



# Equality Statement, Policy and Objectives

**\*\*\*This new version of the Policy is under review and awaiting approval.\*\*\***

Approval date:	TBC
Approved by:	Board of Trustees
Next review:	TBC

Together we **Exceed**



# Contents

1. Statement of Intent .....	2
2. Legislative Framework .....	2
3. Principles and Aims.....	3
4. Roles and Responsibilities .....	4
5. Uniform/Dress Policy.....	4
6. Promoting Equality .....	4
7. Employment .....	5
8. External Partners .....	5
9. Monitoring and Review.....	6
10. Complaints .....	6
Equality Objectives .....	7
Equality Impact Assessment.....	11
Equality Impact Assessment Checklist.....	13

<sup>^</sup> An update regarding progress in achieving the objectives is required to be published annually.

The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In the development of this policy due regard has been given to achieving these objectives.

## 1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 Exceed Academies Trust is committed to creating an equitable and inclusive environment where all individuals are treated with respect, have a genuine sense of belonging, and can thrive professionally.
- 1.2 This policy aims to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination, and victimisation within the Trust, its school communities, and workforce.
- 1.3 The Trust recognises that certain groups have historically faced discrimination based on protected characteristics such as race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age and is dedicated to addressing these issues.
- 1.4 This policy will be regularly reviewed and revised as knowledge, practice, and provision evolve.

## 2. Legislative Framework

- 2.1 This policy is compliant with the Equality Act 2010, which provides a single legal framework with three broad duties: to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. The Act makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education, access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 2.2 The policy also takes into account other relevant legislation, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014.
- 2.3 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires the Trust to prepare and publish equality objectives and information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.4 The policy also considers the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 2.5 The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:
  - Age;
  - Disability;
  - Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin;
  - Sex (including transgender people);
  - Gender reassignment;
  - Maternity and pregnancy;
  - Religion and belief;
  - Sexual orientation;
  - Marriage and civil partnership (for employees).

2.6 Various other Trust/school policies should be considered alongside this policy including but not limited to:

- Staff Grievance Procedure;
- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure;
- Flexible Working Policy;
- Appraisal Policy;
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy;
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy;
- School Uniform Policy;
- Admissions Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Complaints Policy.

### 3. Principles and Aims

- 3.1 The Trust values all employees, learners, potential learners, and their parents/carers equally, recognising and celebrating the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences.
- 3.2 Our policies and procedures will actively promote equity, ensuring fair outcomes for all and fostering a strong sense of belonging.
- 3.3 We will take into account differences in life experience, outlook, and background, addressing barriers and disadvantages people may face due to their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age.
- 3.4 The Trust is committed to promoting race equality, disability equality, and gender equality.
- 3.5 Transgender people are explicitly covered by this policy, with the Trust respecting confidentiality and providing a supportive environment.
- 3.6 The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience prejudice-related discrimination may not fare well in the education system.
- 3.7 All staff will comply with equality legislation and regulations.
- 3.8 We will foster positive attitudes and relationships, ensuring that this is promoted in all policies and procedures.
- 3.9 We will observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention, and development, and ensure that all policies benefit all employees and potential employees.
- 3.10 The Trust aims to reduce and remove any inequalities and barriers.
- 3.11 We will ensure staff promote an inclusive ethos, challenge inappropriate language, respond to discrimination, and support pupils with additional needs.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Trust Board and school Local Advisory Boards (LABs), will ensure compliance with equality legislation, publish equality objectives, conduct impact assessments, and scrutinise diversity data.
- 4.2 The Trust Board will ensure equal opportunities in staff recruitment, promotion, and professional development, and consider the diversity profile when recruiting new staff.
- 4.3 The CEO, Trust Senior Leaders, School Headteachers, and Executive Headteachers will implement the policy, ensure staff receive appropriate training, and challenge discriminatory practices.
- 4.4 Trust/School employees will be mindful of harassment or bullying, challenge bias and stereotyping, promote equality and good relations, and monitor pupils' progress and academic needs to ensure that appropriate support is in place.
- 4.5 All staff will keep up to date with equality legislation.

## 5. Uniform/Dress Policy

- 5.1 The Trust and its schools will ensure that uniform policies do not discriminate based on protected characteristics such as race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age.
- 5.2 We will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important school policies, such as those relating to safety or discipline.

## 6. Promoting Equity, Diversity, and Belonging (EDB)

- 6.1 The Trust will actively seek feedback to understand staff feelings and create a more supportive environment, increasing the visibility of diverse role models and representation of underrepresented groups.
- 6.2 The Trust will track and monitor EDB data on vacancies, leavers, promotions, flexible working, and professional development to ensure equitable opportunities.
- 6.3 We will aim to reduce the gap between our staff diversity and local/national diversity by 2027.
- 6.4 The Trust will review its vision, values, and ethical goals to explicitly promote inclusivity and define what it means to 'belong' within the Exceed family for staff and pupils.
- 6.5 We will ensure language in policies and documents is inclusive and encompasses its ethos and commitment.
- 6.6 The Trust will adopt an inclusive leadership framework and is committed to being a Disability Confident Employer.

- 6.7 The Trust aims for its staff to feel respected, valued, safe, and have a sense of belonging, and will collect and track data on both diversity and inclusion.
- 6.8 The Trust will equip all leaders with knowledge of its leadership framework, common EDB language, and inclusive behaviours.
- 6.9 The Trust will implement a program of professional development, including allyship, unconscious bias, and managing difficult conversations.
- 6.10 New staff will be inducted into the culture of the Trust/school, and the Trust will develop coaching and internship programs.
- 6.11 The Trust will support staff networks and at least one active staff network will be established related to EDB.
- 6.12 All new senior leaders will access high-quality inclusive leadership training within 12 months, and all staff will complete basic equality and diversity training at least every 2 years.
- 6.13 The school curriculum will actively promote diversity, relationships, and opportunity while challenging discrimination and stereotypes, including racial literacy, anti-racism, and decolonising the curriculum.
- 6.14 Teachers will receive training to deliver a culturally responsive curriculum, and the Trust will establish an EDB curriculum network for sharing effective practices.
- 6.15 We will incorporate awareness and cultural events into the school curriculum and celebrate them with parents and the wider community.

## **7. Employment**

- 7.1 Exceed Academies Trust aims to employ a workforce that reflects the community it serves.
- 7.2 No employee or applicant will be disadvantaged due to conditions or requirements not related to the job.
- 7.3 Staff will treat each other fairly and respectfully.
- 7.4 Reasonable adjustments will be made to working arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for all.
- 7.5 All staff will receive relevant equality and diversity training, commencing at induction.

## **8. External Partners**

- 8.1 External partners working with Exceed Academies Trust and its schools must comply with this Policy.
- 8.2 We will engage in discussions with any partners who do not comply and consider the continuation of collaborations.

## 9. Monitoring and Review

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years and will be considered annually to ensure alignment with legal requirements and best practices.
- 9.2 We will report annually on progress made in achieving the equality objectives and the objectives will be reviewed at least every four years.
- 9.3 Published data may include school performance, anti-bullying policies, school development plans, equality milestones, and curriculum materials.

## 10. Complaints

- 10.1 Staff who believe they have suffered discrimination, harassment, or victimisation can raise the matter through the Trust's Grievance Procedure.
- 10.2 Concerns from anyone not employed by the Trust/school should be raised following the Trust's Complaints Policy.
- 10.3 The Trust will take any allegation of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation very seriously and will take disciplinary action if necessary.



## Equality Objectives

Exceed Academies Trust (including its schools and organisations) has adopted the Equality Objectives listed below. Progress on achieving these will be reported on annually.

OBJECTIVE 1
To increase the representation of staff from underrepresented groups within the Trust.
Aim
To create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities served by the Trust and to foster a greater sense of belonging for all staff.
SMART Goals
<p><b>Specific:</b> Enhance recruitment campaigns and selection processes to attract more diverse candidates.</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> Increase the number of potential appointments to substantive posts and teacher training programs from underrepresented groups annually.</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> Utilise targeted advertising, inclusive recruitment packs, and diverse selection panels.</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Directly addresses the need to improve workforce representation.</p> <p><b>Time-bound:</b> Achieve a measurable increase in representation each year with a goal to reduce the gap between staff diversity and local/national diversity by 2027.</p>
Possible Success Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual increase in the percentage of new hires from underrepresented groups.</li><li>• Reduced gap between the staff diversity profile and local/national diversity profile by 2027.</li><li>• Increased number of applications from underrepresented groups.</li></ul>
Progress Updates



OBJECTIVE 2
To foster a culture where all staff feel respected, valued, safe, and have a strong sense of belonging within the Trust.
Aim
To create an environment where staff feel comfortable being their authentic selves and can thrive professionally.
SMART Goals
<p><b>Specific:</b> Implement an inclusive leadership framework and establish a common language for EDB.</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> Conduct regular surveys to assess staff feelings of respect, value, safety, and belonging.</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> Conduct training, review policies, and collect data on both diversity and inclusion to make improvements.</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Directly addresses the goal of creating an inclusive culture.</p> <p><b>Time-bound:</b> Increase the proportion of staff reporting positive feelings of inclusion annually.</p>
Possible Success Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in positive staff survey responses related to feeling respected, valued, safe, and a sense of belonging.</li> <li>• Increased staff participation in diversity and inclusion initiatives.</li> <li>• Trust and school leadership report increased confidence in maintaining an inclusive culture.</li> <li>• Implementation of inclusive policies across all areas of the Trust.</li> </ul>
Progress Updates

