
Belfairs Academy



Equality Policy and Objectives

November 2022-2026

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If you have any comments about our equality policy or if you would like this information in an alternative format that would better suit your needs e.g. easy to read, large print, braille, audio tape or if you would like the document to be explained to you in your language, please contact us:

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Introduction

Belfairs Academy is a non-selective and inclusive academy where we focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child. All members of our community are treated equally. Belfairs Academy believes that every member of the academy community has the right to be valued equally and treated with dignity, understanding, tolerance, respect and fairness regardless of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, size, religion or the challenges of disability or disadvantage.

Meeting our Duties

We strongly believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tracking discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people in our academy.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. We also welcome our specific duties to publish information about our academy's population every year, to explain how we have regard for equality and to publish equality objectives to show how we plan to tackle particular inequalities and reduce or remove them.

Our Academy Values and Visions

Meeting the duties described above will mean that all our objectives will embody our academy's key principles and values. Our key objectives are to:

- Inspire all students regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin or status, gender or sexual orientation to be the best they can be.
- Foster respect and responsibility and reach out into the wider world. We know that treating people equally is not simply a matter of treating everyone the same. This means that we do our best to make reasonable adjustments for disability, recognise and celebrate cultural differences, and the different needs and experiences of all genders.
- Recognise that equality is not simply about protecting the potentially vulnerable.
- Celebrate people of all genders from differing cultural, social and ethnic groups as individuals who we value and respect.

- Encourage students with SEND to fulfil their potential by taking advantage of the full range of teaching and learning resources and enrichment activities on offer.
- Believe that all children may be disadvantaged by the holding of prejudicial views, and seek to promote good relationships between all groups, and positive attitudes towards disabled people, people from different ethnic or cultural groups or faith backgrounds and people of different genders or sexual orientation.
- Value staff for their ability and potential to help us provide innovative learning opportunities in a forward thinking environment, regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, religious belief, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.
- Prepare and empower everyone to embark on future challenges with excitement and confidence by being proactive in our efforts to identify and minimise existing barriers or inequalities.
- Promote the involvement of parents, governors, students, teachers, other non-teaching colleagues and the whole academy community in supporting and developing the equalities programme
- Recognise our role in promoting community cohesion, and actively encourage the participation in public life of all learners in our academy.

Our policy endorses the three principles of inclusion in the National Curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to students' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students

Information about student population

Number of students on roll at the academy 1587 for years 7 – 13 (based on Autumn 2022 Census)

Attainment and Progress

Our aim is to ensure that all students achieve the highest standards. Belfairs Academy will monitor all achievement and progress in conjunction with Southend-on-Sea's equalities policy in order to offer every student the best possible educational opportunities. Student achievement is monitored by formal and informal procedures. It is analysed by gender, ethnicity and background. Our policy is underpinned by an appreciation and understanding of how race, class, gender, sexual orientation, size, religion or the challenges of disability or disadvantage impact on learning.

In order to comprehensively monitor and evaluate our equalities policy we will need to:

Promote the involvement of parents, governors, students, teachers, other non-teaching colleagues and the whole academy community in supporting and developing an equalities programme

- Address any pattern of underachievement of a particular group through

targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support

- Encourage all students to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection on their progress
- Use assessment systems and procedures which are free of gender, racial, cultural and social bias, avoiding stereotypical responses. Baseline assessments are used appropriately for all students
- Ensure access to information for parents who do not have English as a first language
- Ensure progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue
- Achievements are recognised and valued in the academy

Attitudes and Environment

Belfairs Academy promotes positive approaches to difference, fostering respect for people and property. Language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory in any way will not be tolerated.

- There is high expectation of all students with regard to behaviour and attendance
- All forms of discrimination, including racism, sexism and homophobia, are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with the academy's behaviour and anti-bullying policies
- Students, staff and parents are aware of procedures should incidents of discrimination arise and all staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline
- The academy works in partnership with parents and the community to tackle specific incidents of harassment and to develop positive attitudes to difference. Visitors to the academy are required to adhere to the Belfairs equalities policy.
- Staff receive training and are encouraged to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to the equalities policy. Adults in the academy take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all students.
- It is recognised that external influences may affect attitudes, opinions and behaviour. The academy takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour
- Students are encouraged to self-regulate and to take responsibility for their own behaviour

Admission, Attendance and Exclusions

In order to promote equal access to learning experiences for all students, Belfairs Academy will monitor patterns of exclusion and attendance including information on gender, ethnicity, SEND and background. The academy and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to student attendance, and absence is followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Comprehensive information about student ethnicity, first language, religion, physical and medical needs is included on all admission forms.

