Orion Academy

Equality Objective and Plan

Reviewed:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2028
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Chair of RIB:	Simon Terrington

Aims

Orion Academy is committed to ensuring that equality applies to all members of the school community: students, parents, community, staff and governance. The school aims to provide equality of education and opportunity for all. The school meets the needs and makes adaption for all, taking into account, for example, learning ability, special needs, disability, ethnicity, culture, gender, language, race, age, faith or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic factors. This list is not exhaustive of how and where difference can be found.

The aims of the equality objective and plan include ensuring that:

- All students and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential
- Reasonable adjustments are made for special needs/disability
- Differences between people are respected, valued and celebrated
- We prepare students for life in a diverse society
- The school acknowledges and addresses prejudice and prejudice-based incidents and take positive action to eliminate this
- The school a place where everyone feels welcomed and valued
- Positive relationships are fostered between different groups within the school and within the wider community
- An inclusive ethos is established and maintained

It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of students to ensure inclusion for all and that all students are as prepared as possible for full participation in a diverse society.

Leadership and Management

All school policies (and implementation practices) and our curriculum reflect a commitment to inclusion and equalities. A clear ethos is also set and maintained by the trustees of the Gallery Trust and the school leadership team (SLT): this reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the community. The school advances equality of opportunity through positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity. Members of governance, in collaboration with the SLT and all staff, take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities and difference, and also strives to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.

Members of the SLT work in partnership with the whole-school community and beyond to eliminate all forms of oppressive behaviour; prejudice related incidents, sexualised behaviours, bullying, discrimination or other, through training, practice and policy. Members of the school community, including students, parents, community partners and staff, are consulted and contribute to the development and review of policy documents, wherever possible. The school ensures the involvement of governance and the Gallery Trust, and values contributions from all stakeholders.

The development of teaching, learning and the curriculum are monitored to ensure high expectations of all students and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school, local, UK and global community.

Responsibilities

Governance, Trustees and the Executive Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation and ensures that the policy, related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Executive Headteacher will also ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under policies and legislation.

The school recognises it has to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper and thrive, which includes:

- o Boys and girls, men and women and non-binary
- o All minority ethnic groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- o Students or families with different religions or beliefs
- o Students and others with special educational needs
- o Students and others with a range of disabilities
- o Children looked after and their carers
- o Children or staff who are gay or lesbian
- o Students or staff who are pregnant or have just given birth
- o Students or staff undergoing gender reassignment
- o Students, staff or families with mental health or other medical needs

When monitor progress and achievement data, the Academy ensures that vulnerable individuals or cohorts are identified rapidly so intervention strategies are implemented to improve achievement.

Orion Academy has identified the issues that may be barriers to effective learning and equality, which may include:

- o Special Educational Needs
- o Disabilities
- o Attendance
- o Low self-esteem, low expectations – mental health / family needs
- o Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life, and access at home to learning tools
- o Low parental support and expectations
- o Lack of stability in life
- o Lack of external help with emotional, mental & physical well-being
- o Students on the Child Protection Register
- o Looked After students

We strive to remove any and all barriers to learning, and ensure equity and equality for all people.

Orion Academy's Commitment to Equalities

As a school, we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination,
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion. 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. The Academy recognises that new Positive Action provisions in the Equalities Act 2010 allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantage experienced by or to meet the particular needs of students with particular protected characteristics. If we decide to use these we will ensure that it is a proportionate response to achieve the relevant aim.

We understand that equality and equity for all will empower outcomes and wellbeing for all members of the school community.

Examples of equality and equity at Orion Academy include:

1.	**Establishing, maintaining and developing a school culture and ethos**	A consistent approach to behaviour ensures that students are aware of the expectations upon them. Students are encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of their peer groups, and the school community is caring and respectful, regardless of special need, disability, gender, faith, race, religion and diversity. The school implements many strategies to celebrate pupil achievement, including the weekly celebrations and reward systems. Achievements can be regarded as gains made in terms of behaviour, independence and attainment. These reward systems engender a sense of belonging and a desire to achieve amongst students. The school involves parents, carers and key stakeholders through regular contact, face to face meetings, participation in school events, newsletters, home school agreements, assemblies and the website. The school places great emphasis on the celebration of diversity and equality through its PSHE and RSE curriculum, assemblies and during enrichment days.
2.	**Listening to students, staff, parents and others**	The school welcomes the voice of students, staff and stakeholders. Senior staff are available daily from 8.00 am onwards to listen to staff concerns and to answer queries and questions. The Student Council meets regularly to air any concerns and so the school can consult the group on activities and proposals. The views of parents are sought through annual review meetings, meet the team, parents' evenings, Class Dojo (online communication) and through informal consultation. All staff have a line manager with whom they can discuss issues and concerns. The school takes a consultative approach, ensuring equality of voice to all.

