

**St Francis of Assisi Catholic
Academy Trust Public Duty
Equality Statement**



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust

Signed off by: Trust Board

Date from: September 2024

Review Date: September 2025

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), part of the Equality Act requires organisations to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. The PSED has a key role to play in making sure that fairness is at the heart of public bodies' work and that public services meet the needs of different groups. It covers a range of public bodies, including academies.

The PSED replaces the three former duties that required government departments, local authorities and other public bodies to take into account gender, race and disability equality both as employers and when making policy decisions and delivering services. The duty standardises this requirement and also extends it to cover:

- Age;
- Marriage;
- Civil partnership;
- Religion or belief;
- Sexual orientation;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Gender reassignment.

Equality Objectives:

The Trust and its Academies are committed to developing policies and practices that raise attainment for all students and close the gap between those facing disadvantage and their peers.

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a legal duty to publish information to demonstrate compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty of that Act.

As a Trust we recognise our general and specific duties having 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 between people of all characteristics.

These duties extend to all members of our Trust and each of our Academies, and specific regard needs to be given to those who have protected characteristics which are outlined above.

The Trust and its Academies are committed to:

- Considering equality as we develop policy and acting on those considerations;
- Being conscious of the need for our policy to be informed by equality evidence, collecting the evidence, and using it;
- Improving our practice in promoting equality, and engaging with our local, national and international communities.

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish specific and measurable equality objectives. Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data, our Trust Improvement Plan and other information. Our equality objectives focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantage. These objectives are aligned with our Trust and School Improvement plans and we regularly review the progress we are making to meet them.

Objective 1 - Ensure that high quality teaching and support secures excellent achievement for all and that we narrow gaps between students who receive pupil premium funding and their peers, as well as between male and female students and students from different ethnic backgrounds. This will be achieved by:

- Rigorous assessment identification of key groups of students who may have fallen behind or have been negatively impacted by the pandemic
- Rigorous assessment to identify content gaps in learning, (with a particular focus on the reading gap), as students are likely to have missed substantial parts of their education at all levels.
- Progress and attainment of sub-groups is constantly under review with appropriate actions/support to address any underachievement
- Timely interventions to close the progress, reading and attainment gaps between groups.
- Analysis of achievement by our academies and action planning to ensure that strategies are in place to ensure excellent achievement for all
- To monitor and analyse student achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for students. This is to be undertaken annually.

Objective 2 - To improve the student understanding of equality through the educational delivery of PSHE & RSHE. This will be achieved by:

- Regular review of our Relationships and Sex Education and our PSHE policies to ensure that they meet Government requirements, the ethos of our Trust and its academies and the needs of the diverse families our academies serve
- Regular assemblies, worship and high quality teaching with a focus on promoting attitudes and values that challenge any discriminatory behaviour or prejudice.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to appreciate and understand their own religion and culture and celebrate the diversity of other religions and cultures.

Objective 3 - When reviewing the breadth of our curriculum, we will ensure that there are ample opportunities to expose children to historical and scientific perspectives from a range of cultures, ethnic backgrounds, from both male and female perspectives, including individuals with disabilities (remembering that some disabilities are less visible. This will be achieved by:

- Provision in all Academies to allow a student voice to shape educational and pastoral resources.
- Leaders to share books and articles relating to diversity with the full staff group
- Leaders to support teachers to have understanding of political landscape (eg BLM) and be able to address with their classes in an age appropriate way
- Reading material in academy libraries to reflect a range of cultures, ethnic backgrounds and diverse positive role models
- Our charity work for the common good encourages philanthropy amongst our students alongside learning new skills and developing a greater understanding of different lives and cultures.

Implementation

In compliance with The Public Sector Equality Duty the Trust is committed to working for equality for all our staff, students and parents/carers. We give 'Due regard' to the PSED by ensuring that whenever significant decisions are made or policies are developed, thought is given to equality implications at every stage.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. In order to ensure that all students are protected from discrimination, the Trust and its Academies collect information on protected characteristics.

In addition to students with protected characteristics, we gather information on the following groups of students:

- Students eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Children from represented ethnic groups
- Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Disadvantaged groups
- Looked after Children and Previously Looked After (LAC)
- Young Carers
- Other vulnerable groups

In essence, we eliminate discrimination by the following activities, although this is not an exhaustive list:

- Our Behaviour Policy ensures all students feel safe at school and addresses prejudicial bullying.
- Reporting, responding to and monitoring all racist incidents.
- Regularly monitoring the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of our students and that it promotes diversity and challenges negative stereotyping.
- Teaching is of the highest quality to ensure students reach their potential and all students are given equal entitlement to success.
- Tracking student progress and intervening where necessary.
- Ensuring all students have the opportunity to access extra-curricular provision.
- Listening to and monitoring views and experiences of students and adults to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and procedures.
- Publishing relevant and appropriate information on the Trust and Academy websites and social media.
- Advancing equality and opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not share it.

We advance equality of opportunity by:

- Using the information, we gather to identify underachieving groups or individuals and plan targeted intervention.
- Ensuring participation of parents/carers and students in school development.
- Listening to all parents/carers, students and staff.
- Fostering good relations across all characteristics – between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not share it.

Impact

Through rigorous tracking and monitoring of individuals and of all student groups, including progress and attainment, by curriculum review and student/ pupil voice we aim to:

- ensure that any gap in attainment for students within any of the above different groups is removed, or at least remains less than the gap nationally
- improve students' understanding of equality

Conclusion

St Francis of Assis Catholic Multi Academy Trust is committed to adopting the aims of the PSED in all Academies and workplaces within the Trust. The Public Sector Equality Duty introduces legislation in the form of specific duties. The duties require Trusts and Academies to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how the Trust is complying with the PSED. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic
- Prepare and publish equality objectives on the Trust website

In addition to this the Trust also has a Trust Equality and Diversity Policy which it adheres to at all times.