Uniform

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against an individual based on the protected characteristics, which include sex, race, religion or belief, and gender reassignment. To avoid discrimination, our academy will:

- Avoid listing uniform items based on sex, to give all students the opportunity to wear the uniform they feel most comfortable in or that most reflects their self-identified gender.
- Make sure that our uniform costs the same for all students.
- Allow all students to have long hair (though we reserve the right to ask for this to be tied back)
- Allow students to request changes to swimwear for religious reasons.
- Allow for adaptations to our policy on the grounds of equality by asking students or their parents to get in touch with the PA to the Principal, who can refer questions to the Senior Leadership Team and respond to any requests.

Recognising and Dealing with Discriminatory Incidents

When incidents of a discriminatory nature occur, it is our collective responsibility to challenge and intervene.

Discriminatory incidents may include:

- A student towards another student
- A student towards a member of staff
- A member of staff towards a student
- A member of staff towards another member of staff
- A parent or member of the public towards a student
- A parent or member of the public towards a member of staff

Actions which are clearly unacceptable and/or hurtful include:

- Derogatory and discriminatory name-calling, insults, comments and jokes
- Discriminatory graffiti or any other written insult including text messages, websites and social networking sites
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing discriminatory badges or insignia
- Bringing materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines into the academy which are judged to be:
 - Discriminatory or designed to diminish, including pornography
 - Attempts to recruit others to organisations and groups practising discrimination
 - Making threats against a person or group
 - Offensive and/or hurtful actions against a person or group
 - Physical assault against a person or group
 - Unwelcome suggestions or physical contact including varying degrees

- of sexual assault
- Any other instances of discriminatory behaviour

Any or all of these actions will be seen as particularly serious when the perpetrator is in a position of power or authority over the victim.

Framework for Staff dealing with Discrimination

It is important to explain to the perpetrators why their actions are regarded as derogatory and discriminatory. The nature of the incident should be considered when deciding on a course of action. For example, it may require action relating to one individual, a larger group or even an entire year group.

Staff will need to use their judgement as to the context of addressing the issue. If appropriate and possible, discussion with other colleagues is often helpful.

Dealing with Incidents

Coherence and consistency of practice are essential for effective action. The following are practical suggestions for dealing with discriminatory incidents:

- Challenge the perpetrator(s) in a non-confrontational manner
- Remove the perpetrator(s) from the lesson/situation
- Make an SLT Call-Out
- On-Call SLT to establish the nature of the incident by obtaining a written statement from the perpetrator(s) and from those suffering the incident (the victim). Other witnesses may also be requested to provide written statements
- Explain in detail to the perpetrator(s) what discrimination has taken place and why it is wrong.
- Take appropriate action as determined by the nature of the incident.

Follow-up and Resolution of Incident

Pastoral and or/Year Leader will investigate once all information received. Students involved will be contacted.

Resolutions may include:

- Parental contact
- Agreed sanctions
- Restorative practice meeting
- Further incidents will be dealt with using an escalating series of sanctions

Criteria for Monitoring and Evaluating Discriminatory Practices

Discriminatory incidents within the academy must be examined carefully. In order to evaluate discriminatory behaviour, the academy will need to monitor:

- the frequency of such incidents
- evidence of change following action taken
- evaluating the information available to identify any evidence of trends

- assessing the information relative to our perceived view of the frequency and nature of discriminatory incidents

Teaching and Learning

Belfairs Academy Teaching and Learning policy ensures that equality issues are actively incorporated in classroom practice:

- All students are encouraged to become responsible for their own learning
- Teaching is responsive to students' different learning styles in order to engage all students
- The teacher ensures that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which students feel all contributions are valued.
- The teacher takes positive steps to include all students using our no hands up policy.
- Varied teaching styles including collaborative learning are utilised so that students appreciate the value of working together. All students are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.
- Student seating plans and grouping in the classroom is planned and varied
- Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster students' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities
- Resources and displays reflect the experience and background of students, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas
- All resources are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect the inclusive ethos of the academy
- Supporting and valuing students who are bilingual, or for whom English is not their first language
- Using differentiated activities reflecting student abilities
- A focus on Personal Development, SMSC, fundamental British Values and CRESS, our 5 key character traits.

