



BELONG

CE Multi Academy Trust

Equality Information & Objectives

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Love, Hope, Community and Compassion



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Note for schools:

While this policy is designed for trust-wide adoption, individual schools within the Belong CE MAT may set their own equality objectives under Section 8, in alignment with their local context.

1. Aims

At Belong Multi Academy Trust, we are committed to fulfilling our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations across all characteristics—between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Rooted in our Christian foundation, we seek to promote **respect for difference and diversity**, recognising every individual as a unique creation of God. Our values of **Hope, Love, Community, and Compassion** guide us in building a culture where all pupils, staff, and stakeholders feel a deep sense of belonging and are empowered to flourish.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy complies with the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects individuals from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish equality information and objectives

It is also informed by:

- Department for Education (DfE) guidance on the Equality Act
- Technical guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Government Equalities Office guidance on meeting the specific duties under the PSED

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Note: This document also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

This section should be adapted to reflect Belong MAT's governance and leadership structure. Below is a trust-level framework:

3.1 *The Board of Trustees*

The board will:

- Ensure equality information is published and communicated across the trust, including to local governors, staff, pupils, and parents/carers
- Ensure annual updates to published equality information and a four-yearly review of objectives
- Delegate daily monitoring of objectives to headteachers and, where applicable, local governing bodies or link equality trustees/governors

3.2 *Local Governing Bodies*

These bodies will:

- Meet regularly within each school to review progress and address issues
- Stay informed about relevant legislation and this policy
- Undertake appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report to the full board on equality matters

3.3 *Headteachers*

Each headteacher will:

- Promote understanding of equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Monitor progress and report to governors
- Consider equality implications in all decisions and actions

3.4 *All Staff*

All staff across Belong MAT are expected to uphold this policy and contribute to achieving the trust's equality objectives.

4. Eliminating Discrimination

Belong Multi Academy Trust recognises its legal and moral obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by law. This commitment is rooted in our Christian values of **Hope, Love, Community, and Compassion**, and our belief that every individual is made in the image of God and deserves dignity and respect.

To uphold this commitment:

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- All trust-wide policies explicitly reference the importance of avoiding discrimination and promoting equity and inclusion.
- Trustees and staff are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act through briefings, training, and governance meetings. Where equality matters are discussed, they are formally recorded in meeting minutes.
- New staff receive comprehensive equality and diversity training as part of their induction, including an overview of the Equality Act and its implications for their role. Refresher training is delivered annually each September, with content tailored to current issues and best practice.
- Each school within the trust appoints a designated member of staff responsible for monitoring equality issues, alongside a link local governor for equalities. These individuals meet regularly to discuss emerging concerns and ensure senior leaders are informed and responsive.

This trust-wide framework ensures consistency in approach while allowing schools to reflect their local context within the boundaries of statutory compliance.

5. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

In line with Department for Education guidance and our theological commitment to valuing every person as a unique creation of God, Belong Multi Academy Trust seeks to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Identifying and reducing disadvantages experienced by individuals with protected characteristics (e.g. pupils with disabilities or LGBTQ+ pupils facing bullying).
- Meeting the specific needs of individuals with protected characteristics through targeted support and inclusive practices.
- Encouraging full participation in school life by all pupils and staff, regardless of background or identity.

5.1 Publishing Information About Pupils

To fulfil our duty, each school within the trust will:

- Publish annual attainment data disaggregated by protected characteristics to identify performance trends.
- Analyse this data to highlight strengths and areas for improvement, and publish resulting actions.
- Share evidence of progress for specific groups, such as reductions in discriminatory incidents or improved engagement.
- Publish additional data where relevant, identifying issues that may affect pupils with protected characteristics.

All pupil-related equality data will be published on individual school websites, ensuring transparency while protecting confidentiality.

5.2 Publishing Information About Staff

As an employer, Belong MAT will publish data to demonstrate how our practices affect staff with protected characteristics. This includes:

- Workforce composition by grade, role, and pay level, including patterns of part-time work and occupational segregation.
- Gender pay gap reporting.
- Staff profiles across recruitment, training, promotion, and retention.
- Applications and outcomes for flexible working and professional development.
- Grievances, disciplinary actions, and complaints related to discrimination.
- Staff feedback from surveys and union engagement.
- Equality impact assessments for key decisions.

We will ensure that all published data protects individual privacy, and where numbers are small, data may be withheld to preserve confidentiality.

6. Fostering Good Relations

Belong MAT is committed to fostering good relations between individuals who share protected characteristics and those who do not. This is central to our vision of building communities where everyone feels they belong and can flourish.

To achieve this, we will:

- Promote tolerance, friendship, and understanding through the curriculum, including RE, PSHE, citizenship, and English literature, which features texts from diverse cultures.
- Ensure pupils are familiar with behaviour and anti-bullying policies that promote respect and inclusion.
- Hold assemblies on equality-related themes, with pupil-led contributions and guest speakers from diverse backgrounds.
- Encourage schools to engage with their local communities, including inviting faith leaders to speak and organising community-based trips and activities.
- Support initiatives that address tensions between pupil groups, such as inclusive school councils and extracurricular activities that promote cross-group participation.
- Work with parents/carers to build understanding of different cultures and identities.
- Develop partnerships with organisations and individuals who bring specialist knowledge on protected characteristics to inform our practice.

7. Equality Considerations in Decision-Making

At Belong Multi Academy Trust, we ensure that equality considerations are embedded in all significant decisions. We are committed to having due regard to the impact of our decisions on individuals with protected characteristics, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Before and during the development of policies, and throughout decision-making processes, we actively consider equality implications. This includes:

- Assessing whether proposed activities or changes may disadvantage any group
- Reviewing decisions regularly to ensure they continue to uphold our equality commitments

In all schools across the trust, staff are expected to consider the impact of decisions on particular groups. For example, when planning a school trip or event, staff will assess whether:

- The timing conflicts with religious observances
- The venue and activity are accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Facilities and arrangements are inclusive of all genders

To support this, each school completes an **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)** alongside the risk assessment for any significant activity. The EIA is completed by the organising staff member and stored electronically with the risk assessment documentation. This process ensures transparency and accountability in our commitment to equity.

8. Equality Objectives

We take a trust-wide approach to setting objectives, while allowing schools to supplement these with their own context-specific goals. This ensures consistency across the trust while respecting the diversity of our school communities. Whilst schools may set additional objectives based on their local context. These should align with the trust's overarching approach to equality.

Our current trust-wide equality objectives are:

Objective 1

Undertake an analysis of recruitment data and trends in regard to race, disability, and gender pay gap by July 2027, and report findings to the Board of Trustees.

Why we have chosen this objective: To identify and address any disparities in recruitment and pay.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Collect and analyse data annually, and develop targeted actions based on findings.

Progress we are making: Initial data collection underway; reporting framework in development.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

The Board of Directors will update the equality information published in Sections 4 to 7 annually. This document will be reviewed each year to ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Where schools set their own equality objectives, these will be reviewed every four years by the headteacher or and approved by the local governing body.

The trust-wide policy will be approved annually by the Board of Trustees.

10. Links with Other Policies

This Equality Policy is aligned with the following trust-wide documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Risk Assessment Policy
- SEND Information Report

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct