



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy title:	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Function:	For information and guidance about equality at The Blue Coat School. This document forms part of the portfolio of policies designed to inform students and parents, staff and the general public.
Status:	Approved
Statutory guidance:	The Equality Act (2010) DFE: The Equality Act and Schools (2018) The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
Audience:	Students, Parents, Staff, Leaders, Trustees, Local authority, General public
Ownership:	Trust Board/Headteacher
Last reviewed:	September 2023
Reviewed by:	Full Trust Board
Next review:	Every four years – September 2027

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Aims and objectives

At the Blue Coat School our vision is simple. All that we do is focused on developing exceptionally well-rounded individuals with the skills to thrive and positively contribute in a rapidly changing society.

This is underpinned by our unrelenting focus on:

Inspiring excellence

Excellence is not something that is simply achieved. It is something that we always strive for so that we can continually create opportunity and enhance the life chances of talented young people from broad and diverse backgrounds. The best is not, however, always the easiest. Our staff and learners will be resilient, and able to overcome barriers and challenges to ensure that potential is unlocked.

Shaping character

Our learners leave us not just knowing how to do things, but how to do things in the right way for the right reasons. That is why humility and integrity are the key pillars of our community, and the basis for how we treat one another. They ensure we have a culture where individuals are treated with care and compassionate respectfulness.

Forging futures

Every member of our community will leave us embracing their strengths and with ambition and aspiration as to how they can contribute positively to the modern world they are entering. Our students will become the leaders of tomorrow.

By extension, our values, approach and ethos are embodied in, and implemented through, our policies and procedures. They are the framework to support all that we do and achieve.

Policy aims and objectives

This policy sets out The Blue Coat School's arrangements to ensure equality for all members of the school community in line with the Equality Act (2010), the DFE guidance titled The Equality Act 2010 and schools (2018) and The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

- 1 This policy provides guidance so that all adults and children at The Blue Coat School:
 - understand the school's zero tolerance stance on prejudice and discrimination
 - understand the school's commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion
 - are aware of and support the school's aim to protect all members of its community from prejudice or discrimination, including adults and children on grounds of:
 - age
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
 - disability
 - religion or belief
 - race
 - gender reassignment
 - pregnancy, maternity or paternity
 - marriage and civil partnership

- 2 The policy provides a clear framework to protect all adults and children from prejudice or discrimination of any kind and to ensure that The Blue Coat School:
 - is a positive place where there is a shared commitment to recognise and respect difference and diversity
 - is a place where any form of prejudice is challenged
 - consistently models that everybody is of equal value
 - meets the individual needs of children and adults
 - promotes equality in all of its policies, systems, processes, monitoring and evaluation
 - fosters positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
 - aims to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers

Equality Objectives

- a. To promote cultural understanding and awareness, valuing and celebrating various cultures and religious beliefs amongst different ethnic groups within our school community through regular extra-curricular events and the curriculum.

- b. To monitor and review the extra-curricular provision within school, including leadership opportunities, so an effective extra-curricular programme is established that promotes the involvement of all groups of students.

- c. To actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between students and all groups of students by July 2025; especially boys, students eligible for free-school meals, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from minority ethnic groups.
- d. To train staff on how to respond effectively to prejudice-related bullying, so that by July 2024, 90% of staff will feel confident in responding effectively to prejudice-related bullying.
- e. To review relevant school policies and publications to ensure they clearly reflect the aim of inclusivity each academic year.

Roles and responsibilities

- 4 The Trust Board will:
 - ensure this policy complies with all relevant legislation about equality for all
 - challenge senior leaders to ensure that equality and diversity is considered in all aspects of the school's work
 - monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

- 5 The Headteacher will:
 - ensure this policy is implemented effectively and consistently
 - work closely with the senior leadership team to ensure that systems, processes and practices are free from conscious or unconscious discrimination or bias
 - challenge all school leaders to be alert to and monitor equality issues for both adults and children
 - ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under this policy
 - ensure a thorough, diligent and rigorous response to allegations of discrimination at The Blue Coat School
 - ensure that senior leaders use assemblies and other opportunities to promote everybody's responsibility to ensure equality and celebrate diversity

- 6 Senior leaders will:
 - support the headteacher to achieve the above roles and responsibilities
 - ensure that school assemblies and collective acts of worship promote equality, diversity and inclusion
 - record and monitor occurrences of discrimination or inequality perpetrated by adults or children with particular regard to the protected characteristics identified above
 - lead by example to ensure pro-active equality across the school.
 - support Middle Leaders to ensure that student provision highlights and celebrates equality, diversity and inclusion

- 7 Heads of Department will:
- ensure that equality and diversity are core principles of subject curricula and that they are positively addressed wherever possible
 - ensure that teaching practices and subject curricula challenges discrimination and inequality
 - lead by example as positive role models of equality
- 8 Key Stage Leaders will:
- demonstrate equality in all aspects of their work to support form tutors and children
 - ensure that assemblies include opportunities to positively promote equality and diversity to children of all age groups
 - monitor attendance, behaviour, welfare, progress and achievement to ensure equality of outcome and provision for children of all characteristics
 - lead by example as positive role models of equality
- 9 Support Team Leaders will ensure that:
- all team members enjoy equal opportunities, treatment and support.
 - equality is a core principle of the provision and services provided by their area
 - lead by example as positive role models of equality
- 10 All staff will:
- ensure they are fully aware of the school's policy on equality
 - positively and actively comply with all aspects of the school's equality policy
 - challenge and report any form of discrimination or inequality against children or adults
 - lead by example as positive role models of equality
- 11 Students will:
- be made aware of the School's commitment to equality and be expected to act accordingly
 - recognise and respect diversity.
 - respect different faiths and beliefs
 - foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging.
- 12 Parents will:
- support initiatives and strategies which are implemented to eradicate inequality and discrimination
 - promote equality, diversity and inclusion with their children

Procedures and practices

General principles

- 11 The Blue Coat School is committed to ensuring complete equality for every child and adult.
- 12 The school will always provide an environment which respects and values the positive contributions of all members of its community.
- 13 The school will always promote every adult and child's right to be:
 - treated well, with dignity and respect
 - treated fairly at all times
 - protected from discrimination and bias
 - encouraged and supported to achieve their very best
- 14 Curriculum and Pastoral areas, where appropriate, use materials that reflect a range of cultures, backgrounds and lifestyles.
- 15 Policies, displays, notices, meals and uniform in the school will all reflect the entire school population and with due diligence to protected characteristics. Positive images of adults and children of all characteristics will be used to illustrate the commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities.
- 16 The Blue Coat School will seek to take as many opportunities as it can to positively engage with partner organisations that positively promote equality for adults and children (Annex A).
- 17 The school will not tolerate any incidents of any child or adult receiving less favourable treatment on grounds of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, race, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or any other characteristic.
- 18 The school will have clear and simple systems to investigate occurrences of actual or potential discrimination.
- 19 The school will ensure that the buildings, accommodation and the physical environment are regularly reviewed and assessed to meet the needs of adults and children with restricted mobility.
- 20 In support of equality for all adults and children, the school will gather, maintain and review information about the characteristics of all members of the school community. Further information will be sought and recorded where the school needs more detail to help, support and protect adults and children. All information will be held in the strictest confidence.
- 21 The school will engage positively with any adult or child who would benefit from reasonable adjustments to support their day to day activities. The school will support any such reasonable adjustments with appropriate risk assessments where relevant and/or adaptations to resources.

Equality for children

- 22 School admissions are based on selection by ability and are entirely independent of students' protected characteristics.
- 23 The school will promote positive attitudes about adults and children of all characteristics in its community and in the wider world.
- 24 All members of the school community will be encouraged to be open-minded and to challenge prejudice of any kind.
- 25 Students of all characteristics (protected or other) will be positively encouraged to be fully involved in every aspect of school life. All school opportunities will be equally available to all students, but some may be on a 'first come, first served' basis where places are limited. In such circumstances, students and parents will be informed of the limited availability at the outset in writing.
- 26 School events, including assemblies, will include opportunities to promote:
 - student's awareness of equality and protected characteristics
 - everybody's responsibility towards equality
 - opportunities for students of protected or other characteristics to contribute to the school's ethos.
- 27 The curriculum will promote positive attitudes to difference and diversity. It will develop students' awareness of the responsibility of individuals, communities and societies to promote equality for all and particularly for adults and children of protected characteristics. In lessons, students will be given the opportunity to discuss, identify and challenge racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice.
- 28 Teachers and support staff will ensure that:
 - students of any gender are encouraged and supported to aim high, participate equally in physical and intellectual activities and make full use of the broad range of careers opportunities available at The Blue Coat School
 - they make every effort to fully integrate students with disabilities into the life of the school by adapting practices and strategies and ensuring adequate risk assessment and access arrangements
 - students of all ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to contribute to their education by bringing their cultural experiences, values and perceptions to it
 - students who experience hardship or are materially disadvantaged are proactively supported with the opportunities, resources and facilities they need to compete equally with their peers
 - students of all abilities will be provided with the teaching and experiences required to ensure that through stretch and challenge, every student achieves their very best given their starting point

- students of all sexualities, including those that are transgender or gender diverse, experience the support they need to thrive in The Blue Coat Community so that they are confident and comfortable with their identity and ready for the adult life
- the needs and cultures of students from all ethnicities are carefully recognised, considered, appreciated and valued by all so that outstanding race relations are the norm across The Blue Coat School Community.

- 29 Day to day monitoring of students' academic needs is carried out by teaching staff. Where necessary, additional learning support will be arranged.
- 30 Students of all characteristics will receive high quality individualised pastoral support through their Form Tutors and Key Stage Leaders. Pastoral staff will ensure the specific needs of all students including those related to age, gender, disability, sexuality, ethnicity and religion are carefully considered in day to day support.
- 31 Dealing with discriminatory behaviour is the responsibility of everyone. All students will be regularly reminded of what to do if they feel they have witnessed discrimination, prejudice or inequality at The Blue Coat School.
- 32 If a students feel they have been abused or discriminated against on any grounds they should report the matter immediately to their Form Tutor, Key Stage Leaders or a Senior leader. All students can expect to be listened to and have their complaints thoroughly and independently investigated.

Equality for adults

- 33 The school's recruitment procedures to fill vacant posts will be carefully undertaken and monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at each stage including advertisement, selection, assessment and appointment. Applicants with disabilities who meet the essential criteria will be shortlisted for interview. All candidates will be given the same experience.
- 34 The school will appoint and promote staff with absolute transparency on the basis of ability. Processes will be free of any assumptions, including those based on protected characteristics.
- 35 The school will monitor and review the outcome of staff appointments to ensure that there is no conscious or unconscious discrimination against applicants with protected equality characteristics.
- 36 The Blue Coat School is fully committed to supporting staff with maternity or paternity leave and will support all staff to retain the career aspirations of their choice before, during and after such leave.
- 37 The school expects all employees to demonstrate positive attitudes to equality for all and particularly those of protected characteristics.
- 38 The school will provide regular training and development opportunities to ensure all staff are well informed of the principles of equality and diversity, and benefit from the opportunity to discuss and explore issues of discrimination, prejudice and the harm they cause.

- 39 Staff will ensure that the ideas and images in books and other resources, challenge inequality or discrimination of any kind and promote equality in a positive manner.
- 40 Staff will ensure that information shared with The Blue Coat School relating to characteristics of adults or children is treated with confidentiality and sensitivity.
- 41 The school will carefully consider requests for leave of absence where they may be directly linked to equality for staff with protected characteristics.
- 42 The school will positively support any member of staff where circumstances dictate that they are unable to undertake the full range of duties required from their role. In such cases, close, supportive communication with the member of staff will inform careful consideration of reasonable adjustments and/or medical redeployment. Where either of these are impractical, the member of staff's capability for work will be assessed as set out in the school's employment policy.
- 43 Dealing with discriminatory behaviour is the responsibility of everyone. The procedure for school staff to raise concerns about discrimination, prejudice or inequality will be clearly shared with all staff.
- 44 If staff feel they have been discriminated against in any way they should report the matter immediately to their line manager or any senior leader and should follow the guidelines set out below. Staff can expect to be listened to and have their complaints thoroughly and independently investigated.

