



Equality Policy and Equality Information & Objectives Statement

Review by policy owners:	Darren Barton
Review by Trustees:	Laura Ellener and Gaynor Brown
Ratified by Board of Trustees:	10 July 2024
Next review date:	For Summer 2 Full Board 2025

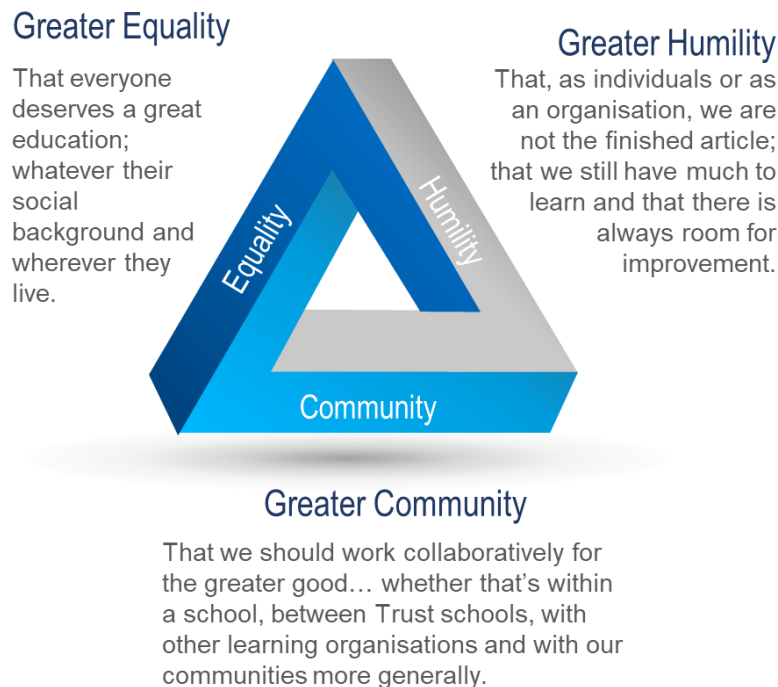
Within this policy the term CEO refers to the CEO of the Trust. The term Headteacher refers to the Headteacher of the School.

The Trustees of the Twynham Learning Trust (the Trust) are Charity Trustees and Company Directors and for the purpose of this policy these terms are interchangeable.

This policy reflects the legislation at the time that it was last reviewed. Any changes in legislation will take precedence over anything printed in this policy.

1. Introduction

Twynham Learning exists to deliver a world class education to the communities we serve. We are in the business of education but strive to be a movement for social change. We use three “greater” principles to guide us in everything we do:



We pride ourselves on being a Trust where individual difference is valued; we believe in standardisation of process but see value in schools retaining their individual identities. We want schools to feel like members of a family, not like clones.

We also value individual difference when it comes to Staff and to Pupils. We commit to making Twynham Learning an organisation where all are welcome and supported to be the very best they can be.

The Trust has committed, within its Excellence Strategy, to having “community at its core with a strong commitment to embedding the voice of our partners in designing the future”. All Policies have an Equality Impact Assessment and we commit to consider equality via impact assessments in our wider decision-making and to increase opportunities for the voices of our community to be heard.

2. Scope & Definitions

This Policy addresses the statutory requirements which the Equality Act 2010 places on Twynham Learning. However, it deliberately considers the widest view of Equality in terms of a moral obligation, rather than being just a response to a duty to consider Protected Characteristics. It therefore addresses issues of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. It relates to Twynham Learning's duties as an employer, as an admissions authority and as an education body.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

It also has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) The Equality Act and schools
- DfE (2018) Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children
- DfE (2018) Gender separation in mixed schools
- DfE (2018) Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools

It also acknowledges the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and 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.

Instances of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination will be dealt with in line with Staff Grievance Policy & Procedure, Staff Discipline Policy & Procedure and/or Behaviour Policy & Procedure (for pupils) and appropriate action will be taken.

