Equality Policy

Freemantle C.E. Community Academy Trust

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our, self-evaluation review, the academy prospectus and website.

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Approved by: Directors	
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1. Introduction

Freemantle C of E Community Academy Trust is an inclusive academy where we focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

Our vision statement is ‘Everyone is welcome’… We are a forward-thinking academy that embraces and acknowledges education as a right and a privilege. We have high expectations and strive to ensure that all children reach their full potential. We aim to create an environment in which everyone feels happy and is actively involved in all areas of their learning. We aim to encourage everyone to develop a growth mind-set by taking risks, asking questions, rising to challenges and being resilient. We value everyone as individuals and encourage them to respect each other, helping them to form and maintain positive and meaningful relationships.

We teach children about their rights and about our core values of courage, fellowship and creativity. We celebrate individuality and the unique talents and characteristics of each child, whilst celebrating the wonderfully diverse make up of our academy. Our school promotes and teaches the children to understand the British values of tolerance and mutual respect, democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.

Our Freemantle curriculum aims share the ambitious expectations we have for our children. We prepare children well for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement within different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. Our commitment to ensuring equality of access to the academy environment is detailed in our academy local offer.

2. Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

- **All learners are 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/non-faith background.
- **We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength:** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith. We believe diversity should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- **We foster positive attitudes and relationships:** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between all groups and communities irrespective of any differences from each other.
- **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging:** We want all members of our academy community to feel a sense of belonging within the academy and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in academy life.

- **We observe good equalities practice for our staff:** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- **We have the highest expectations of all our pupils:** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.
- **We work to raise standards for all pupils**: We believe that embedding the strategies to improve the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole academy.

3. Purpose of the Policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that organisations cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity.

The Act requires all public organisations, including academies to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties:

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** or 'general duty'. This requires all public organisations, including academies to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The two 'Specific Duties': This requires all public organisations, including academies to:

- Publish updated information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the academy is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the academy is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs and those who are supported by pupil premium funding. Analysis of data tracks progress towards closing the attainment gap.

4. What is the academy doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment Duty for disabled pupils – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled pupils being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We 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.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the 'day to day life' of the academy.
- We actively promote equality and diversity though the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their gender, race, disability, religion or belief.

5. Behaviour, Exclusion and Attendance

The Academy Policy on Behaviour – Section 5: Rewards & Sanctions and Section 6: Suspensions & Exclusions - takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from the academy for evidence of over- representation of different groups and act promptly to address concerns.

6. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

The academy challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- Prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- Prejudices around race, religion or belief (for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia), travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- Prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

There is guidance in the safeguarding and code of conduct policies to ensure no employee is discriminated against. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

7. What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

The academy is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions. Staff, Directors and Members are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings.

New staff receive training on Inclusion, SEND and safeguarding as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training at regular intervals. The academy has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues (Nina Myszkowski, Headteacher) and an equality link Director (Karen Linington). They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and Directors aware of these as appropriate.

We eliminate discrimination through:

- Understanding the needs of our academy population and collecting and analysing data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- Having clear procedures and working in partnership with parents and carers, identifying pupils who have a disability or additional needs through our induction process.
- Implementation and review of all relevant policies (e.g. SEND policy, Intimate Care Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical needs Policy and Accessibility Plan);
- Reporting, responding to and monitoring all racist incidents; shared and in directors' minutes
- Ensuring all children are treated with dignity, feel safe at the academy and any prejudicial behaviours are addressed;
- Regularly reviewing our curriculum to ensure that it reflects current guidance and is entrenched in spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning opportunities, which meet the needs and interests of all learners;
- Providing opportunities to understand human rights and fundamental British Values;
- Ensuring teaching is of the highest quality to ensure children reach their potential and all pupils are given equal entitlement to success;
- Tracking pupil progress to ensure that all children make expected or better progress from their starting points, and intervening when necessary to diminish any gaps;

- Ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to access extra-curricular provision (enrichment clubs);
- Listening to and monitoring views and experiences of pupils and adults to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and procedures.

The headteacher will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

Advancing equality of opportunity:

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the academy will:

- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information;
- Make evidence available to directors identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or similar types of bullying);
- Share information about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils;
- Identify actions related to analysis of vulnerable groups each term and evaluations of progress informs future changes to provision.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not, by embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum and wider activities e.g. Pupil Leader elections, Pupil voice elections, Mental Health Champions, Anti-bullying week, RE curriculum, British Values, Class reflection spaces, Talk partners etc;
- Foster good relationships by providing enrichment opportunities e.g. educational visits, visiting speakers, specialist teachers in music, dance and sports;
- Ensure that Freemantle C E Community Academy is visible within our local community e.g. singing in the community, taking part in choir festivals, participation in sports events including those for children with disabilities, visits to local secondary academy's, fund-raising initiatives and charity days, through collaborative research with local academy's and in contributing to curriculum and trust wide developments;
- Recognise our responsibilities to the environment near and far through our globally immersive curriculum;
- Provide a variety of extra-curricular and cross-academy opportunities for children to extend confidence and experience of working with different personalities, cultures and abilities.

