

Maiden Erlegh Trust

EQUALITY INFORMATION & OBJECTIVES



MAIDEN ERLEGH
TRUST

Including local arrangements for:

OAK TREE SCHOOL

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1. General Aims

Maiden Erlegh Trust and its schools will consider the interests of and effects on all pupils/students, staff, and the whole community in all our work.

We will always seek to act in a way which is fair, non-discriminatory, and does not put individuals or groups at a disadvantage. This does not mean always treating all people exactly the same e.g.: where there is a need to overcome existing inequalities reasonable actions will be taken.

We will:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation or any other unlawful conduct in the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations.

2. Overriding Principles

Maiden Erlegh Trust, and all its schools, will comply with statutory duties under equalities legislation and meet obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the following principles:

- We will not tolerate discrimination or any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- All members of the Trust and the wider community are of equal value and so we will work to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist to those with protected characteristics and the most disadvantaged.
- We recognise, respect, and represent diversity and social identity in a balanced and positive way.
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.
- Encourage participation and representation in all areas of school life by different groups, pupils/students, and staff alike: in this way all parties have the opportunity to reach their full potential.
- We will create and maintain a culture where people feel comfortable to discuss, explore and celebrate different experiences and backgrounds – including holding differing views where respectfully and kindly expressed.
- We will ensure that the recruitment, retention, and ongoing development of staff are undertaken in a fair and equitable.
- In fulfilling its duty to promote and teach British Values, Maiden Erlegh Trust, and its schools, contribute to a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging and worth by all communities.
- Take reasonable and proportionate action to address the disadvantage and challenges faced by particular groups of students, including reviewing progress of students by groups as identified in data monitoring sets.
- Promote and support the continued professional development of all staff and governors.

3. 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 the [Department for Education \(DfE\) advice for schools on the Equality Act](#), and the [technical guidance for schools from the Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) and [guidance from the Government Equalities Office on meeting the specific duties that support the public sector equality duty](#).

This document also complies with our Funding Agreements and Articles of Association.

This document should be read in relation to any relevant Trust and/or school policies e.g.:

- Admissions Policy.
- SEND Information Report.
- Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Our suite of HR policies.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Maiden Erlegh Trust is a complex institution with very different types of schools as well as central functions. We are committed to ensuring compliance, agreeing pertinent strategic priorities for development, and monitoring closely the impact of work to achieve those priorities and meet Equality Objectives. To do so effectively at each level, responsibility for different strands of equality work is distributed across different roles and functions within the Trust e.g.:

Operational oversight area	Monitored by
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – full organisation	Trust Board
Chief Finance & Operations Officer (CFOO) – business operations	Audit & Risk Committee
Director of Curriculum & Continuous Improvement – curriculum (taught and enrichment)	Educational Standards Committee
Director of Inclusion and Safeguarding – culture, experience and personal development	Culture & environment Committee
Headteachers – school implementation & impact	Local Advisory Board

4.1 The Trust Board

The Trust Board will:

- Approve the Equality Information and Objectives statement and that it is reviewed and updated at least once every 4 years.
- Ensure it is published and communicated throughout the Trust, including to Local Advisory Boards, staff, pupils/students, and parents.
- Delegate responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the impact of work towards the objectives across the organisation.
- Ensure that all parties are familiar the all the relevant legislation and policy as necessary and receive appropriate information, guidance, and training.
- Monitor the impact of the Trust's work to meeting its objectives.

4.2 Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee will consider the quality and impact of work in relation to business and operational issues e.g.: linked to Human Resources, Health & Safety, Communication and Accessibility.

4.3 Educational Standards Committee

The Educational Standards Committee will consider the quality and equity of the design and delivery of the curriculum (including the enrichment curriculum) *

** 2.8 The content of the school curriculum has never been caught by discrimination law, and this Act now states explicitly that it is excluded. However, the way in which a school provides education – the delivery of the curriculum – is explicitly included.*

The Equality Act 2010 and schools Departmental May 2014

The Committee will also consider the accessibility of the curriculum, especially for pupils/students with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, and how effective it is in closing gaps in attainment between learners with similar starting points and potential.

The Committee will assess a range of information to ensure they have a rounded picture of the experience of pupils and students.

4.4 Culture and Environment Committee

The Culture and Environment Committee will consider the quality and equity of work on attendance, behaviour (including exclusions), safeguarding and the inclusive culture and practice in schools.

The Committee will assess a range of information to ensure they have a rounded picture of the experience of pupils and students.

4.5 Local Advisory Board (LAB)

The LAB is accountable for the effective implementation of this document and the Trust and school's Equality Objectives. As such it will:

- Ensure that the school complies with all relevant equality's legislation.
- Liaise with the Clerk to the Trust Board regarding training on equalities duties for LAB members.
- Ensure the School Improvement Plan and any significant decisions formally considers equality duty.
- Support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary.
- Ensure that stakeholder views are considered in planning and that they are informed about the impact of any actions.
- Review the school's Equality Objectives every four years.
- Ensure equality issues are reviewed at least termly as part of the SEF and SIP process.
- Ensure there is a up to date Accessibility Plan for the school.
- Ensure that no pupil/student, staff member, parent or visitor is discriminated against on account of any protected characteristic.

4.6 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will, for their school:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils/students.
- Ensure staff have access to equality information, guidance and CPD as appropriate and foster links with external agencies so that actions are in line with best practice.
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to Local Advisory Board and CEO.
- Report to the Local Advisory Board as part of the SEF on the impact of the Equality Objectives.

Within in each school, the responsibility for issues of equality is distributed across a range of staff e.g.:

Oversight area	Monitored by
SEND	SENCO
Disadvantaged	Pupil Premium Lead / LAC Teacher
School Culture	Pastoral Lead
Curriculum	Curriculum Lead
Trips and visits	Education Visits Coordinator
Staff issues	School Business Manager
Accessibility	School Business Manager

These colleagues will:

- Support the Headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils/students.
- Report to the Local Advisory Board Champion for Equality at least termly where appropriate.
- Support the Headteacher in identifying any staff training needs and deliver training as necessary.

4.7 All staff across Maiden Erlegh Trust

- All staff across the Trust are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the Trust and School Equality Objectives as set out in Section 8.
- Undertake Equality training/reading as part of induction and refresher training at least every three years.
- Model respectful and unbiased behaviour and language at all times, and ensuring all other adults do the same.

5. Eliminating discrimination

Maiden Erlegh Trust is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions:

- Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- Trustees and all staff are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings, in Staff Handbooks and on the IntraMet. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year (typically as part of September training and/or the Annual Conference). This training can be in the form of face-to-face or online training or directed reading.

- Headteachers ultimately have responsibility for monitoring equality issues in their school and reporting to the Local Advisory Board (via the SEF and through the LAB Champion for Equality) and the CEO as part of line manager meetings as appropriate.

6. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

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

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by individuals with particular protected characteristics.
- Taking reasonable steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a protected characteristic (e.g., enabling Muslim pupils/students to pray at prescribed times).
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g., encouraging all pupils/students to be involved in the full range of school societies).

6.1 Publishing information about pupils/students

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty Maiden Erlegh Trust will:

- Produce attainment data showing how pupils/students with different characteristics are performing (by organisation and by school).
- Analyse the above data to set clear strategic targets for improvement in the Trust Strategic Plan and in School Improvement Plans.
- Publish evidence identifying the impact of actions and improvements in respect of specific groups (academic, cultural, and pastoral) through the SEF and SIP reviews.
- As appropriate, publish summary information on school websites (eg: through links DfE comparison sites).

6.2 Publishing information about staff

As an employer of over 150 members of staff, we will consider how our activities affect staff in respect of protected characteristics. We will publish information to show that we do this and in so doing we will consider:

- The make-up of our workforce, with breakdowns of staff with different protected characteristics.
- Gender pay-gap reporting and other pay equality issues.
- Recruitment and retention rates for staff with different protected characteristics.
- Applications for flexible working and their outcomes for staff with different protected characteristics.
- Applications for learning and development opportunities and promotions, and their outcomes for staff with different protected characteristics.
- Grievances and disciplinary issues for staff with different protected characteristics.
- Policies and programmes in place to address equality concerns from staff.

Published information may include data but also details of policies, training and programmes designed to address equality within the workforce alongside any other information, such as staff surveys.

6.3 Information gathering to support analysis

As an organisation, we will decide what information is necessary to demonstrate compliance with this duty, remaining mindful of what constitutes 'sensitive' data and requires the permission of the data holder to be stored by the organisation.

We will make sure that with any data we publish to show how we meet our equality duties, individual staff or pupils/students will not be identifiable. This means we may suppress some data if it relates to a very small number of staff or pupils/students to preserve their confidentiality.