The Trust welcomes the principles of the Equality Act 2010 (referred to as "the Act") and the associated effort to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| • Age (does not apply to pupils) | • Maternity and pregnancy |
| • Disability | • Religion and belief |
| • Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity | • Sexual orientation |
| • Sex | • Marriage and civil partnership |
| • Gender reassignment | |

3. Equality Objectives – for 2023-2026

A review of Equality Objectives during 2022/23 identified the following areas for focus and action across Twynham Learning with schools developing their own local action plans (reviewed and published on school websites annually) in support of the objectives:

i. Close the Gap

- In school attendance (including exclusions)
- Between Male and Female Pupils; particularly in subjects historically associated with a gender bias in participation / achievement
- In whether Pupil Premium Pupils achieve their potential in comparison to non-Pupil Premium Pupils
- In whether SEND Pupils achieve their potential
- In Extra-Curricular participation and access to wraparound / holiday club provision

This information is captured within the Trust's Management Information System and is part of regular reporting to the Board of Trustees (Education Committee) as well as a key focus of the annual School Improvement cycle.

ii. Employee Values

- Recruitment (including promotion) – to encourage applications which reflect the whole community, including addressing protected characteristics but also recognising the benefits of having other groups of individuals (such as the neurodiverse) within the workplace
- Ensuring the opportunity for Employee Voice to be heard through the staff forum and other direct mechanisms
- For the Employee Values & Attributes to be actively promoted
- ... that **everyone** has the opportunity to be successful

Recruitment activity is open and transparent but TL will actively promote a culture which seeks to remove barriers to employment / pay progression / promotion through its website, social media stories and intranet content.

Elements of data on recruitment and other initiatives is presented (in an anonymised / summarised form) to the Board of Trustees Resources Committee for oversight.

iii. Valuing Diversity – Organisational Culture

- Active promotion of Understanding Difference and Valuing Diversity; that the Trust's values are exemplified and that relationships / interactions are respectful
- Championing the rights of all and respectful of individual circumstance
- Eliminating prejudice-related bullying / peer-on-peer abuse and the use of derogatory language; particularly towards those pupils with a protected characteristic
- Ensuring the opportunity for Pupil Voice to be heard through the Pupil Parliament and other direct mechanisms

- Adjusting uniform policies to remove historic issues regarding higher cost of girls uniform at secondary schools; ensuring the uniforms are presented as options to be chosen regardless of the gender of the pupil; ensuring that adjustments can be made to reflect any religious requirements
- The recruitment of governance volunteers will also actively seek to ensure that Boards are representative of the communities they serve.

Any incidents of bullying or safeguarding incidents are logged and can be reported on to pull out any themes to take appropriate action beyond those taken for an individual occurrence. Trends relating to Suspensions, Permanent Exclusions and Attendance are reported to Trustees (Education Committee) for oversight; incident trends relating to bullying and safeguarding are reviewed and challenged by the Local Advisory Board (LAB).

Work on Community Engagement (including pupil voice and parental consultation) and Civic Leadership is presented to the Board of Trustees for scrutiny within Theme 1 of the Twynham Learning Excellence Strategy.

4. Staff

It is at the core of Twynham Learning that the organisation runs as a meritocracy; that people join and succeed on the basis of their efforts within a transparent and fair system and are treated with respect and decency throughout their employment. We commit to supporting our staff and applicants to be their authentic selves in the workplace without judgement. In return, we expect all staff to treat others with dignity at all times.

Staff data held in our Management Information System is part of statutory returns as part of the school workforce census and this contains information on some protected characteristics. Our staff census returns feed into national data sets (link below and also from school websites).

[Search for schools, colleges and multi-academy trusts - Find school and college performance data in England - GOV.UK \(find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-school-performance-data)

4.1 Recruitment

Our approach to recruitment and selection prioritises safeguarding and protection of our learners. We recruit new staff using a fair process, giving candidates opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and attributes (especially our Twynham Learning staff values and attributes). We value diversity and inclusiveness and we are an equal opportunities employer.

In addition to adhering to Safer Recruitment principles, Twynham Learning's recruitment arrangements promote avoiding unnecessary restrictions on job descriptions / person specifications; the equal consideration of all applicants; the avoidance of bias; making reasonable adjustments for recruitment and employment.

Our recruitment, selection and probation processes are fair, consistent, equitable and transparent. We make decisions based on candidates' ability to demonstrate/evidence the skills, experience, attitude and attributes required for the post. We actively encourage applications for our vacancies from all parts of our community, and we never discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin), trade union membership status, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We will not ask candidates for any information about their health before they are offered

a job. However, we will check whether they require any adjustments to help them participate in our selection processes (and we will always do our best to accommodate any reasonable request).

Shortlisting is always carried out against the Job Description, by a panel rather than an individual, and with the scoring of each candidate recorded on a shortlisting matrix for transparency and (where appropriate) for the provision of feedback.

An appropriate range of selection activities will assess all shortlisted candidates against a consistent framework with scores and evidence being gathered to ensure that the post is offered to the candidate who best fits the job description.

Medical clearance is part of the pre-start process, following us making a conditional offer of employment. Our Occupational Health team will consider whether the candidate is physically and mentally fit to perform the post and advise us of any reasonable adjustments required for health reasons.

4.2 Ongoing Employment & Development

As part of the Trust's induction arrangements, staff will be trained on matters relating to Equality / Diversity & Inclusion – relating to both pupils and colleagues – which will be subject to periodic refresher. Equality good practice, initiatives and training opportunities will be promoted to staff on the Trust's intranet platform (SpoTLight). All staff are expected to champion inclusiveness within our employee value of "Don't Leave Anyone Behind" (which is embedded within recruitment and appraisal processes) and leaders are expected to promote a positive culture (within the Leadership Attributes) including inclusivity, meritocracy and valuing difference.

During employment, staff participate in a consistent appraisal process to ensure they are given a satisfying and challenging (but achievable) workload and that any training needs to support them achieving their objectives are identified and addressed. The appraisal process (including its link to pay progression) is moderated to promote consistency (and therefore fairness) across the whole organisation.

Consistent HR processes encourage the rapid resolution of any instances of capability, grievance, unacceptable conduct or unfair treatment; promoting opportunities for individuals to be supported to improve and thrive. Arrangements are also in place to fairly consider Flexible Working Requests.

Staff will not be singled out or treated less favourably because of any protected characteristic. For example:

- Staff who are pregnant, have recently given birth to or adopted a child or are breastfeeding will be supported and have their rights respected. Risk assessments will be in place to protect and support pregnant and new mothers and provision will be made for storage of breast milk.
- Colleagues will be provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith eg to perform their daily prayers. The majority of school-based staff are not able to routinely take time off work during term-time. Any requests to take unpaid leave (or to use holiday entitlement where that applies) for religious observances will be considered on a case by case basis upon the staff member presenting a full request to their line manager.
- Staff undergoing gender reassignment will be supported to express the gender role in which they identify.

5. Pupils

To honour Twynham Learning's commitment to **every** pupil receiving a world class education irrespective of background, there are a number of strands where Equality, Diversity & Inclusion are considered and actively promoted in our arrangements.

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body (the Board of Trustees) 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 access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Neither will pupils be discriminated against by virtue of their parents' protected characteristics.

Pupil data held in our Management Information System is part of statutory returns as part of the termly school census and this contains information on some protected characteristics. Our pupil census returns feed into national data sets (link below and also from school websites).

[Search for schools, colleges and multi-academy trusts - Find school and college performance data in England - GOV.UK \(find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/search-for-schools-colleges-and-multi-academy-trusts-find-school-and-college-performance-data-in-england)

5.1 Admissions

Twynham Learning schools have admissions policies which include the principle of admission arrangements being consistently and equally applied to all requests being made by parents for admission, irrespective of background.

Where a child has an Education Health and Care Plan which names the school, the Trust recognises a duty to admit the child to the school. Where all parental preferences for places at the school can be satisfied, all children seeking a place will be admitted. Where there are too few places available, as measured against the PAN, places will be allocated according to the oversubscription criteria (after any children where their Education Health and Care Plan names the school).