OBJECTIVE 3
To equip all staff with the knowledge and skills to become effective inclusive leaders and allies.
Aim
To ensure that all staff, and especially leaders, are competent in promoting equity, diversity, and belonging in all aspects of their work.
SMART Goals
<p><b>Specific:</b> Provide professional development programs including allyship, unconscious bias, and managing difficult conversations.</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> Track the number of staff completing EDB training and measure their confidence in applying the training.</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> Implement a universal and targeted program of professional development for all staff and support the establishment of staff networks.</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Directly addresses the need for ongoing training and development.</p> <p><b>Time-bound:</b> All new senior leaders will access high-quality inclusive leadership training within 12 months, and all staff will complete basic EDB training at least every 2 years.</p>
Possible Success Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of new senior leaders complete high-quality inclusive leadership training within 12 months of appointment.</li> <li>• 100% of staff complete basic EDB training every 2 years.</li> <li>• Establishment of at least one active staff network.</li> <li>• Increased staff participation in professional development related to EDB.</li> </ul>
Progress Updates

OBJECTIVE 4
To ensure the school curriculum actively promotes diversity, positive relationships, and challenges discrimination and stereotypes.
Aim
To provide all pupils with a culturally responsive curriculum that prepares them for a diverse world, while also challenging stereotypes, assumptions, and biases.
SMART Goals
<p><b>Specific:</b> Provide training to teachers on delivering a culturally responsive curriculum and establish an EDB curriculum network to share effective practices.</p> <p><b>Measurable:</b> Track the implementation of EDB themes in the curriculum and assess teachers' confidence in delivering it.</p> <p><b>Achievable:</b> Develop resources and guidance to implement a culturally responsive curriculum and support teachers in using the materials.</p> <p><b>Relevant:</b> Addresses the need to integrate EDB into the core educational experience.</p> <p><b>Time-bound:</b> Teachers will annually report high confidence in planning and delivering culturally responsive teaching.</p>
Possible Success Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers report high confidence in planning and delivering culturally responsive teaching annually.</li> <li>• Increased presence of diversity and inclusion within school curriculum materials, lessons, and faith assemblies.</li> <li>• Increased acknowledgement and celebration of diverse cultural events with pupils, parents, and the wider community.</li> <li>• Increased reporting of good practice in the EDB curriculum network.</li> </ul>
Progress Updates

## Equality Impact Assessment

This document should be completed when developing or reviewing all policies and procedures, both at Trust level and by individual Schools.

### Stage 1 – The policy/procedure

Title of policy/procedure	Equality Statement, Policy and Objectives
Department responsible for the policy/procedure	Human Resources / LAB
Is it a new or previously approved policy/procedure?	New
If previously approved, what was the date?	N/a
Name and role of assessor(s)	XXX

### Stage 2 – Further information

1. Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure	To put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the Trust, its school communities and workforce.
2. Who is expected to benefit from this policy/procedure?	Employees and pupils of the Trust and Exceed Schools.
3. Which individuals/groups/organisations have been consulted <sup>^</sup> regarding this policy/procedure (name and roles)?	Guidance has been sought from The Key, School Bus and the National Governance Association (NGA). Examples of policies adopted by a number of other organisations have been referred to.

<sup>^</sup> If any further consultation would be beneficial in ensuring that there is no adverse impact, this should be done prior to the policy/procedure being submitted to the approving body.

### Stage 3 – Assessing the impact on different groups of people

In the checklist within this document please indicate whether (and how) the policy/procedure affects particular groups of people (primarily 'Equality Target Groups') compared to others. Please complete the checklist, noting the following guidance:

Positive impact: a policy or practice where the impact on a particular group of people is more positive than for other groups, e.g., accessible website design. It can also include legally permitted positive action initiatives designed to improve workforce imbalance, such as job interview guarantee schemes for disabled people.

Negative impact: a policy or practice where the impact on a particular group of people is more negative than for other groups, e.g., where the choice of venue for a staff social occasion precludes members of a particular faith or belief group from participating.

Neutral impact: a policy or practice with neither a positive nor a negative impact on any group or groups of people compared to others.

#### **Stage 4 – Confirming completion of the Assessment**

Confirmation of completion of the equality impact assessment process by the manager who is responsible for developing or reviewing the policy/procedure.

Name:

Role:

Enc: completed checklist

DRAFT

## Equality Impact Assessment Checklist

Groups	Level of impact of the policy			Reasons / comments
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	
Equality Target Groups				
Men	Yes			Given the nature of the policy, it aims to have a positive impact on all groups
Women	Yes			
People from black and other minority ethnic communities	Yes			
People with a disability or additional needs	Yes			
Gay, Lesbian and Bi-sexual people	Yes			
Transgender people	Yes			
Older people (50+)	Yes			
Younger people (age 17–25)	Yes			
Faith or belief groups	Yes			
Other groups				
People with mental health issues	Yes			
People with economic/social needs	Yes			