadership opportunities accessible wherever possible.
- Review participation to understand who may be missing out.
- Work with families and community partners to remove barriers.
- Communicate with families in accessible ways, including translation or alternative formats where needed.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body	Provides strategic oversight of student equality, pupil inclusion, accessibility and school equality objectives.
SEND & Equality Link Governor	Supports scrutiny of SEND, accessibility, reasonable adjustments, pupil equality and inclusion.
Headteacher and senior leaders	Promote equality and inclusion, monitor outcomes and experiences, ensure staff training and respond to concerns.
All staff	Model inclusive behaviour, challenge discrimination, support belonging and use inclusive practice.

Students	Treat others with respect, report concerns and help build a welcoming school community.
Parents and carers	Work with the school to support inclusion and raise concerns constructively where needed.

Equality objectives

Each school will set 2-3 measurable equality objectives overall. These objectives may focus on students, staff or both, depending on the school context and the evidence available. Schools do not need to set 2-3 separate objectives in each school policy unless they choose to do so.

Objectives should be reviewed annually and refreshed at least every four years. Each objective should include a baseline, action, owner, measure and review date.

Examples of student equality objectives

- Improve student belonging survey scores for an identified group by [x%] by [date].
- Increase participation of under-represented groups in enrichment, clubs or student leadership by [x%] by [date].
- Reduce an identified gap in attendance, behaviour, progress or attainment by [x%] by [date].
- Complete a curriculum representation review in all subject areas by [date], with actions agreed and reviewed annually.
- Improve student awareness of how to report bullying, harassment or discrimination, measured through student voice.

10. Checking the impact of decisions

When we make important decisions or change policies, we will consider how different groups of students may be affected. This helps us identify barriers, avoid unintended disadvantage and improve outcomes. This may be recorded through an Equality Impact Assessment, decision record, consultation summary or meeting minutes.

11. Concerns

Students should know how to report bullying, discrimination, harassment or anything that makes them feel unsafe or excluded. Concerns will be taken seriously and handled through the appropriate route, such as pastoral support, behaviour procedures, anti-bullying procedures, safeguarding, complaints or another relevant process.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every four years, or earlier if legislation, guidance or Trust needs change. Equality objectives will be reviewed annually.

Progress may be monitored through attendance, attainment, progress, behaviour, suspensions, participation, student voice, bullying and incident data, complaints, curriculum review and feedback from families.

Progress will be reported through the agreed school and Trust governance route.

13. Related policies and guidance

- Trust Equality Policy
- School Equality Policy - Staff
- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies
- Attendance and Admissions policies
- Safeguarding policies
- Curriculum policies and guidance
- Complaints Procedure
- DEIB best-practice webpage