Highest priority is always given in the oversubscription criteria to Looked After Children (and previously Looked After Children). They will not be singled out or treated less favourably because they are or have been looked after by the state. They will have a personal education plan to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

Because Twynham Learning schools participate in the coordinated scheme run by the Local Authority, the allocation of places within the main round of applications is undertaken by the Local Authority. Twynham Learning schools simply apply the oversubscription criteria and receive back a list of pupils who will be offered a place at the school based on matching parental preference wherever possible.

Fairness and consistency is at the heart of the Twynham Learning admissions policies and arrangements, in line with Sections 1.8 and 1.9 of the Admissions Code.

5.2 Behaviour

Twynham Learning schools share a Statement of Intent regarding behaviour which is predicated on a fundamental principle: “All teachers have the right to teach and all pupils have the right to learn in an environment that is safe, highly focused and productive and absolutely free from low level distraction and disruption.”

Pupils are expected to be respectful of self, their peers and their teachers; respecting the right of their peers to learn and the right of their teachers to teach.

Leaders are expected to be highly visible; leading from the front in terms of ethos, culture, behaviour, rewards and sanctions. They will intentionally build the culture recognising that it cannot be left to chance with the culture being centred around:

- **Positivity, aspiration and respect for all.**
- Pupils being and feeling safe.
- Building positive relationships with all students.
- Bullying, discrimination and child-on-child abuse being dealt with quickly, effectively and consistently if it occurs.
- Value and care for pupils, collectively and individually.
- Love of learning.

Staff will have consistent routines and expectations and have high fidelity to the school’s arrangements (a trust-wide statement of intent with school-specific Policy & Procedure) so that there is a shared understanding of what good behaviour means; and that it is “taught not caught” via Twynham Learning’s behaviour curriculum.

5.3 SEND

Twynham Learning believes that meeting every pupil’s needs is the responsibility of all staff. In order to provide excellence in education, its staff will ensure that pupils are treated as individuals whilst developing their sense of place within the wider community. Twynham Learning is therefore committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of its pupils, whatever their needs or abilities.

As part of the organisation’s commitment to excellence in SEND, there is a clear vision that all pupils will achieve expected or above expected outcomes in line with their ability, through:

- Schools offering quality provision.
- Staff being aspirational for all pupils.
- Staff having a clear understanding of needs and implementing effective tailored strategies to break down barriers - ‘All teachers are teachers of SEND’.
- Staff identifying needs at the earliest point possible
- Staff monitoring and assessing the progress/impact of provision
- Staff building on each other’s provision to provide the best future opportunities.
- Twynham Learning working effectively and consistently within the community and with the Local Authority.
- Twynham Learning offering high quality CPD opportunities to all staff.

Twynham Learning has a network of SENDCos and a senior leader with a portfolio for SEND who, working together, share best practice, support the transition of pupils, develop colleagues' knowledge and understanding of SEND matters and who continually drive improvement so that **all** pupils can achieve their potential.

Schools will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids necessary to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities, especially where the pupil also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or Education Health & Care Plan. The Trust recognises its duty to, where appropriate, treat a disabled pupil more favourably than a person who is not disabled in order that they can benefit from our educational offer to the same extent that a person without that disability can.

5.4 Pastoral Support & Culture

Each school has a pastoral staffing structure to compliment the teaching and learning staffing structure. Pupils have access to adults who will value their individuality, recognise their challenges and help them to be and to achieve their very best.

All pupils will be given a variety of educational experiences to expose them to a wide range of cultural experiences and to promote an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged and where stereotypical views of society of broken down rather than reinforced.

Staff will support LGBTQ+ and trans pupils to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity (and will not single anyone out for different or less favourable treatment). Safe spaces and support will also be designated and promoted to allow pupils to discuss issues of gender and sexuality without fear of discrimination. Whilst pupils are taught about the nature of marriage (including same-sex marriage), teachers will not offer personal opinions. Pupils will be educated on positive relationships, families and gender identities (see Relationships and Sex Education Policy).

