

**Priory Academy**

**EQUALITY POLICY**

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# PRIORY ACADEMY

## Equality Scheme

### 1. Rationale and Aims

Priory Academy welcomes staff, students, parents, workers, volunteers, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds. The Academy provides for students of different abilities who are mainly drawn from the area in which the Academy is situated.

We recognise the benefits of having a diverse community, with individuals who value one another and the different contributions everyone can make. Students will be taught to have pride in themselves and to value and respect others. Priory Academy is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and will recognise and accept its responsibilities under the law by opposing discrimination on the basis of:

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)
- gender
- sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the Academy Community)
- marital or civil partnership status; and
- age.

These can be called the **Protected Characteristics**. Priory Academy also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The Academy aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunities and comply with the public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

**Publication:** This policy will be available on the Academy's website and on request from the school office. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

**Related policies:** This equal opportunities policy is consistent with all of the Academy's policies, including the admissions policy, behaviour policy, uniform code of practice, anti-bullying policy, disability policy, SEND policy and our accessibility plan.

### 2. Policy statement

**Scope:** This policy applies to all stakeholders of Priory Academy. There is also an equal opportunities policy for Staff in the Staff Handbook.

**Policy aims:** Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- communicate the commitment of the Academy to the promotion of equal opportunities
- promote equal treatment within the Academy for all stakeholders
- create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination
- foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the Academy
- remove or help to overcome barriers for students where they already exist

- ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any person on any ground listed under Protected Characteristics above
- make it clear that, and ensure, that all discriminatory words, behaviour and images are treated as unacceptable
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage (the **Reasonable Adjustments** duty)
- set out how we will publish information to demonstrate our equality commitments
- set out details about our academy equality objectives

### 3. Public Sector Equality Duty

Priory Academy is committed to promoting equality and when carrying out our functions, in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we will have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those without
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We also:

- publish information to demonstrate how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty; and
- prepare and publish academy equality objectives.

Our equality information and objectives are published on our Academy website. We publish the information at least annually and we publish new objectives at least every four years.

### 4. Forms of discrimination

**Types:** Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

**Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in" on the grounds of their race would be direct discrimination. Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a student is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that student.

**Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with gender, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of gender.

**Discrimination arising from disability:** Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, where a student with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend an academy visit because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

## 5. Admission

**Applicants:** The Academy accepts applications from, and admits students irrespective of their Protected Characteristics and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered, subject to section 9, below. The Academy will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way.

**Admissions policy:** The Academy's Admissions Policy reflects the Academy's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this policy.

## 6. Education and associated services

**Equal access:** The Academy will afford all students equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare as set out below.

**Positive action:** The Academy may afford students of a particular racial group, or students with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the students in that group.

**Exclusions:** The Academy will not discriminate against any student by excluding him or her from the Academy, or by subjecting him or her to any other detriment, on the grounds of his or her Protected Characteristics, subject to section 9 of this policy.

**Teaching and Academy materials:** Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the Academy's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

**Student interaction:** All students are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other students, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the Academy, and students will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

**Bullying:** The Academy will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason. Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying relating to race, religion, belief or culture
- bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or disabilities
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- bullying relating to sexual orientation
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- sexist or sexual bullying.

The Academy's anti-bullying policy contains more details about the Academy's anti-bullying practices.

## 7. Academy uniform

The Academy uniform code of practice is consistent with this policy. The same Academy uniform policy applies equally to all students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the

Academy will consider reasonable requests to alter the Academy uniform, for example for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled children.

**Disabled students:** Reasonable adjustments may be required to the Academy Uniform and decisions will be made according to individual needs. The student or his or her parents should refer the matter to the Headteacher to ensure all Reasonable Adjustments are made to accommodate the student.

## 8. Religious belief

**Religion:** The Academy respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with any faith, or no faith, subject always to their respecting the rights and freedoms of the Academy community as a whole and considerations of safety and welfare.

