




'Christ at the centre, children at the heart'

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic MAT

Company No: 08444133

Registered Office: Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7AA

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| Approved by the Trust Board: | May 2025 |
| Signed by Trust CEO: |  |
| Review Date: | May 2026 |

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Vision, Values and Ethos

The Directors, Local Governing Bodies and each Academy within the OLOW CMAT are deeply committed to the principles of equality. In each Academy we have a caring and supportive Academy ethos that seeks to value all individuals and ensure that they achieve their potential. Each Academy is active in its role in promoting equality of opportunity for everyone who makes up our Academy community.

Through our policies and practices we strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harassment that present barriers to both staff and students achieving their full potential. We actively promote positive, respectful attitudes and relationships between and amongst all members of our Academy community and encourage them to be active partners in the promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of Academy life and beyond.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where everyone can develop their maximum potential and feel valued as individuals who can contribute to the life of our Academies and society in general.

We have robust and supportive policies in place that are underpinned by our Catholic ethos which ensures that our practices actively promote equality of opportunity amongst staff and do not in any way discriminate in any area of recruitment, retention, promotion, training or any aspect of employment.

We are committed towards ensuring that the development, implementation and monitoring of our equality action plan (evidenced in our MAT Improvement Plans and individual Academy Improvement Plans) is the vehicle for actively embedding equality within our policies and practices.

The underlying and overriding principle of our faith in Jesus Christ binds us together in love, understanding and mutual enrichment.

'You are, all of you, sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. All baptised in Christ, you have all clothed yourself in Christ and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus.'

(Galatians 3: 26-29)

The Gospel itself leaves us in no doubt that our belief in its values should place us in the forefront of the movement for equality between all members of our community of Academies.

The Legal Context

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), gender (including gender reassignment and gender identity) maternity and pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

We 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.

We understand that from time-to-time further legislation and guidance is published by Government and relevant legal bodies and we will continually monitor and implement relevant policy and practice to ensure compliance.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners, members of staff*, directors, governors and volunteers are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, members of staff, governors, directors and volunteers as of equal value.

(*Staff = all individuals working at all grades, including senior managers, employees, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual workers and agency staff)

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate* but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face.

*discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards people of different ages and an absence of harassment of elderly people
- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice- related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between genders, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment
- mutual respect and good relations between people regardless of marital or civil partnership status
- positive attitudes towards those who are pregnant or have had children

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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 consult widely and will aim to involve a diverse and inclusive group.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- people of different ages
- disabled people as well as non-disabled people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of all genders
- people of all gender identities
- people of all sexual orientations
- all people, regardless of marital/civil partnership status
- all people, regardless of whether or not they may be pregnant, or who may or may not have had children

Principle 8: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and on the basis of which we decide on specific and measurable objectives.

Evidence relating to equalities is integrated into our self-evaluation documentation.

Principle 9: Measurable objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the consultations we have conducted (principle 6) and the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8).

The objectives which we identify consider national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

Our equality objectives are integrated into the Academy improvement plan.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Responsibilities

All directors, governors, staff, volunteers, students and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the Academy's Equality & Diversity Policy and Action

Plan. In addition:

The Trust Directors are responsible for ensuring that the Trust prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews an Equality & Diversity Policy and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Duty.

Each Headteacher works with the Local Governing Body to ensure that:

- the Policy and Action Plan are implemented
- staff recruitment, training opportunities and conditions promote equality and diversity
- all staff, students and their parents/ carers are consulted regarding, and are aware of the Academy's responsibilities to meet, the Equality Duty
- existing and planned policies are assessed for the ways in which they impact on equality and diversity
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, Academy journeys and extended Academy activities take account of the need to promote equality and diversity
- incidents of bullying or harassment related to any of the protected characteristics are dealt with according to the Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying policies and the Code of Conduct for staff
- the Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan is published on the MAT website and copies of are available in the office of each of the Academies

All staff have a responsibility to deal with incidents of harassment or bullying; help eliminate unlawful discrimination; prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, Academy journeys and extended Academy activities (including work with parents / carers) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote equality and diversity.

