



**SPENCER**  
ACADEMIES TRUST



# **The Mease Spencer Academy**

## **Equalities and Inclusion Policy**

**February 2023**

## **School Vision Statement**

We want all our children at The Mease, regardless of their protected characteristics, to experience what it feels like to have respectful, caring relationships with others. We want them to achieve personal success and always be the best they can possibly be. We want them to question and challenge what they hear and see as they explore the world. We want them to develop a moral compass that helps them to be brave, independent and kind and gives them the resilience to grow, ask for help and to recognise when others need it too.

## **Scope of this policy**

At The Mease, we recognise that educational success is promoted in schools which are genuinely inclusive in their nature and are welcoming to difference and diversity (Shaefer, 2019). The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN 2016), states as inclusive education means:

- A fundamental right to education
- A principle that values students' wellbeing, dignity, autonomy, and contribution to society
- A continuing process to eliminate barriers to education and promote reform in the culture, policy, and practice in schools to include all students.

As a school it is important that we promote a culture that enables all pupils to access the possibilities of achieving their potential. We want to support the development of an inclusive society and to promote equality by ensuring that each child has the confidence to develop their own social identity. As a school we strive to move beyond tolerating social and educational differences but by recognising the worth of each pupil and family can bring to enrich our school community (O'Hanlon, 2003). This is observed through promoting British Values and by fulfilling our duties relating to equality and inclusion.

### **1. Aims**

The Mease Spencer Academy aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The Principal and the wider school team aim to successfully implement an inclusive and welcoming educational environment to all pupils by ensuring the following objectives:

- Everyone is made to feel welcome
- Pupils are equally valued
- There are high expectations for all pupils
- Staff and pupils treat one another with respect
- There is a partnership between staff and families
- The school is accessible to all pupils
- Senior staff support teachers in making sure that all pupils participate and learn
- The school monitors the presence, participation, and achievement of all pupils

## **Protected Characteristics**

At The Mease, it is important to us that everyone is treated fairly, and with dignity and respect. We adhere to Spencer Academy Trust Equality & Diversity Policy which encompasses the following protected characteristics as set

out in equality law. The Equality Act 2010 states that it is unlawful to discriminate against people with the following protected characteristics. This applies to the whole school community:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Sex
- Marriage and Civil Partnership



**Note:** **Age, and Marriage/civil partnership** are listed in the Equality Act 2010, but are not listed in the DfE guidance. Age as a protected characteristic does not apply to pupils in schools, so pupils can be treated in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development without risk of legal challenge. For these reasons, both have 'staff' bracketed after the protected characteristics here.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and Schools.

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the academy, including to staff, pupils and parents;
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years;
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Principal.

The Principal will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils;
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors and the Trust.

The designated member of staff for equality will:

- Support the Principal in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality link governor every term to raise and discuss any issues
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All academy staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

#### **4. Eliminating discrimination**

Equality at our school permeates all aspects of school life. It is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Everyone within our school community has the right to feel safe, secure, respected, and should feel valued and of equal worth. This includes:

- Children and young people
- All staff employed at The Mease Spencer Academy
- Students on placement
- Colleagues from other SAT Academies
- Parents/carers
- Governors and SAT Board of Directors
- Agency staff
- Contractors working at our school
- External agencies whose staff are working with our school, including Health,
- Social Care, Special Needs support and agencies such as the Department for Education, and Ofsted
- All visitors to the school

We implement accessibility plans and policy which is aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which a person with a / disabilities can participate in the curriculum.
- Improving the environment, both inside and out, to enable pupils and children with a/ disabilities to take better advantage of all we have to offer, both educationally and pastorally.
- Continuing to develop the accessibility of information

Spencer Academies Trust, our governing body and academy are committed to this policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of any of the protected characteristics. Having positive high regard for everyone is a key expectation.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where everyone has the conditions to excel and flourish, and where physical and cultural diversity is celebrated. Each and every member of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's Equality Policy and are obliged to act in accordance with this policy.

#### **5. Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the academy aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying).
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. promoting the use of Makaton across the school to support non-verbal pupils).
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of academy societies).

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the academy will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing.
- Analyse the data referenced above to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information.

- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying).
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils.

## 6. Fostering good relations

The academy aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. School Council and Eco Schools will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute.
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising academy trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the academy. For example, our academy council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the academy's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

## 7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The academy ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The academy always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when an academy trip or activity is being planned, the academy considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays.
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities.
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls.

The academy keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment as part of TAF meetings) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. Risk assessments are written in accordance to equality duties and stored on Exeant.

## 8. Equality objectives

### Objective 1

By July 2025 all of our staff will feel confident in responding effectively to prejudice related comments, as shown in the annual staff survey.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** We want all The Mease staff to confidently challenge and respond effectively to prejudice-relating comments so that there is a clear message that prejudices are not tolerated in any form at The Mease.

**To achieve this objective, we plan to:** Ensure that all staff access appropriate CPD to further improve their confidence in challenging prejudice comments.

**Progress we are making towards this objective:** Staff have received CPD on the protective characteristics and a response to behavioral incidents has been shared with all staff to ensure a consistent approach.

## **Objective 2**

By July 2024, we will have greater representation of protected characteristics in our pupil leadership roles in school, eg, REFLECT leaders, school council and eco warriors.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** currently poor representation of lower prior attainers and children with SEND in this group.

**To achieve this objective we plan to:** adjust responsibilities to ensure a variety of pupil roles that can be achieved by all. To create new roles. To find ways of engaging lower prior attainers and children with SEND in these roles

**Progress we are making towards this objective:** At least 20% of pupil leaders will be lower prior attainers or children with SEND.

## **Objective 3**

By July 2026, to raise awareness of at least two different cultures and/or religions per year group through PSED/RE curriculum, visits and visitors, high quality resources and carefully selected inspirational people.

**Why we have chosen this objective:** Our school has little diversity and children do not experience a range of cultures/religions within the school including Christianity.

**To achieve this objective we plan to:** Increase children's participation in activities where they will experience a range of religions and cultures.

**Progress we are making towards this objective:** Made contact with local Church. Visit planned for Y3 pupils during Spring 23.

## **9. Monitoring arrangements**

The Principal will update the equality information we publish at least every year.

This document will be reviewed by governing board at least every 4 years.

This document will be approved by governing board.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment