



THE FORGE

TRUST

Equality & Diversity Policy

(complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty)

Our Ambition: To be the highest performing MAT in the country
Our Mission: To improve the communities we serve for the better

Written by	The Principals Review Committee
Date for Review	March 2025
Approving Body	Strategic Development Committee
Signed Chair of Trustees	S. Trentini

Vision:

*Challenging educational orthodoxies so that every child makes good progress in all subjects;
all teachers are committed to personal improvement and fulfil their responsibilities;
all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum;
all academies strive to be outstanding.*

Aims

Across the FORGE trust, we aim to maintain a caring, supportive and disciplined learning environment where children benefit from the best possible education. All staff are committed to this aim. We would like to know if you think we are not meeting your expectations, so that we have an opportunity to respond. We would also like to know your opinion on the things we do well.

Equality & Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, belief or ability. The FORGE Trust is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from intimidation and harassment in respect of any of the protected characteristics. Indeed, it is an expectation that all people (children and adults) are treated with kindness and respect in an environment that enables them to succeed.

The FORGE Trust is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited below, The FORGE Trust are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all children as learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender and gender identity;
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background;
- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised;
- religion, belief or faith background;

- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people;
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Where appropriate we consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- both women and men, and girls and boys;
- members of the LGBTQ+ community as well as heterosexual.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled;
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;

we believe in promoting greater participation in public life of all people irrespective of gender or sexual orientation.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We review quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability;
- ethnicity, religion and culture;
- gender.

Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7), in relation to:

- disability;
- ethnicity, religion and culture;
- gender.

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

2.) MISSION STATEMENT

We are committed to ensuring this policy is actively implemented across The FORGE Trust and is focussed on achieving positive outcomes. This policy will be implemented through day to day practice and it also links to other Trust and Academy policies such as The Accessibility Plan and SEND Policy.

3.) LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and this policy has been developed to help us to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct;
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.) THE CURRICULUM/TEACHING AND LEARNING

Equality and diversity will be as embedded as far as is possible in all areas of the curriculum and pupils will be given opportunities to explore prejudice and discrimination, and to positively explore difference in relation to race/ethnicity, religion/belief, gender, disability etc. Each subject area will be kept under review, including the resources available. The FORGE Trust are committed to ensuring that resource materials reflect both the diversity of each academy, local community and wider society as a whole. Attainment and achievement data will be collected both at academy and trust level and this is used to inform planning and provision to support individuals and groups of pupils. We also have specific assessments that assess the needs of pupils with additional needs such as EAL, SEND etc and we also recognise the importance of scrutinising assessment materials for cultural bias.

5.) ETHOS AND ORGANISATION

Quality and diversity principles will run through all day to day practices and are embedded in all policies. These include practice and policies such as:

- Admissions, induction and attendance;
- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement;
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being (linking to anti-bullying and safeguarding);
- Care, guidance and support;
- Parental/carer involvement;
- Working with the wider community and community cohesion;
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions (linking to SEAL);
- Teaching styles and strategies;
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development;
- Inclusion (linking to curriculum, participation etc.)

6.) ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED BULLYING

Every academy within The FORGE Trust has a legal obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment and victimisation, as well as a duty to foster positive relations between groups and individuals. The definition of a hate incident is:

"any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offender's prejudice against people because of their age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or other reason."

We take our obligations seriously and have procedures in place for dealing with such incidents. We also ensure that staff are adequately trained to deal with such incidents. New members of staff are made familiar with the principles in the policy in their induction.

We address issues around prejudice and bullying and follow the guidelines in each academy's Behaviour / Anti Bullying Policy and procedures.

7.) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustee body is responsible for ensuring the Trust complies with the legislation, and that the policy, the trust's practice and related procedures and any action plans are implemented and regularly reviewed and monitored.

The Principal / Head of School at each academy within the trust is responsible for the overall implementation of the policy on a day to day basis, but that this may be delegated as appropriate to a senior member of staff. The Principal / Head of School is responsible for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination; and for ensuring that **all** staff are aware of their responsibilities under the legislation and that they are given appropriate training and support to meet these responsibilities.

All staff have a responsibility to keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work, and support the ethos of the school through their actions. They undertake all their work activities mindful of equalities issues, including planning, assessment, and individual support for pupils and groups of pupils. They also demonstrate an awareness of specific individual needs and promote respect for diversity.

Staff also know how to respond to and deal with any prejudice-related incidents which occur.

8.) BREACHES OF THE POLICY

Concerns/complaints about the implementation of the policy are taken very seriously and any infringement of the policy will be dealt with. Please refer to the 'Complaints Policy'.

10.) MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The impact of the policy will be measured and will be reviewed annually. Data on racial/hate incidents will be collected and analysed and this will be used to adapt our policy and actions if required.