Individual Staff Responsibilities

Action against negative and devaluing behaviour in respect of gender, race, special needs, religion, ethnic/national origins will be monitored by:

- Identifying such behaviour
- Dealing with the perpetrator
- Supporting the victim
- Dealing with the effect on the academy and the community
- Recording and reporting such incidents

Curriculum

- Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and diversity in order to promote positive attitudes.
- All students have access to the mainstream curriculum
- The curriculum builds on students' starting points and is differentiated appropriately:

- For students with English as an additional language
- For students from minority ethnic groups, where necessary
- For students with SEND
- For students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- The content of the curriculum reflects and values cultural diversity
- The curriculum encourages students to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes
- All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students
- Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all students
- Parent Forums are designed to include the whole-academy community and at times will target minority or marginalised groups

Staffing – Recruitment, Training and Continuing Professional Development

Belfairs Academy equalities policy emphasises that all staff, including operational and part-time staff, are given status and support:

- Staff training and policies include equal opportunities issues
- All members of staff have access to CPD which will enhance and develop the equalities policy and its implementation as well as aid personal development
- Recruitment and selection procedures are fair and equal
- Staff reflects ethnic and gender diversity at all levels
- The skills of all staff members are recognised and valued and staff are encouraged to share their knowledge
- Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community

Policy, Leadership and Management

- Belfairs Academy policies reflect a genuine commitment to equal opportunities throughout the academy:
- The management of the academy and the Governing Body set a clear ethos which reflects the academy's commitment to all its students and staff and ensure that the equal opportunity ethos is both explicit and practised
- Teaching and curriculum development is monitored to ensure high expectations of all students and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the academy and wider community
- Additional grants and resources are appropriately targeted and monitored
- We maintain access to all parts of the academy building for students with physical disability

Other academy policies and procedures used to inform our Equalities Policy include:

- Academy Development Plan
- Accessibility Plan

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy (inc. Anti-Bullying)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- PP Policy
- Uniform Policy

The Principal is the named senior member of staff responsible for equal opportunities in the academy.

Recruitment and Employment

Belfairs Academy refers to the Borough's equal opportunities policy in respect of recruitment and employment:

'Southend-on-Sea Borough Council fully supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment and firmly opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, those with dangerous transmittable diseases (e.g. Hepatitis & HIV) ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexuality, age, disability, trade union membership, religious belief, and offending background.'

Parents, Governors and Community Partnership

- Belfairs Academy will promote the involvement of parents, governors, academy staff and community partners in supporting, reviewing and developing an equal opportunities programme to meet the needs of the academy and its wider community. We will strive to work closely with community organisations.
- All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the academy. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish information that demonstrates that we have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

What are we doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

- We take into account equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled students
- We have adapted our uniform policy to allow for expression of gender
- All appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is

discriminated against in terms of employments or promotion

- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment through our CRESS values (commitment, respect, excellence, self-belief, strength) that champion equality of opportunity
- Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourable on the grounds of sex, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender and other protected characteristics

What are we doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups?

- We collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve our attainment targets for students
- We have procedures to identify children with SEND
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of students and use this data to support academy improvement, taking action to close attainment gaps

What are we doing to foster good relations?

- We prepare our students for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through Values lessons and across the curriculum including our tutor-time programme
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the academy, the local community and British society
- We promote a whole academy ethos and values that challenge prejudice language, attitudes and behaviour

Equalities Objectives

- Objective 1: Work with Belfairs Academy Equality Ambassadors to ensure we always have a student voice on equality.
- Objective 2: Audit our recruitment processes and analyse recruitment data with regard to race, gender and disability and report back to governors. We want to ensure our recruitment and selection processes promote non-discrimination and equal opportunities and reduce unconscious bias.
- Objective 3: To close the achievement gap between different groups within the academy, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and our SEND students.

Monitoring and Review

We will review the actions we have taken for this policy annually to ensure it is relevant and accurate.

We will review in accordance with:

- The results of our information gathering activities for discrimination and what we have done with this information
- The outcomes of involvement activities from minority groups
- A summary from equality impact assessments undertaken
- An update of the progress made against priorities
- Celebrating what we have achieved in relation to promoting community cohesion

All members of staff and the Governing Body have the responsibility of implementing this policy. We will review and publish our Equalities objectives and policy every four years and we will publish our equalities information each year.