

Equality of Opportunity Plan 2025-26

Equality Act 2010

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all types of unlawful discrimination in a simplified way.

Direct discrimination is treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others. Indirect discrimination, happens when something applies to everyone in the same way, but affects some people unfairly: i.e. holding a club in a room only accessible via stairs.

In England and Wales the Act applies to all maintained and independent schools, including academies, and maintained and non-maintained special schools.

The Act makes it unlawful for the governing body of a school to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil, parents/carers, and staff:

- In relation to admission;
- In the way it provides education for pupils ;
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility, or service; and/or
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

In practice, any persons acting on behalf of the governing body are liable for their own discriminatory actions, but the governing body is also liable unless it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from doing the discriminatory action.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil by treating them less favourably because of their protected characteristics:

- Sex;
- Race;
- Disability;
- Religion or belief;
- Sexual orientation;
- Gender reassignment;
- Pregnancy or maternity.

For example, it is unlawful for a school to discriminate against or victimise a pupil by excluding him or her because of or for a reason related to a protected characteristic. The Act does not prohibit schools from excluding students with protected characteristics, but does prohibit exclusion because of their protected characteristics or discrimination during the exclusion process.

Behaviour and exclusion policies that result in a higher proportion of students with a particular protected characteristic being excluded are likely to result in indirect discrimination unless their application can be objectively justified.

Schools, and their governing bodies, have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the exclusion process for disabled students and in circumstances where they fail to do so the exclusion is unlikely to be capable of objective justification.

'A Protected Act' might involve, for example, making an allegation of discrimination, or supporting another person's complaint by giving evidence or information. Even if the allegation was found to be false due to misunderstanding, that person is protected against retaliation unless they were acting in bad faith, i.e. lying about an incident taking place, as opposed to a misunderstanding.

More information relating to the Act can be found [here](#).

Leigh Academy Bearsted:

	Describe how you ensure the academy is working in accordance with the Equality Act.
Curriculum	Our curriculum is designed to ensure that no student faces disadvantages due to their culture, native language, learning needs or disabilities. The IB PYP framework shapes our curriculum to be highly inclusive and accessible through inquiry based learning. Quality first teaching and adaptive teaching are the drivers for all learning and teaching with associated/adapted resources. Visual timetables are in every class so that pupils know what will be happening throughout the day. Digital resources, including chromebooks, Read&Write and text translation, are used to make learning accessible to pupils and more personalised. An inclusive culture is further enhanced through the use of Widgit symbols within and across learning. Methods of nonverbal communication i.e. Makaton are also being deployed across the academy. The PSHE/RSE and RE curriculum is mapped and utilised for addressing any direct/indirect discrimination in regard to a person's protected characteristics.
Behaviour / Exclusions	The development of behaviour categories have helped teachers and senior leaders respond to the behaviour needs that are emerging. This is not an exhaustive document but it serves as a guide of best fit to support all stakeholders in managing behaviour across the academy. It is intended to intervene and support pupils at the early stages to avoid serious consequences as a result of behaviour. Adults and pupils are clear that the expectations apply to all and are for the benefit of all. Where a pupil's individual needs may adversely impact upon their behaviour, due care and consideration will be applied. The recent appointment for the new role of Learning Mentor will further support pupils with individual needs to help them self-regulate and have the skills and behaviours for learning allowing them to feel safe and be successful. Fixed term suspensions and or Permanent Exclusions are always seen as the last resort. A holistic view of the child is considered when making decisions whether to FTS or PEX a pupil, this includes SEN and Safeguarding needs of the pupil and/or family
Acts of worship	All assemblies and remembrances are non-denominational and accessible by all students and staff. Parental requests regarding their child attending any of these are taken into consideration and alternative arrangements are made if required. Fundamental British Values and Religious Observances are recognised within our assembly schedule to the end that pupils learn about them and have greater understanding of the beliefs that make up our British culture.
Uniform	The uniform is gender neutral and revised to be more affordable to parents. It was made clear to parents that they would be able to use all uniform items currently purchased until pupils had grown out of them. This year, the academy name changed leading to a slight variation to the revised uniform. Again, it has been made clear to parents that they will be able to use all uniform items currently purchased until pupils have grown out of them.
Examinations	All pupils are supported to feel relaxed and confident when completing any assessments. For national summative assessments, all access arrangements are applied for all pupils to be successful. The full suite of access arrangements will be trialled and deployed before pupils sit national summative assessments.
Admissions	We have clearly defined admissions arrangements ensuring all applications are