7. Fostering good relations

Maiden Erlegh Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting respect, kindness and understanding of a range of religions, cultures and needs throughout the curriculum and the enrichment programme.
- Holding assemblies and facilitating presentations dealing with relevant issues and fostering (including giving a diverse range of pupils and students the opportunity to participate).
- Helping pupils/students understand and work with their local community e.g.: inviting representatives of local faith/community groups to speak at assemblies and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Encouraging diversity and representation across pupil/student groups and societies (e.g.: Councils, sports clubs, leadership activities etc) and also in celebratory and promotional materials.
- Developing a strong culture of talk (e.g.: through the curriculum) and tell (eg: through reporting and disclosing mechanisms) to ensure that pupils/students can explore, discuss, and celebrate differences but also feel comfortable and confident to report concerns.
- Where necessary, implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils/students within each school.
- Developing links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop how they implement their approach.
- Working with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures and characteristics.

8. Equality considerations in decision-making

Maiden Erlegh Trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The Trust and/or schools keep a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions.

9. Maiden Erlegh Trust Equality objectives

To design and deliver a high-quality, inclusive, and diversity-rich curriculum.

We will:

- Ensure all pupils/students have access to the most ambitious and appropriate curriculum for them, regardless of protected characteristic, SEND or disadvantage.

- Use examples, case-studies, texts, and other resources include positive representation from a diverse range of groups, especially with those protected characteristics.
- Employ group structures, pedagogy and practice include, support, and challenge all pupils/students. Appropriately.
- Provide a range of enrichment experiences and opportunities aimed at reducing cultural capital differences between groups of pupils/students.

Key structures to support this include:

- Curriculum strand of the Diversity & Inclusion Actions.
- The Continuous Improvement Strategy.
- School Improvement Planning, Pupil Premium Strategies.
- School and Trust SEF process.

As a result, we will:

- Reduce, and where possible eliminate, any differences in achievement between groups.
- Increase the numbers of SEND and disadvantaged going onto Level 3 courses and then onto university or higher/degree-level apprenticeships.

To create a respectful, kind, and inclusive working and learning culture.

We will:

- Promote empathy for, and understanding of, the experience and needs of those with protected characteristics and the most disadvantaged.
- Celebrate differences and the experience, language, and culture of others – ensuring they are seen as enriching for the individual and the community.
- Work with pupils/students to ensure their experience of school is one of safety, confidence, and optimism.
- Listen to pupils/students from different groups.
- Ensure parents and carers feel welcome and are aided as far as possible to support their child's education, whatever their background.

Key structures to support this include:

- Culture strand of the Diversity & Inclusion Actions.
- PSMSC Programme.
- Pupil Premium Strategies.
- Enrichment & Pupil/Student Leadership programme and school calendar.
- Annual surveys.

As a result, we will:

- Ensure pupils/students feel safe, included, heard and that they belong in our schools.
- Ensure that pupils/students with protected characteristics and the most disadvantaged are not disproportionately represented in exclusion and absence data (or are reducing rapidly).

To nurture a safe, open, and equitable working and learning environment for all.

We will:

- Be clear to all stakeholders understand what language and behaviours are unacceptable and why (including so called “banter”).
- Provide opportunities for pupils/students and staff to explore and discuss different experiences.
- Facilitate effective and respectful discussions on themes relevant to them, where pupils/students and staff feel comfortable to ask questions and express differing viewpoints.
- Ensure that discrimination, harassment, and prejudice are not tolerated, providing effective education and training to support this aim.
- Ensure that all stakeholders have different mechanisms to enable them to report concerns and provide clarity about what actions the schools/Trust will take.
- Ensure that information regarding CPD, professional opportunities and job offers is shared openly and where possible use “blind applications” to support neutrality of decision-making.

Key structures to support this include:

- Visibility strand of the Diversity & Inclusion Actions.
- PSMSC programme.
- CPD programme.
- HR, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies (and relevant data dashboards).
- Websites, social media etc.
- Annual surveys.

As a result, we will:

- Demonstrate that pupils/students and staff feel that the culture and ethos in the Trust and in school supports positive and respectful discussion and exchange.
- Demonstrate that pupils/students and staff feel able to report concerns and are confident that they will be taken seriously.
- There will be increased diversity in terms of Trust and school leadership training and recruitment to promoted posts.

ANNEX 1: OAK TREE SCHOOL EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

At Oak Tree School, we are committed to ensuring that all children feel proud of their identity to participate fully in school life. All children at the school will hold an Educational Health Care Plan, this uniqueness is to be celebrated and all pupils will be given a variety of opportunities from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background.

We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At our school we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach, and visit here.

Oak Tree School will ensure:

- There is a curriculum pathway to meet each individual child's needs. This pathway will continue to ensure they are challenged and provide them with strategies to ensure they are as independent as possible citizens in everyday society.
- Each child will be assessed by our Speech and Language Therapist to ensure they have appropriate AAC support personalised to their communication level.
- Each child will be assessed by our Occupational Therapist to ensure they have appropriate support to ensure their sensory needs are met.
- Life skills is an identified and protected characteristic which enables our pupils to feel respected supported and included as part of a school in which diversity is celebrated.
- There is a well-considered strategy in place to promote diversity and inclusion across the school and that, as part of this, under-represented groups are equitably treated.
- To narrow the gap in attainment between those students with protected characteristics.
- We will aim to raise aspirations among children and young people, their parents and communities and raise awareness of career and higher education opportunities, to challenge stereotypes.