Concerns about possible discrimination

- 45 Any individual who feels discriminated against has the right to report their concerns to the school. Incidents should be reported within 3 months of the date of occurrence so that the school can promptly respond to concerns.
- 46 Children's and adult's concerns about equality or discrimination will be carefully listened to and investigated promptly.
- 47 The school will investigate all concerns with upmost diligence including allegations of:
- student on student prejudice or discrimination
 - student on staff prejudice or discrimination
 - staff on student prejudice or discrimination
 - staff on staff prejudice or discrimination
 - prejudice or discrimination by the school on an individual outside of the school community.
- 48 Where prejudice or discrimination is alleged against a student, the matter will be investigated by an independent member of the senior leadership team and if appropriate, dealt with according to the school's behaviour policy.

- 49 Where prejudice or discrimination is alleged against a member of staff, the matter will be investigated by an independent member of the senior leadership team and if appropriate, dealt with according to the school's professional conduct policy.
- 50 Where prejudice or discrimination is alleged against the school, the aggrieved will be invited to submit their concern using the school's complaints policy and the matter will be investigated by the Headteacher. If the allegation involves the Headteacher, the matter will be investigated by the Chair of Trustees. Where appropriate the matter will be dealt with according to the school's professional conduct policy.
- 51 If a child or adult feels that their complaint has not been dealt with properly, the matter may be referred to the Headteacher or Chair of Trustees for further consideration.
- 52 Any adult or child that does not adhere to this policy will be dealt with under the relevant disciplinary procedure. Such behaviour has the potential to lead to exclusion or dismissal.

Related Policies

The policies detailed below are relevant and should be read alongside this policy:

- Accessibility Policy
 - Anti-bullying Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Pupil Premium Strategy
 - Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Relationships and Sex Education Policy
 - Staff Professional Conduct Policy
- (This list is not exhaustive)

Monitoring, review and evaluation

- 53 The Trust Board will ensure that the procedures and practices of this policy are monitored, reviewed and evaluated through full Trust Board activity and lead Trustee roles.
- 54 The headteacher will ensure that the Trust Board is presented with the necessary information to rigorously evaluate:
- student admissions
 - provision and opportunities for students
 - student behaviours and attitudes
 - staff recruitment and appointment
 - proactive support for staff equality
 - staff conduct

- investigations into prejudice or discrimination in the context of promoting equality and challenging discrimination.

55 Senior leaders will monitor:

- student admission processes to ensure no applicant of any characteristic is unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged
- school provision, curricula and support to assess the frequency and quality of opportunities to promote equality to students
- student behaviour records to promptly respond to incidents of prejudice and discrimination
- the outcome of staff appointments against protected characteristics to evaluate and act on any potential conscious or unconscious discrimination
- training, awareness raising and support for staff to promote equality in all aspects of their roles
- records of staff conduct to educate, support and challenge staff where potential or actual equality has taken place.

56 All monitoring and evaluation related to this policy will centre on the extent to which The Blue Coat School successfully demonstrates a consistently inclusive, supportive and equal atmosphere.

57 The school will always review the application and effectiveness of this policy where prejudice or discrimination necessitates the need for sanctions against any adult or child.

Annex A: Helpful contacts

ACAS

T: 0300 123 1100

W: <http://www.acas.org.uk>

Disability Rights UK

T: 020 7250 8181

W: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Disability Equality North West

Tel: 01772 558 863

W: www.disability-equality.org.uk

Equality and human rights commission

T: 0161 829 8100

W: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Equality Advisory and Support Service

T: 0808 800 0082

W: www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

Stonewall

T: 020 7593 1850

W: <http://www.stonewall.org.uk>