Students and parents / carers have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with the policy, as do **visitors** to the Academy.

The Specific Duties

We are working to develop our understanding of the major equality and diversity issues in each Academy's functions and services. In order to do this, we:

- collect and analyse Academy data and other equality-relevant information.
- consult all staff, students, parents/carers and relevant communities
- review all our MAT and Academy policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on equality and diversity
- ensure directors, governors, staff, students, parents and others in our Academies are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting equality and diversity. All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. The Director of Finance and Operations has overall responsibility for equal opportunities training.
- assess and address the causes of any pay gap related to protected characteristics
- publish and implement the Action Plan within our SIDPs with our proposed objectives and actions

We will:

- set out the results of reviews, consultations and impact assessments
- report on progress annually and set further objectives where necessary

Consultation; publishing; staff, students and parent/carer development

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with directors, governors, staff, the trades unions and the Academy community. These consultations have contributed to developing the awareness among directors, governors, staff, students and parents/carers of the ongoing need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality and diversity.

We will continue to develop awareness of what constitutes unlawful discrimination and harassment, and of the need to eliminate this and to promote equality and diversity.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other Academy policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher, the Directors of the MAT and Local Governing Bodies as appropriate.

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. If you believe that you may have been subject to bullying or harassment, you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

Associated Policies and Procedures

OLW CMAT Equality Duty

OLW CMAT Performance Management, Appraisal & Capability Policies and Procedures for Teachers and Support Staff

OLW CMAT Pay Policy

OLW CMAT Complaints Policy and Procedure

OLW CMAT Data Protection Policy

OLW CMAT Code of Conduct Policy

OLW CMAT Dignity at Work Policy

OLW CMAT Whistle-blowing Policy

OLW CMAT Employee Disciplinary Procedures

OLW CMAT Contracts of Employment

OLW CMAT Grievance Procedures

OLW CMAT Safer Recruitment Selection Policy

OLW CMAT Allegations of Abuse Policy

OLW CMAT Discretionary Leave of Absence Policy

OLW CMAT Acceptable Use Policy

Local Academies' Policies as appropriate, e.g. Behaviour for SEN, Learning, Attendance etc.

OLW CMAT EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Each Academy's commitment to equality and diversity

Ethos

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- promoting an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect among all members of the Academy community, regardless of protected characteristic;
- ensuring that all staff, parents/carers and students are treated with dignity;
- challenging stereotypes in all aspects of Academy life;
- encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of issues related to protected characteristics which reflect on stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- striving to eliminate all forms of bullying and violence

Curriculum, learning and teaching

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- ensuring equality of access for all students to all areas of the curriculum, to include subject choice and careers advice to meet students' individual needs;
- ensuring that the curriculum is balanced, broadly based and culturally inclusive that provides opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- ensuring that teachers' planning and delivery takes account of issues related to protected characteristics and the need to challenge stereotypes;
- ensuring that resources in all areas of the curriculum promote knowledge and understanding of issues related to protected characteristics;
- ensuring that any particular learning needs of the genders are met

Achievement, attainment, assessment progress

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- having procedures to monitor and track progress and achievement by protected characteristics in order to identify and respond to trends and patterns;
- striving to maintain equally high expectations of all students

Attendance

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- monitoring student attendance by protected characteristics;
- using the data to develop strategies to address poor attendance

Behaviour

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- monitoring student behaviour and exclusions by protected characteristics;
- using the information collected to ensure that procedures are applied fairly and equitably to all students, ensuring their safety and security in the Academy;
- developing and implementing strategies to address any specific examples of inappropriate behaviour related to protected characteristics

Staff recruitment, training, career development and conditions of service

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality and diversity by:

- ensuring that all staff, directors and governors responsible for appointing staff and reviewing staff performance and pay do not discriminate against members of staff according to the protected characteristics;
- taking account of the requirement to eliminate unlawful pay discrimination;
- ensuring that opportunities for professional development, career progression and promotion are free from unlawful discrimination;
- monitoring workforce composition and promotions to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels;
- reviewing regularly conditions of service, benefits and facilities to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Community and parental/carer consultation