ANNEX 2: DEFINITIONS

Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- Repeated.
- Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Sometimes bullying is classed as harassment, which is against the law.

Harassment

Harassment is when bullying or unwanted behaviour is related to any of the following (known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010).

For it to count as harassment, the unwanted behaviour must have either:

- Violated the person's dignity, whether it was intended or not.
- Created a hostile environment for the person, whether it was intended or not.

Victimisation

Victimisation is when someone is treated unfairly because they made or supported a complaint to do with a 'protected characteristic', or someone thinks they did or might do.

Discrimination

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than you treat (or would treat) another person because of a protected characteristic.

In order for someone to show that they have been directly discriminated against, they must compare what has happened to them to the treatment a person without their protected characteristic is receiving or would receive. A person does not need to find an actual person to compare their treatment with but can rely on a hypothetical person if they can show there is evidence that such a person would be treated differently.

Discrimination based on association

Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy and maternity). This might occur when a person is treated less favourably because their sibling, parent, carer, or friend has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination based on perception

Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because someone mistakenly think that they have a protected characteristic.

Discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity

It is discrimination to treat a woman (including a female student of any age) less favourably because she is or has been pregnant. It is direct sex discrimination to treat a woman (including a female student of any age) less favourably because she is breastfeeding.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when you apply a provision, criterion, or practice in the same way for all persons or a particular group, but this has the effect of putting persons sharing a protected characteristic within the general group at a particular disadvantage. It does not matter that you did not intend to disadvantage the person/s with a particular protected characteristic in this way.

'Disadvantage' is not defined in the Act, but a rule of thumb is that a reasonable person would consider that disadvantage has occurred. It can take many different forms, such as denial of an opportunity or choice, deterrence, rejection, or exclusion.

You cannot show that the provision, criteria of practice is justified as a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. To be legitimate the aim of the provision, criterion or practice must be legal and non-discriminatory and represent a real objective consideration. In the context of education, examples of legitimate aims might include:

- Maintaining academic and other standards.
- Ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of students.

Even if the aim is legitimate the means of achieving it must be proportionate. Proportionate means 'appropriate and necessary', but 'necessary' does not mean that the provision, criterion, or practice is the only possible way of achieving the legitimate aim.

The more serious the disadvantage caused by the discriminatory provision, criterion, or practice, the more convincing the justification must be. In a case involving disability, failure to comply with the duty to make relevant reasonable adjustments, will make it difficult to show that the treatment was proportionate.

Reasonable adjustments

The Trust has a duty to reasonably adjust, first introduced under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The reasonable adjustments duty under the Equality Act operates slightly differently. The object of the duty is the same: to avoid as far as possible by reasonable means, the disadvantage which a disabled person experiences because of their disability.

The Trust/schools are required to take reasonable steps to avoid substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.

This duty is owed to existing students, applicants and, in limited circumstances, to disabled former students in relation to the following areas:

ANNEX 3: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTIONS

Maiden Erlegh Trust is determined to ensure its work on diversity and inclusion is on-going and dynamic. As a result, it has established three key aims for action working to the following principles:

- Actions are important – a few done well and then which are built upon.
- The actions will evolve as more “voices” are heard and impact reviewed.
- Actions are undertaken in a spirit of respect, listening, fairness and welcome. Hate and prejudice will not be tolerated.
- Actions are undertaken with an understanding that sometimes no malice is intended and that views of good and kind people can differ. This provides an opportunity to share, learn and grow individually and as an organisation.
- On-going stakeholder voice will be taken into account through surveys, focus groups, individual conversations.
- Monitoring: Trust Board and LABs discuss impact of, and stakeholder feedback on, Diversity & Inclusion actions (at least once a year formally).

Aim 1: Representation of all members of our community is improved in all areas of our work (reviewed Jan 2021 and Jan 2022).

Aim 2: The curriculum and its delivery will represent a wider range of historical and cultural references and taught in a balanced and open way so that all have a voice in a context of respect. Ready for Sept 2021 and reviewed again for Sept 2022.

Aims 3: (a) students and staff feel welcome, valued, respected, and listened to (b) whilst education is always the first response, acts of hate or overt racism/prejudice will not be tolerated. (Reviewed Jan 2021 and Jan 2022).