3.	**Equalising opportunities**	The school recognises that the socio-economic profile of some students could potentially reduce their ability to access opportunities. The school has a charging policy in place and ensures that contributions to fund activities and trips are voluntary. No child is precluded from accessing an opportunity because of financial pressures. The school in some circumstances funds students to access activities and takes a flexible approach to payment, for example offering staggered payment plans. Emphasis is placed on offering students opportunities which may not be available to them from any other source: for example, theatre visits, sporting activities, theatre performances and visiting musicians. The promotion of independence skills, such as cooking, and independent travel, are a key part of the school's offer. While the school has a school uniform, the requirements are minimal and do not include expensive items such as blazers etc.
4.	**Informing and involving parents and carers**	The school adapts communications with parents to meet their need and caters for any special needs that parents/carers have by adapting the method of contact. School adapts information for parents who have English as an additional language and organises translators for those who need them. Parents are welcomed into the school, both formally through regular, scheduled meetings, and through informal meetings. An effort is made to accommodate parents through the arrangement of meetings at times to suit their commitments, and meetings are frequently re-arranged to meet needs. Regular and effective communication supports all endeavours of the school.
5.	**Welcoming new students and helping them to settle in effectively**	The school ensures that all students have a structured and tailored introduction to the school through a carefully thought-out transition process, which is agreed after discussion with their current provision, alongside family and any other professionals involved. Information regarding new students is shared with key staff to ensure that there is a clear understanding of their needs and how best to accommodate them. New students are placed into classes after consideration of their learning and social needs, and the nature of their learning difficulties.
6.	**Addressing the full range of learning needs**	The school ensures that any students who are at risk of under-achievement are rapidly identified and interventions are put into place to meet their specific needs. Student assessment is ongoing, and progress is tracked to ensure appropriate teaching strategies are used to meet needs. Attendance is tracked on an ongoing basis to reduce any impact on pupil progress and wellbeing. Students' Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are reviewed annually with parents and key professionals, with targets set in the interim time. These reviews give parents/carers an opportunity to discuss their son or daughter's learning needs and to share their rights with professionals. The curriculum has been developed to address the full range of learning needs across the school, offering bespoke learning packages as necessary. Teachers use a variety of creative teaching approaches and assessment to ensure progress is made by all learners. The classroom environment is considered with the needs of all learners in mind.

7.	**Making the school accessible to all**	The school meets the needs of students with SEND and physical disabilities, and reviews the physical site facilities on a regular basis. An Accessibility Plan is in place. All school activities are accessible to students regardless of their special need, disability and diversity, where this is safe. A stringent Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment approach ensures that if any issues are posed by disability or SEND, control measures are put into place to accommodate needs so that full access is maintained. Students and staff are not prevented from accessing any area of the school site at present due to their disability or SEND.
8.	**Ensuring fair and equal treatment of students**	We do not discriminate on any grounds, and admissions to the school are based against non-discriminatory criteria: the needs of different cultures, races and religions are accommodated. Should the issue of gender reassignment, cultural or diversity issues be raised, the implementation of the uniform and other policies would be applied carefully and flexibly. Careful monitoring of incident reports ensures that staff do not impose stricter disciplinary penalties on any particular group, as trends would be quickly identified. Incidents of bullying and harassment which may be linked to diversity are, along with all incidents, rapidly dealt with through the school's anti-bullying policy. All teaching regarding diversity, such as same sex relationships, gender, faith, culture and race is conveyed responsibly and sensitively.
9.	**Ensuring fair and equal treatment for staff and others**	The school follows the principles of Safer Recruitment, ensuring that it does not discriminate against any particular group at any stage throughout the recruitment process. The school follows The Gallery Trust policy that should an applicant who regards themselves to be disabled meets the essential selection criteria for a post, he or she will be automatically shortlisted for interview. All staff receive equal access to funding for training and professional development. The school follows The Gallery Trust policy "Dignity at Work" to ensure that equality, respect and dignity are observed by staff within the workplace. Any discrimination to a member of staff would be pursued rapidly in line with appropriate policies.
10.	**Monitoring and Evaluating the policy**	The school will continually monitor and review how this policy is applied and will address any concerns rapidly, noting any areas of concern or improvements if they are needed. This policy will be brought to the attention of staff and students on an annual basis.

11.	**The specific reporting duties**	We will: Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the three aims of the Equality Duty within all our functions and to do this at least annually. Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years. To achieve the specific duties, we will collect and analyse data related to the protected characteristics to determine our focus for the equality objectives. We will decide what information we need to publish to demonstrate our compliance with the Equality Duty as there is no subscribed format. We will look at what equality information we publish already, and to consider whether that gives a reasonable picture of progress on equality issues which may be affecting our students, parents/carers, community and staff, to raise standards for all. It is essential for us to maintain and ensure that our focus is on performance, not process. We will ensure that the information we publish and the equality objectives that we set are easily accessible for people. In addition to publishing them electronically on our website, we will consider making them available in other formats. We will also consider whether the information is provided in a way which makes it easy for everyone to understand and use. We will publish this information at least annually.

Orion Academy School Equality Objective

Governance Arrangements have agreed the following Equality Objective (2026-2028):

Equality objective	**Success Criteria** How we will know we are making progress?	**Actions required to achieve objective**	**Aims of the Equality Duty**	**Protected Characteristics**
To work to further develop a school that embraces, celebrates and informs students about relationships, families, belief and difference	• The curriculum plans for opportunities to make students aware of the different types of relationships, families and beliefs • Gender-variant or questioning students will feel supported within the school: e.g. staff using correct pronoun, new name, supporting the wearing of new clothes, etc... • All students, regardless of gender, sexuality, race or other protected characteristics, will continue to make strong progress • Staff will understand how student/s are protected under law and how to support students who question their identity and beliefs	• Be clear about the Equalities Objective with key stakeholders: ongoing communications related to the RSE and PSHE curriculum • Ensure School Council are aware and discuss the objective so that student voice is prioritised • Identify further training opportunities following feedback from RSE curriculum delivery • Ensure staff are clear on terminology to use with students and how best to support them	• To empower student and community knowledge in the area of family, beliefs and gender • To build confidence in both students and staff • To ensure a high-quality approach that supports and builds equality	Race Religion or Belief Sex Sexual Orientation

The GALLERY TRUST

A community of special schools

This policy sits within the Equality Duty Policy of The Gallery Trust:

https://thegallerytrust.co.uk/about/statutory-information/