

Ormiston Academies Trust

Employee Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Policy version control

Policy type	OAT Mandatory <i>The Trust will regularly monitor and review this policy to ensure that it is appropriate, effective, and compliant with both employment legislation and the Equality Act 2010.</i>
Author	Daniele Brennan-Bradshaw, Head of People Policy, Process and Systems.
In consultation with	All trade unions recognised at the JCC.
Approved by	National Leadership Group, August 2026
Release date	August 2026, for implementation on 1 September 2026.
Review	Policies will be reviewed in line with OAT's internal policy schedule and/or updated when new legislation comes into force. This policy can be used until the release date of the new policy <i>This policy has been implemented following consultation with the recognised trade unions. Any subsequent changes or scheduled review will be subject to the same.</i>
Description of changes	2026 updates - Title updated to reflect current approaches to inclusion. - Approach to equalities modernised throughout - New policy statement and commitment to EDI - Made clear this is a policy in relation to employees not students - Reference added for educational objectives, and where to find local equality information

Contents

1. Our Commitment	3
2. About this policy	3
3. Who does this policy apply to	4
4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training.....	4
5. Equality Objectives	4
6. Types of Discrimination	4
7. Reasonable Adjustments.....	4
8. Recruitment and Selection	5
9. Training needs	6
10. Termination of Employment.....	6
11. Disabilities.....	6
12. Part-time and fixed-term work	6
13. Raising a Complaint.....	6
14. Breaches of this policy.....	7

1. Our Commitment

- 1.1 Ormiston Academies Trust (the Trust) is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful and equitable working environment for all colleagues. We uphold the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and ensure our practices align with the Equality Act 2010. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (contained in the Equality Act 2010), Multi Academy Trusts have a duty to have “due regard” to equality considerations whenever taking significant decisions or developing any policies.
- 1.2 We aim to build a culture in which every employee is treated consistently, equitably and with dignity, and where discrimination of any kind is actively challenged. We recognise that discrimination can create barriers at work, and we are committed to identifying and removing these barriers to improve the experience of all of our people.
- 1.3 We will take all reasonable steps to:
- Promote awareness and provide training to all staff and all managers on equality and diversity in the workplace, including undertaking mandatory EDI training during their induction period
 - Apply the principles of equality to all staff and all job applicants so that there is equality of opportunity
 - We will ensure that no individual is denied employment opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability
 - Establish processes that ensure a diversity of candidates at all career stages beginning with recruitment, development and promotion of talent through to the appointment of senior leadership.
 - Implement all internal policies and procedures on a fair and impartial basis
 - Create an inclusive working environment that is sensitive to the needs of colleagues of differing cultures, religions and beliefs. For example, in connection with festivals, religious observance and dress. For more information, please use the Leave of Absence Policy.
 - Make reasonable adjustments to enable employees with disabilities to function effectively and to their full potential. Ensure that all work environments are free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying.

2. About this policy

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach to diversity, equality and inclusion. Our aim is to encourage and support diversity, equality and inclusion and actively promote a culture that values difference and eliminates discrimination in our workplace. It applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment, pay, benefits and conditions, flexible working and leave, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 2.2 This policy has been implemented following consultation with the Trade Unions represented at the JCC.
- 2.3 This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time, following consultation where required.

3. Who does this policy apply to

3

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training

- 4.1 Managers will be given appropriate training on recognising and avoiding discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in the areas of recruitment, development and promotion. The People Team has overall responsibility for equality training for staff and managers, as appropriate.

5. Equality Objectives

- 5.1 Each academy has individual equality objectives published on the academy website.

6. Types of Discrimination

- 6.1 Discrimination, harassment and victimisation are unlawful and will not be tolerated. The Trust recognises the following forms of discrimination as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- **Direct discrimination** – treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** – applying a provision, criterion or practice that disadvantages people with a protected characteristic and cannot be objectively justified.
- **Harassment** – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation** – subjecting a person to a detriment because they have raised, supported or been involved in a complaint under equality legislation.
- **Discrimination arising from disability** – unfavourable treatment because of something arising in consequence of a disability where this cannot be objectively justified.
- **Failure to make reasonable adjustments** – failing to take reasonable steps to remove disadvantages experienced by disabled people.

- 6.2 Any such behaviour by employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, visitors or third parties may result in action being taken in line with relevant Trust policies and procedures.

7. Reasonable Adjustments

- 7.1 The Trust has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for employees, applicants and workers with disabilities and long-term health conditions.

7.2 Reasonable adjustments may include, but are not limited to:

- Adjustments to working hours, duties or location
- Provision of specialist equipment or support
- Modifications to recruitment or selection processes
- Adjustments linked to appropriate workplace sup

7.3 Requests for reasonable adjustments will be considered promptly, sensitively and on an individual basis. Employees are encouraged to discuss their needs openly with their line manager or the appropriate academy HR officer.

8. Recruitment and Selection

8.1 Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting and interviewing should be done by more than one person. Our recruitment procedures will be reviewed in line with our internal review schedule to ensure that individuals are objectively assessed on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. For further information please see our Recruitment and Selection policy.

8.2 Vacancies should usually be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

8.3 Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a protected characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

8.4 Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with the approval of the People Team. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish whether an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the selection or decision-making process).
- Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check.

8.5 We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the People Team or UK Visas and Immigration.

9. Training needs

- 9.1 Training needs will be identified through regular appraisals which will be based entirely on an objective assessment of performance and will not be influenced by any protected characteristics that an individual may have. Colleagues will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

10. Termination of Employment

- 10.1 We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory. We will also ensure that disciplinary and capability procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

11. Disabilities

- 11.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition(s) so that we can support you as appropriate.

12. Part-time and fixed-term work

- 12.1 Part-time and fixed-term staff should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified. An example of this may be that a part-time employee should have access to the same training and development opportunities as a full-time colleague, even if sessions are adjusted to fit their working hours.
- 12.2 For further information on flexible working, please review the Flexible Working Policy.

13. Raising a Complaint

- 13.1 Employees who believe they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment or victimisation are encouraged to raise concerns as early as possible. You do not have to start informally if the concern raised is serious.
- 13.2 Concerns may be raised through:
- Informal discussion with a line manager
 - Discussion with a Regional People Partner
 - The Trust's Grievance Procedure
 - The Whistleblowing Policy (where appropriate)
- 13.3 All concerns will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and investigated fairly. No individual will suffer any detriment for raising or supporting a concern in good faith. Victimisation of any individual who raises or supports a concern is strictly prohibited.

14. Breaches of this policy

14

- 14.1 The Trust takes a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which if appropriate, may be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination and victimisation may result in dismissal.
- 14.2 There must be no victimisation or retaliation against colleagues who complain about or report discrimination. If you believe you have been victimised for making a complaint or report of discrimination or have witnessed it happening to someone else in the workplace, you should raise this through the Trust's Grievance Procedure.
- 14.3 We encourage the reporting of all types of potential discrimination, as this assists us in ensuring that diversity, equality and inclusion principles are adhered to in the workplace. However, making a false allegation in bad faith, or that you know to be untrue, will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.