## 9. Disability and special educational needs

**Our approach:** We are an inclusive Academy which welcomes anyone with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the Academy and we will not treat anyone less favourably on these grounds without justification. At present, our facilities, physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited. However we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the Academy's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy is consistent with this policy. For a copy of this policy please see the school website or contact the school office.

**Definitions:** Children have 'special educational needs' if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a "*substantial and long term adverse effect*" on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010).

**Reasonable adjustments:** The Academy has an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and students with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other students. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of Academy life, for example: the curriculum, classroom organisation and timetabling, access to Academy facilities, clubs and visits, Academy sports and Academy policies.

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete exams
- providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment
- making arrangements to allow a student to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

The Academy is not legally required to make adjustments which include physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, or a new library.

In making reasonable adjustments, the Academy is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled students. The Academy will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

**Informing the Academy:** Parents of students should notify the Headteacher in writing if they are aware or suspect that the student (or prospective student) has a disability or if they (either parent), the student (or prospective student), or any close relations have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty. Parents should provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the Academy with such information will enable the Academy to support the student as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. The Academy will have due regard to any request made by a parent or student (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

**Access:** The Academy will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the Academy will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The Academy has an Accessibility Plan, which is reviewed annually and is available on request from the school office.

## **10. Students with statements of special educational needs**

The Academy's Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy includes details about the welfare and educational provision for students with Statements of Special Educational Need.

## **11. Students with English as an additional language**

**English as an Additional Language (EAL):** Students with English as an Additional Language will receive additional learning support if necessary. The Academy will consult with the student and the parents as appropriate. Linguistic diversity is positively recognised.

**Language and culture:** The Academy will ensure that:

- home-Academy links are made to involve parents directly in the work of the Academy;
- interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible;
- links are established within the local community;
- staff work effectively with other local services;
- learning support for ethnic minority students is efficient and effective;
- provision is made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information; and
- students' names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students should be encouraged to accept and respect names from cultures other than their own.

## **12. Responsibilities**

All stakeholders are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with dignity at all times.

**Overall responsibility:** The Governing Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the Academy's equal opportunities policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Governing Board has delegated to the Headteacher day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

**Management:** Those working at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the Academy with regard to equal opportunities in light of the public sector equality duty.

**Senior management:** The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged students are in place. Arrangements include:

- identifying and investigating any patterns in exclusions and poor attendance;
- monitoring differences in attitudes to the Academy, work and other students;
- addressing harassment and bullying;
- evaluating performance among different groups;
- the impact of any additional support.

### **13. Monitoring and review**

**Monitoring:** To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admissions, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in the Academy, the Academy monitors applicants' gender, race, disability and religion or belief as part of the Admissions procedure. We also monitor achievement, exclusions and bullying incidents against gender, race, disability and special educational need. We maintain records of this data in an anonymised format for the purposes stated in this policy.

**Review:** The Headteacher is responsible for the ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data monitored in accordance with this policy and will arrange for the taking of appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination where necessary. The Headteacher is also responsible for reviewing whether the aims of this policy are carried out throughout all areas of the Academy and taking appropriate action where necessary. This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to the Board of Governors.

### **14. Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination**

**Questions about this policy:** If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Headteacher.

**Complaints:** If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the Academy's formal Complaints Procedure. For a copy of the Academy's complaints procedure, please refer to the Academy's website. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

**Reports:** If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint under one of the grounds listed above, please contact the Headteacher.

**Enforcement:** We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the Academy who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

**Record:** All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher.

# **APPENDIX**

## **EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

**PRIORY ACADEMY**  
**EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

1. Promote cultural understanding and awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our Academy community.
2. Promote and monitor the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the Academy, including leadership opportunities, especially students of ethnic minorities or with special educational needs and disabilities and those eligible for Pupil Premium funding.
3. Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between students for all groups of students; especially students eligible for Pupil Premium, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from minority ethnic groups.
4. Continue to improve accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas.
5. Monitor the incidence of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by students in the Academy.