LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

Statutory

Policy Approved by the Board of Trustees	
Signed:  **Name: Mark Blackman** **Chair of Board of Trustees**	**Date: 24 September 2026**
Authorised for Issue	
Signed:  **Name: Gary Lewis** **Chief Executive**	**Date: 24 September 2026**

Document History

Version	Author/Owner	Drafted	Comments
1.1	Gary Lewis	Jan 2023	Schools consulted and language tightened in several areas.
1.2	Gary Lewis	September 2026	Rewrite of policy. Phrasing changed to include EDI. List of associated policies updated. Specific sections for staff and families added.

Review cycle	Every four years.
Next review date	September 2030

Introduction

Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees on behalf of all schools and the Central Team in LSP.

Our approach to equality is based on the following seven key principles:

1. All pupils and employees are of equal value, whether or not they have a disability, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sex or sexual orientation.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, sex*, gender reassignment status**, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3. We nurture positive attitudes and relationships. We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

4. We nurture a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff. We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment, promotion, and continuing professional development.

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children. We expect all children and young people to make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

7. We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable. We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

The Trust is committed to a policy of equality, diversity and inclusion and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil, parent or other member of a school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex*, gender reassignment**, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, maternity or religious belief.

Racist, disablist, homophobic or sexist behaviour, comments or attitudes will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are valued members of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all

can flourish and where diversity is celebrated.

The Trustees are responsible for this Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and all members of our community (especially staff and governors) are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

* definition of sex is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as "binary" and decided by biology at birth (April 2025 UK Supreme Court ruling).
**Under Section 7 of the Equality Act 2010, a person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

The Legislative Framework

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, 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 agreement and articles of association.

Schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against or treat less favourably pupils (and potential/ex-pupils) or adults (staff, volunteers or parents/carers etc.) because of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnership or pregnancy. In addition, any form of discrimination or less favourable treatment because of gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity becomes unlawful. All of the above are known as 'protected characteristics'. It is also unlawful to discriminate against a pupil or member of staff who is associated with a person with a protected characteristic e.g., to discriminate against a pupil because their parents/carers are homosexual.

The Act makes it unlawful for the 'responsible body' (the Board of Trustees/Academy Trust) to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions
- In the way it provides education for pupils
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

The Trust is liable for the discriminatory actions of its agents (such as its staff) unless it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to prevent any form of discrimination.

Behaviour: the relationship between one pupil and another is not within the scope of the Act. This policy does not, therefore, deal with homophobic bullying, for example, which will be addressed through Behaviour and Safeguarding Policies. However, the school could be found guilty of unlawful discrimination if it treats such bullying as less serious than other forms of bullying.

The Curriculum: the content of the curriculum is explicitly excluded from scope of this policy but the delivery of the curriculum is explicitly included. For example, there can be no valid complaint under the Equality Act duties or the Equalities and Diversity Policy because the school includes 'The Merchant of Venice' in its syllabus but if the play is used to belittle a Jewish pupil, that pupil has a legitimate grievance.

Acts of Worship: the school can hold daily acts of worship or collective religious observance of a broadly Christian nature. The school is free to celebrate festivals of any faith.

Public Sector Equality Duty: this duty expands the scope of the duties above. In addition to race, disability and gender, it adds gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and age (adults) as protected characteristics.

The three aims are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are achieved by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet their needs where these differ from the needs of others. Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Demonstrating compliance through annual reports and equality impact assessments.

To fulfil its equality duties the Trust must:

- Publish information demonstrating compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives.
- Review and publish those objectives at least every four years.
- Our Equalities Objectives are set out in our Strategic Plan. Schools may (but are not obliged to) additionally set their own equalities objectives as part of their annual development plan.

Implementation

The policy will be delivered by:

- Integrating equality issues into all our key policies, our school improvement plans, milestone reviews and performance management.
- Identifying any differences in pupil outcomes and consider whether these differences are due in whole or in part to the protected characteristics of pupils.
- Considering why such inequalities may exist and understand why the experience of inequality can impact on pupil outcomes.
- Identifying appropriate corrective action and interventions that address the causes of inequality and drive the improvement in pupil outcomes.
- Appropriate training and awareness for staff and volunteers (including Governors and Volunteers), including in induction and refresher/reminder training or when legal circumstances change or are updated.

Responsibilities (monitoring and engagement)

All trustees are responsible for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI).
A named EDI Lead within the LSP Central Team will hold day-to-day responsibility for monitoring and coordination, and each Local Governing Body will champion this policy at school level.

Progress against the Trust's Equality Objectives will be monitored regularly by the EDI Lead, with a summary report presented to the Trust Board at least annually alongside the Trust's published equality information.

Role	Key Responsibilities
Trust Board	Approve and review this policy; ensure statutory EDI duties are met; hold the CEO to account on EDI performance; publish equality information and objectives.

Role	Key Responsibilities
CEO	Provide strategic leadership on EDI across the Trust; ensure accountability structures are in place; champion EDI in all aspects of Trust culture.
Local Governing Bodies	Oversee EDI implementation in their schools; review school-level equality data; champion EDI with the school community.
Headteachers	Lead EDI practice in their academy; ensure staff training; handle complaints and concerns; embed EDI in curriculum and school culture.
SENCOs	Lead on SEND provision; advise staff on adaptations; liaise with parents and external agencies; maintain SEND register.
All Teaching Staff	Deliver inclusive lessons; use differentiated approaches; challenge discriminatory language or behaviour; report concerns promptly. Undertake required training relating to EDI.
Support Staff	Promote inclusion in all interactions; support individual pupils and staff as directed; report concerns promptly.
HR Team	Implement equitable recruitment and employment practices; monitor workforce diversity data; support reasonable adjustments.
All Staff	Treat all pupils, colleagues, and families with dignity and respect; uphold the values of this policy in all interactions; complete required EDI training.

The Trust Board is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion in its own membership and practice, not only in what the Trust delivers for pupils, staff and families. The Board will pursue inclusive and proactive recruitment of trustees and governors, seeking a diverse range of skills, backgrounds and perspectives, and will keep the diversity of the Board and Local Governing Bodies under regular review as part of its skills audit and succession planning.

Equality and inclusion of individuals with protected characteristics

Our Trust is committed to fully including children, young people and adults of all backgrounds and characteristics in the life of our schools and promoting an inclusive, tolerant and humane culture. The Trust and each school will seek to celebrate the contribution made to society by all people and to celebrate diversity as a strength.

Pupils and Students

The Education Policy Institute's 2018 Review of the evidence about bullying found that children and young people with protected characteristics were more likely to face such problems in school than other pupils.

Identity-based bullying is bullying that is targeted at a person because of a protected characteristic such as disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Incidents of identity-based bullying between pupils must be recorded on CPOMS and reported to the Local Governing Body (not names or details) for monitoring purposes. The information may also be disclosed to Trustees so they can have oversight of the number of incidents and trends and the actions taken to address and reduce them.

Identity-based bullying is a very serious breach of a school's Behaviour Policy. The school will adopt a zero-tolerance approach and will always respond with both sanctions and education to address the views and causes underlying the incident.

Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are identified on admission and supported to access the full curriculum. Schools provide appropriate language support and ensure that assessment arrangements do not disadvantage a pupil because of their stage of English acquisition.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are supported in line with the Trust's SEND Policy and each school's SEND Information Report. Reasonable adjustments are made to remove barriers to learning, and the SENCO in each school works with staff, parents/carers and external agencies to ensure pupils with SEND can participate fully in school life.

Employed Individuals (Staff)

Reasonable adjustments will be made for staff with disabilities or health conditions, in line with obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The Trust will maintain a safe and supportive working environment, free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Key training (including sexual harassment) will be required of all staff to ensure that they understand their duties to each other. Staff will be made aware of this policy on induction.