The Academy will fulfil its commitment to equality by:

- working in partnership with parents/carers and the wider community to develop positive attitudes to issues relating to the protected characteristics

Implementation

The Academy's development/improvement planning process will be the main vehicle for implementing the policy. The process for implementation is as follows:

- Ensuring this policy is freely available to the Local Governing Body, staff, volunteers, students, parents/carers and visitors to the Academies including all contractors, and where necessary making its provisions explicit
- undertaking audit throughout the year to inform our action planning, including:
 - auditing the current progress and attainment of all students by the protected characteristics*, using Raise online and other data, and the Academy's data tracking system
 - targets to improve the performance of students with protected characteristics* in any core area
 - enhancing opportunities for students with protected characteristics* equally to participate in extra-curricular activities
 - monitoring the attendance and exclusion data by protected characteristics*

- monitoring data on behaviour by protected characteristics* and dissemination to the appropriate Local Governors' Committee
 - analysis of any student rewards by protected characteristics*
 - analysis of participation in Academy trips and visits by protected characteristics*
 - monitoring those staff undertaking middle management and leadership training according to protected characteristics*
 - i. monitoring the implementation of this policy via staff consultation
 - ii. reviewing existing policies informed by the light of these duties
 - iii. develop the awareness among directors, governors, staff, students and parents of the ongoing need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality by consulting and disseminating this policy and action plan to all groups
- *where known
- developing training for all staff, directors and governors

Equality and Diversity Scheme Checklist Service Provision

- Information is collected on protected characteristics, where known and subject to data protection, with regards to both students and staff and is used to identify priorities and objectives to eliminate discrimination and improve provision of services
- Achievement and attainment data are analysed by protected characteristics and action is taken to narrow any identified gap as appropriate
- All students are actively encouraged to participate in all aspects of Academy life e.g. assemblies, Academy Council, physical activities, and where there are barriers to this occurring, action is taken to reduce them to maximise inclusion for all
- Bullying and harassment of staff and/or students on the grounds of protected characteristics are monitored and action is taken to eliminate such practice
- Health education provision has been reviewed (including sex education, physical activity and healthy eating) and improvements made to ensure further equality
- Stereotyping in terms of protected characteristics is actively challenged within and outside of the classroom including challenging stereotypes in subject choice and careers advice
- The local governing body is representative of the students, staff and local community it serves
- Reporting of the impact of the Equality & Diversity Policy and Action Plan is a standing item on the last Local Governors meeting of the academic year
- Any students who may be vulnerable are supported by there being both male and female Designated Safeguarding Officers who are available

Employer Duties

Issues related to protected characteristics are carefully considered when appointing staff e.g. when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination

Processes for the implementation of pay systems have been reviewed and we are assured that there is no negative impact on equality

Any bullying and harassment of staff on the grounds of protected characteristics would be monitored and action is taken to eliminate such practice

In the process of procuring goods and services we consider equality of opportunity issues and if appropriate we ensure equality requirements are contained within the contract

Appendix 1

- 1 Staffing Complement for the year 20xx-20yy
 - Full-time/Part-time
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Men Women
- 2 Recruitment, Promotion, Performance Pay and Training by Gender, Age, Race and Disability
- 3 Salary by Gender Race and Disability. This should be recorded as full-time equivalent salary

| < £19k | | £20k - £29k | | £30k -£39k | | £40k - £49k | | £50k - £59k | | >£60k | |
|--------|---|-------------|---|------------|---|-------------|---|-------------|---|-------|---|
| M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

- 4 Grievances and disciplinary action and complaints of harassment Number of cases in the last 3 years: Analysis by Age Gender Race and Disability
- 5 Pregnancy Maternity and Paternity Leave and Family Issues
- 6 Based on the information gathering exercise the issues identified are:
- 7 Draft objectives for 20xx -20yy are:
- 8 The progress towards the objectives will be reviewed by the Senior Deputy Headteacher and reported to the Resources Committee of the MAT