	dealt with fairly and in accordance with local authority guidelines.
School scheduling (i.e. parents evenings, trips, etc.)	Parents evenings are held over two evenings twice per year as the majority of our parents have full time jobs in the week. Where a parent is unable to attend, alternative arrangements are made. All classes will have an external trip or an internal visit to enrich their learning and development. These will encompass universal learning opportunities linked to the National and Early Years curriculums and personal development and reflecting the academy and wider communities. Where costs are incurred for trips/visit and a family is unable to pay, the academy has a budget for funds to support in this circumstance.
Staff recruitment / promotion	All recruitment is through LAT Central Services which adheres to all requirements. Staff who interview are safer recruitment trained. All senior staff have had indirect Discrimination training. All appointments are made using fair and consistent interview processes supported by the Trust and reflecting the individual practices and skills of staff/candidates.
Staff access to training / information	All teaching staff attend a CPD briefing every Tuesday morning. All staff attend a briefing every Friday morning. If staff are unable to attend for any reason notes are added to the shared drive and their colleagues ensure they understand the content. All information that staff require is saved to shared drives. Staff have access to shared drives as appropriate i.e. only DSLs have access to the DSL shared drive but all staff have access to the academy shared drive.

Equalities Objectives for Leigh Academy Bearsted 2025-6

Actions	Reason	Outcome
To monitor pupil progress and attainment in order to ensure that pupils in vulnerable groups achieve their potential.	Regular Data Analysis: To continuously assess and analyse pupil progress, focusing on vulnerable groups to identify gaps in attainment. Monitoring and assessment to involve SLT, SENDCo, Teachers, Trust staff and external agencies. Targeted Interventions (alongside Quality First Teaching (QFT)): Identify, implement and monitor targeted support for vulnerable pupils. Interventions might include (not an exhaustive list); additional interventions or small-group work based on assessment data; additional interventions or small-group work based on emotional and physical needs; adapted timetables as agreed with all parties involved. Individual Learning Plans: Alongside the class provision	Improved Attainment: Vulnerable pupils show consistent required progress in assessments, with achievement gaps appropriately narrowing over time. Focused Support: Targeted interventions lead to measurable improvements in the academic performance of vulnerable pupils. Tailored Learning: Individual learning plans result in personalised progress, with pupils meeting their specific learning targets. Early Identification of Needs: Regular progress meetings enable quick identification of barriers to learning, ensuring timely support and intervention. Stronger Parental Engagement: Increased communication with families

	maps, develop, implement and regularly review personalised learning plans for vulnerable pupils, setting clear, measurable goals and adjusting strategies as needed. Personalised plans to be written using Edukey software and shared and reviewed with parents. Frequent Pupil Progress Meetings: Hold regular meetings with staff to review the progress of vulnerable pupils, ensuring timely interventions and support are in place. SENDCo to be involved in these and other meetings to support pupils, parents and families.	leads to greater involvement in pupils' learning, fostering a supportive home-academy partnership.
To provide a variety of enrichment opportunities which give the opportunity for all children to become rounded individuals both physically and psychologically. This may include access to sports' clubs, extra- curricular activities, trips and visits, and multicultural weeks. All vulnerable pupils will be specifically offered enrichment opportunities in sports, arts or music.	Inclusive Enrichment Programmes: Offer a wide range of sports, arts, and music activities that cater to diverse needs, ensuring all pupils, including those in vulnerable groups, have access. Tailored Sports and Arts Opportunities: Provide specific opportunities for vulnerable pupils to participate in sports clubs, arts workshops, or music lessons, focusing on developing physical and emotional well-being. Cultural Awareness Activities: Organise multicultural weeks, trips, and visits that expose pupils to diverse cultures and encourage understanding, fostering a sense of inclusion. Collaborative Planning with Parents/Carers: Work closely with families to ensure enrichment activities align with pupils' interests and needs, ensuring full participation and engagement. Regular Evaluation of Access and Participation: Monitor the participation of vulnerable pupils in enrichment activities, making adjustments where necessary to ensure equitable access for all. Review systems for applying for clubs to be equitable and a wide range available.	Holistic Development: Pupils, including those from vulnerable groups, develop physically, socially, and emotionally through regular participation in diverse activities. Increased Confidence and Well-being: Vulnerable pupils show increased self-esteem and confidence, benefiting from inclusive sports, arts, and music opportunities. Cultural Understanding: Pupils gain greater awareness and respect for diversity, enhancing their sense of belonging and reducing social isolation. Improved Engagement: Vulnerable pupils are more engaged in academy life, with tailored enrichment activities supporting their personal interests and talents. Equal Opportunities: All pupils, regardless of background or need, have equal access to enrichment opportunities, ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and promoting inclusivity.

