

## **Manchester Communication Academy**

### **Equality Plan**

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#### **1. Rationale and Legal Framework:**

The phrasing of the plan reflects the specific duties required by the Public Sector Equality Duties of the Equality Act 2010, in particular the duties to:

- publish information
- to engage with interested groups and individuals
- to formulate and publish objectives

At Manchester Communication Academy we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the academy, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the academy feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in academy life.

The achievement of students will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Manchester Communication Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

#### **2. Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice**

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the academy operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

#### **Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;

- use materials that reflect the diversity of the academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole academy population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

### **Admissions and exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the academy's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

### **3. Equal Opportunities for Staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Manchester Communication Academy

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. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy reflects the diversity of our community.

#### **Employer duties**

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating additional responsibilities or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff ;
- continued professional development opportunities for all staff;
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

### **4. Equality and the law**

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every academy in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2006).

The action plan in Appendix A outlines the actions Manchester Communication Academy will take to meet the general duties detailed below

#### **4a. Race Equality**

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of academies as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare an Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality;
- assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on students, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these students;
- monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such students, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups.

#### **4b. Disability**

This section should be read in conjunction with the academy's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

##### **Definition of disability:**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities; section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

##### **Legal duties**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on academies, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.
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Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them;
- review and revise this Scheme every three years.

#### **4c. Gender Equality**

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on academies to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- promote equality between men and women.
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Under our specific duty we will:

- prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them;
- review and revise this Scheme every three years.

#### **4d. Sexual Orientation**

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For academies this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender young people have the same needs as all other young people - they want to feel safe, included and are able to fulfill their potential. The whole academy should be involved in creating an atmosphere where everyone feels they can be themselves. The most effective way to prevent homophobic bullying and to ensure Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual young feel included and have the information they need to stay safe, is making the curriculum inclusive of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual issues. The academy equips pupils to live in a society that recognises same sex relationships on an equal basis as opposite sex relationships through annual Sex and Relationships Education. The academy includes awareness raising on these issues as part of the PHSE curriculum and is a designated Stonewall Champion

#### **4e. Community cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state academies to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

#### **5. Consultation and involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, students and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- feedback from parents' meetings;
- input from staff surveys or through staff meetings / inset;
- feedback from the academy council, pshe lessons, whole academy surveys on children's attitudes to self and academy;
- issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on individual education plans, mentoring and support;
- feedback at governing body meetings.

#### **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **The role of governors**

- the governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities

in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the academy is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.

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- the governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our academy on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- the governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the academy environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make academy communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.
- the governors welcome all applications to join the academy, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- the governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our academy on account of their race, sex or disability.

### **The role of the principal**

- it is the principal's role to implement the academy's equality plan and she is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- it is the principal's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the equality plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- the principal ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- the principal promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of academy life.
- the principal treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

### **The role of all staff**

- all staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the academy's equality plan.
- all staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- all staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the principal.
- teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

## **7. Tackling discrimination**

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the academy environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to the pastoral team where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Vice Principal and racist incidents will be reported to the governing body on a termly basis.

### **What is a discriminatory incident?**

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

#### Types of discriminatory incident

- types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:
- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- bringing discriminatory material into academy;
- verbal abuse and threats;
- incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding to and reporting incidents**

It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole academy.

### **8. Review of progress and impact**

The Plan has been agreed by our Governing Body. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our academy policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality Plan annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a three year cycle.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

### **9. Publishing the plan**

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- publish our plan on the academy website;
- raise awareness of the plan through the academy newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- make sure hard copies are available.

Signed:

Date:

## **Appendix A – Objectives**

### **ENSURING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND PARTICIPATION**

#### **The academy will ensure that:**

- pupil achievement is monitored by race, gender and disability and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed;
- all staff are aware of the academy's equality plan;
- the talents of disabled students are recognised and represented in gifted and talented programmes, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the academy population in terms of race and gender;
- there is an inclusive approach to ensuring all students are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the academy e.g. through involvement in the academy council by election or co-option); class assemblies; fund raising etc;
- disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys; lunchtime activities; pe and dance and assemblies;
- extended academy activities such as breakfast and after-academy clubs take into account student needs and access issues and students attending reflect the diversity of the academy population in terms of race, gender, disability and socio-economic status;
- staff, students, parents and carers will continue to be involved in the future development of the equality plan through input and feedback from surveys, staff meetings, academy council meetings, parents evenings etc.

#### **The academy will provide:**

- extra and additional support for students who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well being, e.g. ensuring that children with visual impairment have accessible texts; that children with hearing impairment have an enhanced acoustic classroom environment;
- additional support for parents of under-achieving children (e.g. reporting progress; discussing needs);
- additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the academy (e.g. providing a sign interpreter for a deaf parent; ensuring that meetings are held in the most accessible parts of the academy to support wheelchair users)

### **PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND MEETING NEEDS**

#### **The academy will:**

- promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the academy and community in terms of race, gender and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display.
- recruit disabled people to the academy and support them in their work and career development, and try to reflect the diversity of the academy community in its workforce;
- provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and

- build positive relationships, including links with different academies and communities;
- provide extended services, with opportunities for students, families and the wider community to take part in activities and receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups;
- support disabled students in the period of transition between primary and secondary academy to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings;
- help children and young people to understand others and value diversity;
- promote shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them;
- develop skills of participation and responsible action – for example through citizenship education and community engagement.

### **ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

#### **The academy will:**

- develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives;
- support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender or ethnicity;
- keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis;
- review its approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever it reviews its policy on behavior

### **MONITORING IMPACT**

- the academy will collect and analyse evidence and data on children's achievement, attendance and participation by race, gender and disability, and use this to inform strategies to raise achievement;
- the governing body will report annually on the effectiveness and success of its equality plan. we will place the report alongside the plan on our website



## Appendix B - Check list for academy staff and governors

- ✓ Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to both students and staff e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training?
- ✓ Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the academy provides?
- ✓ How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and students?
- ✓ Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?
- ✓ Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?
- ✓ Are all students encouraged to participate in academy life? Are students who make a positive contribution reflective of the academy's diversity e.g. through class assemblies / academy council?
- ✓ Is bullying and harassment of students and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other students?
- ✓ Are racist incidents reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis?
- ✓ Are visual displays reflective of the diversity of your academy community? How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- ✓ Does the academy take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?
- ✓ Is the academy environment as accessible as possible to students, staff and visitors to the academy? Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the academy, and are issues such as language barriers considered?
- ✓ Are the accessibility needs of parents, students and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?
- ✓ Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?