Reports of sexual harassment or identity-based bullying of or by staff will be taken seriously, in line with relevant policies. A zero-tolerance approach is adopted for these sorts of incidents. Incidents that occur which fall into these categories will be monitored and reported to Trustees so they can have oversight of the number of incidents and trends and the actions taken to address and reduce them.

In addition to protected characteristics no employees will be discriminated against due to trade union membership or activities.

Occupational health support will be made available to staff who need it, and all staff have access to Employee Support Services (via SAS) which includes counselling and support for medical and disability needs.

Admissions and Attendance (Pupils)

Steps are taken to ensure the school's admission process is fair and equitable to all applicants. Please see our annual Admissions Policies.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is collected from all pupils prior to admission.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues such as religious holidays.

Attendance is monitored by sex, ethnicity, special educational needs and identified disadvantage and action is taken in order to address any disparities between different groups of pupils.

Equality and inclusion of other individuals (parents/carers)

We recognise that our parent and carer community is as diverse as our pupil population. We are committed to ensuring that all families feel welcomed, respected, and able to engage meaningfully with their child's education.

We will communicate with parents and carers in a range of formats, taking account of different literacy levels, languages, and accessibility requirements. Key documents, including letters home and policy summaries, will be available in languages spoken by the school community on request

While the Trust is committed to supporting and engaging all families, it will not tolerate discriminatory, abusive, or threatening behaviour from parents or carers directed at staff, volunteers, pupils, or other families.

Recruitment (Staff)

The Trust adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job. Short listing of applicants should be done by more than one person wherever possible.

Steps are taken to encourage people from underrepresented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school. Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying. They will state our aim to create a diverse and inclusive workplace and encourage qualified candidates from underrepresented groups to apply.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, other than where it is necessary to;

- establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- establish if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable an applicant to have a fair interview or assessment.
- carry out equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with LSP is informed of the contents of this policy. It is part of the induction programme for new staff.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in the Trust, we will monitor diversity data as part of the recruitment process. Provision of this information is voluntary and non-participation will not adversely affect an individual's success at recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before short listing, and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity

We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

Monitoring & Review

The Trust will review this policy at least every four years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented across our Trust.

The Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies will oversee the internal audit arrangements; providing the appropriate level of support and challenge to ensure that the agreed practice and procedure has been implemented through:

- Scrutiny of all reporting information requested and received.
- Identification of any associated risks, trends, underlying or contributory factors.
- Assessing any opportunities for change to enhance existing practice and achievement of the school's vision.
- Making decisions in respect of any proactive and/or mitigating action to be taken.
- Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of policy and practice in line with the agreed policy review schedule or as necessary.

Relationship to other policies and guidance

Every policy must have regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. There are certain policies and guidance where the need to address this is of particular importance. Amongst these, we include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- SEN Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Recruitment & Reference Policies
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour (pupils)
- Anti-bullying/peer on peer abuse (pupils)
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Code of Conduct and Grievance (staff)
- Anti Bullying and Harassment (staff)
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- GDPR and Data Protection

Complaints and Concerns

Pupils and/or their parents or carers are encouraged to speak to a member of staff that they trust if they feel that they or anyone else is being treated in a way that is inconsistent with this policy.

Staff who experience or witness discrimination, harassment, or victimisation are encouraged to report this promptly. Concerns can be raised through the line management structure, directly with the HR team, or through the Trust's whistleblowing procedure. All concerns will be taken seriously, investigated impartially, and resolved as quickly as possible and the Trust will not tolerate retaliation against any person who raises a concern in good faith

Complaints can be raised under the Lighthouse Schools Partnership Complaints Policy or under the Grievance Policy for staff.

Equality Objectives

Lighthouse Schools Partnership publishes equality information demonstrating compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty annually, and is required to set at least one Equality Objective, reviewed and updated at least once every three years, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Our Equality Objectives are published part of the Trust's Strategic Plan, and are reviewed at least every three years.

Our Schools may also set additional Equalities Objectives pertinent to their setting and context.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 now contains guidance on supporting gender questioning children. Therefore this information is now reflected in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, instead of this Equality and Diversity Policy.