Internal data and data supported by Southampton City Council provides an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage and in groups of pupils such as: Ethnicity, Special Educational Needs (SEND), Looked After Children (LAC), Disadvantaged, Free School Meals (FSM), and English as an Additional Language (EAL) – Note: This is not an exhaustive list and is subject to amendment at any time to keep it updated.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils – we will strive to meet the needs of all pupils who join our academy.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any pupils' achievement. We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils. We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender and disability. Staff have had training and are aware of the procedures to follow for any incidents of Prejudicial language or Behaviour (PLAB) to remove or minimise any disadvantages suffered by people with specific characteristics.

In addition to avoiding or minimising any possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impact by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist.
We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary. The Board of Directors closely monitor the effective implementation of the Academy Equality & Accessibility Policies.

8. Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the academy's Equality Objectives.

What we are doing to foster good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE/RSHE, developing cultural capital across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote an academy ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We invest heavily in the provision for early language, communication and reading, ensuring that those children who start school with a delay in their language are effectively supported in their development. We prioritise emotional literacy support (ELSA) for those children who need it.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures and beliefs.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors and academy events.

9. Other ways we address equality issues

The academy ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The academy always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when an academy visit or activity is being planned the academy considers whether the visit:

- affects any religious holidays;
- is accessible to pupils with disabilities;
- has equivalent facilities and opportunities for all genders.

We maintain records of all training including those relating to Equality Issues.

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our academy policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and wellbeing of our pupils. New policies and practices consider implications regarding Equality.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the academy community we:

- Review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires and parent/carer voice;
- Secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events review feedback and responses from pupils and groups of pupils, from the academy pupil voice groups, and through lessons;
- Ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Board of Directors' meetings and committee meetings.

10. Publishing Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our academy's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also consider national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We ensure that we have complied with the two specific duties.

We produce Equality objectives which we work towards over a three-year period. Please see our Equality Objectives and Public Sector Equality Duty Document (Appendix C) for more information.

This policy is published on our website to ensure transparency and compliance with DFE guidance.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the academy community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We provide or signpost to relevant training, guidance and information to facilitate this.

12. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring that the academy complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and identified actions are implemented.

During each board of directors meeting aspects of the academy's commitment to the Equality Duty are kept under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the academy environment.

Directors annually review this policy, as well as considering actions against the equality objectives in line with the cycle.

13. Headteacher and Senior Accountability Team

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Headteacher (DSL) and DDSL's are responsible for logging all racist incidents and reporting them to the Board of Directors and DfE if required.

All staff have a joint responsibility to implement the policy in their day to day activities. They will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act. Training and Guidance on EAL/NTE will be provided for all teachers, learning support assistants and lunchtime supervisory assistants.

14. Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom. Challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- Deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur.
- Plan and deliver a curriculum and lessons that reflect the academy's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of protected characteristics.
- Maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils.
- Support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult.
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the academy as part of the induction procedure. The principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act will be revisited at a whole staff meeting at the start of the academy year.

15. Visitors

All visitors to the academy, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

16. Commitment to the Equalities Act

Staff responsible for equalities: Nina Myszkowski (HT), Kevin Barnett (ExO) and Val Caldwell (Chair of Directors).

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

- All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- We are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy reflects the diversity of our community.
- As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

17. Monitoring and reviewing the policy

We review this policy annually. Objectives are reviewed within Board of Directors meetings.

We aim to engage and consult with pupils, staff, parents/carers, and the local community so that we can improve our information, monitor the impact of our policies, develop our equality objectives and improve what we do as an academy. We will do this through:

- Parent/Carer and pupil surveys
- Staff surveys on specific issues
- Open door policy
- Opportunities for appointments with teachers, support staff and SAT
- Parent Information Bulletins (PIB)
- Curriculum information evenings and family workshops
- Our website
- Academy pupil voice groups
- Parents' evenings
- Coffee mornings with different focus chosen by parents/carers.
- Curriculum sessions and parent workshops
- Parent working group on Mental Health
- Parent evaluations following academy events and after viewing pupil's voice
- Parent comments on EYFS provision
- Freemantle Events
- Special Curriculum days that celebrate equality and diversity across the curriculum

18. Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives are available:

- on the academy website
- as a paper copies by request from the academy office
- as part of induction for new staff

By publishing the Academy Equality Policy on our academy website, we ensure that the academy community knows about the policy and its objectives.

Appendix 1: Checklist for Academy Staff and Directors

Check list for academy staff and directors:

- The academy collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training.
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the academy provides.
- The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, directors, pupils and other stakeholders.
- The academy publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties.
- The academy analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and acts when their trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The academy sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.
- The Headteacher, Directors and SAT have responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes.
- The academy ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- The academy ensures that visitors to the academy understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in academy life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the academy pupil reps.
- The academy monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and acts if there is a cause for concern.
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the academy community.
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and class assemblies.
- The academy environment is increasingly accessible to pupils, staff and visitors to the academy – including the acoustic environment (refer to academy local offer).
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the academy and issues such as language barriers are considered.
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information (this can include ‘Google translate’).
- The Board of Directors is increasingly representative of the community it serves. Procedures for the election of directors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.

Appendix 2: Definitions of protected characteristics

Age: Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age or range of ages.

Disability: A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and or long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to- day activities.

Gender reassignment: The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership: In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

Pregnancy and maternity: Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race: Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief: Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex: A man, woman or a personal designation in relation to their sex (male/female) and how people should not be discriminated against because of their sex.

Sexual orientation: Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Appendix 3: Equality Objectives 2023 – 2026 and Public Sector Equality Duty Document

We review and update our equality objectives via this policy in line with the three-year cycle. The board of Directors' report on progress towards achieving them. The board of Directors and Headteacher ensure they involve and consults all stakeholders.

At the time of updating this policy, the following statistics make up our academy:

- 398 pupils on roll from Reception through to year 6 (4 to 11 years old), and 439 pupils including our nursery pupils (Age 3 years +).
- 61.96% of our pupils are EAL, which is significantly above national average at 20.20%.

We gather further information on the following groups of pupils:

- Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium Grant;
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND);
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL);
- Pupils with a Traveller heritage who are highly mobile but not from a minority ethnic group;
- Young carers;
- Looked after children (LAC);

Other vulnerable groups such as Post LAC. It may be possible to identify individuals from the information provided when the number of pupils with a particular characteristic is less than 1% of our roll and the information is sensitive personal information. In these cases, we have indicated this by an asterisk (*) and no percentage is published.

Characteristics are based around the Census classifications and parents choose groups to which they, or their children, belong. Where no data is provided, this is due to no pupils currently representing the race, ethnicity or religious group.

Our latest Census data (January 2024) shows we have 57 languages represented within our academy, with English being the main first language (167 pupils), Polish the second most dominant language (64 pupils) and Romanian the third (25 pupils).

Race/Ethnicity: White British (140) 32.41% All other ethnicity (292) 67.59%

Gender: Male - (215) 49.77% Female – (217) 50.23%

Pupils eligible for Pupil Premium: (129) 29.86%

Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND): (114) 26.39%

Number of pupils with EHCPs: 12

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL): (265) 61.34%

Number of languages spoken: 57

Pupils with a Traveller heritage who are highly mobile but not from a minority ethnic group: 0%

Young carers: 8

Looked after children: 2

Equality Objectives 2023 – 2026

Schools and other public sector organisations subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are our specific and measurable Equality Objectives. They are based on our view of the current needs of the academy. They focus on those areas where we have agreed to act to improve equality and tackle disadvantage. We will regularly review the progress we are making to meet our equality objectives:
Objective 1: To develop a greater understanding of diversity and cultures through enriching children's capital.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Whilst we are proud of the fact that our academy is wonderfully diverse, we will strengthen the sequencing of knowledge and broaden the experiences we offer our children.

Why we have chosen this objective: To ensure our pupils know more, do more, expect more and think more.

Objective 2: To develop the provision of RE in order to embed a clear understanding and appreciation of different faiths and cultures from around the world.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Enhance our RE curriculum and explore opportunities within the local community, to enrich our children's RE capital.

Why we have chosen this objective: We want to increase our pupil's understanding of diversity at school, in the local community, and globally.

Objective 3: For pupils to fully live and breathe the vision and values that 'everyone is welcome' at Freemantle.

To achieve this objective, we plan to: Strategically map a range of opportunities to discuss, debate, explore and challenge perceptions, whilst working co-operatively with SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education).

Why we have chosen this objective: Some of our children do not have access to wider experiences outside of our local area. We want to ignite our children's curiosity by learning about how life is different in other towns and cities both near and far.