To ensure that planning and resources utilised in lessons are reflective of both our academy and wider community. This can be seen through the texts studied, images used and references to inspirational figures and places.	Diverse Curriculum Content: Integrate a range of texts, images, and resources from various cultures, backgrounds, and communities to reflect both the academy and wider societal diversity. Curriculum conversations to consider the diversity through literature and historical figures or groups facing discrimination through time. Inclusive Resources Selection: Carefully select materials that highlight inspirational figures, places, and ideas from diverse groups, ensuring representation of all communities within lessons. Cultural Relevance in Planning: Ensure lesson planning actively incorporates themes and topics that are relevant to the pupils' own lives and experiences, as well as the broader community. Collaborative Resource Development: Engage with pupils, staff, and the wider community to gather feedback and ideas for resources that are meaningful and inclusive. Ongoing Evaluation and Review: Regularly evaluate the inclusivity of the resources and texts used, making adjustments where necessary to reflect diverse perspectives	Enhanced Cultural Awareness: Pupils develop a broader understanding of different cultures and communities, leading to increased respect and empathy. Informed pupils who can engage meaningfully with this better. Sense of Belonging: Pupils see themselves and their communities represented in the curriculum, fostering a stronger sense of identity and belonging within the academy. Inspiration and Aspirations: Exposure to diverse, inspirational figures and places motivates pupils, helping them to set high aspirations for their future. Engaged Learning: Pupils demonstrate increased engagement and interest in lessons, as the content is more relevant and reflective of their world. Equality and Inclusivity: The curriculum and resources support equality, ensuring that all pupils, regardless of background, are exposed to a variety of perspectives, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
To ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for any staff member, parent or pupil with a physical disability or mental health need to better meet their needs in line with our accessibility plan. Where any disadvantages are identified or experienced, they are addressed quickly and monitored accordingly.	Tailored Support Plans: Develop individualised support plans for staff, parents, and pupils with physical disabilities or mental health needs, ensuring adjustments are made to meet their specific needs. Access to Specialist Resources: Provide appropriate resources, such as assistive technology, adapted materials, or quiet spaces, to support individuals with disabilities or mental health needs.	Improved Access and Participation: Staff, pupils, and parents with disabilities or mental health needs are fully included in academy life, with all necessary adjustments in place to support them. Increased Well-being: Individuals with physical disabilities or mental health needs experience a greater sense of support, well-being, and engagement, both in and outside the classroom.

	Staff Training and Awareness: Planned regular training for staff on making reasonable adjustments, including understanding physical disabilities and mental health conditions and show to create an inclusive environment. Regular Monitoring and Feedback: To continuously monitor the effectiveness of adjustments through regular feedback and collaboration with staff, parents, and pupils, ensuring that any barriers are quickly identified and addressed. Collaboration with External Agencies: Work with external specialists, such as occupational therapists or mental health professionals, to ensure adjustments are tailored effectively and in line with best practices.	Timely Resolution of Barriers: Identified disadvantages are addressed quickly, ensuring that any potential barriers to success are removed, promoting equal opportunities. Examples might include adapted seating, seating position in classroom, personalised resources, use of digital technology. Inclusive Environment: The academy culture becomes more inclusive, knowledgeable and understanding, with all members of the academy community empowered to contribute and thrive. Compliance: The academy meets its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that reasonable adjustments are consistently made to support all individuals effectively.
Increased awareness of mental health through the curriculum and parent information.	Curriculum and parent information: Strategic planning across the academy curriculum, particularly PSHE, RSE and well-being. PSHE. This includes assemblies, lessons, parent workshops, staff CPD and meetings.	Whole community knowledge and understanding: Pupils, staff and parents are more supportive and understanding of those with mental health and manage their own mental health concerns more effectively
Representing and celebrating diversity at all levels.	Promoting diversity: Increased appropriate use of diverse visuals on academy websites, in recruitment materials, in academy displays, assemblies and curriculum resources.	Aspiration for all: Staff and pupils increasingly see themselves as included and valued. Staff and pupils increasingly recognise the opportunity for progression to all levels in the organisation and .