Pupils will be called by their preferred names and with their preferred pronouns, which may be different from their legal names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation. Pupils can dress to reflect their gender identity within the Uniform Policy. Staff will ensure that parents / carers are aware of pupils changing pronoun and/or name where the school was not advised via the family.

Pupils will only be separated by sex where there is reasonable justification for doing so. Where it is deemed necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, such classes will not give pupils a disadvantage when compared to pupils of the other sex in other classes. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities; where separation is deemed necessary, the single-sex sports teams will receive the same quality and amount of resources. All pupils will be offered equal opportunities to undertake any activity in the school. Pupils undergoing gender reassignment will be allowed to attend the single-sex class that accords with the gender role in which they identify.

Pupils who have become pregnant, have recently given birth, have children or are breastfeeding will not be singled out or treated less favourably. Schools will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of pupils who are pregnant or have just given birth (see Supporting Pregnant Pupils and School Age Parents Policy).

Pupils will not be singled out or segregated on the basis of their race or ethnicity and staff will ensure that pupils with EAL are treated equally and fairly, while ensuring they are supported at all times.

Staff will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief. Pupils will be provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith eg to perform their daily prayers. Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the Attendance Policy.

6. Physical Environment

Each school site has an Accessibility Plan to meet its duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities. One of the strands considered within the Accessibility Plan is the improving of the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided.

The physical environment of the premises will be monitored to consider whether certain features place physically disabled staff, job applicants, pupils / service users, or other stakeholders at a substantial disadvantage compared to others. Where reasonable, the school will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and pupils / service users.

Staff who are disabled or become disabled are encouraged to inform their line manager or a member of SLT about their condition so that support can be given. Staff experiencing difficulties at work because of their disability (physical or otherwise) are also encouraged to raise this with their line manager or a member of SLT to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty.

The provision of some gender-neutral toilet and changing facilities is part of the development of school sites; ensuring that pupils and staff can use the facility they feel most comfortable in.

7. Equality Information

Twynham Learning publishes on an annual basis the statistics for its Gender Pay Gap (and for Bonus Pay Gap if this was to be applicable), and provides at least a three year history.

Twynham Learning gathers equality information as part of its recruitment process. The Diversity Questionnaire is a standalone document (not part of application form) so that it can be received by HR staff and kept separately. It is not made available to the shortlisting panel but is kept so that periodic analysis can help inform the representative nature of our workforce; any barriers to recruitment etc. Any trend information is then available to help shape recruitment activity and other arrangements.

Twynham Learning does not hold information on the protected characteristics of its whole workforce and does not therefore publish any anonymised summary data in this regard.

8. Further information

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Twynham Learning Policies and Procedures which may be Trust-wide (T) or school-level (S):

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (T) and Procedures (S)
- Behaviour Strategy (T)
- Admissions Policies (S)
- SEND Policy (T)
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy (T)

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy (T)
- Supporting Pregnant Pupils and School Age Parents Policy (T)
- Attendance & Punctuality Policy (T)
- Uniform Policy (T)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (S)
- Fairness and Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure (T)
- Recruitment, Selection & Probation Policy (T)
- Restructuring, Pay Protection & Redundancy Policy (T)
- Retirement & LGPS Discretions Policy (T)
- Staff Appraisal Policy (T)
- Staff Attendance Management Policy & Procedure (T)
- Staff Capability Policy (T)
- Staff Discipline Policy & Procedure (T)
- Staff Grievance Policy & Procedure (T)
- Staff Pay Policy (T)
- Complaints Policy & Procedure (T)
- Accessibility Plan (S)
- Relationships & Sex Education Policy (T)

Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening Record

1. What policy is being reviewed?

Equality policy

2. Upon whom will this impact?

All members of Twynham Learning, parents/carers, pupils, staff

3. How would the work impact upon groups; are they included and considered?

<i>The Equality Strands</i>	Negative impact	Positive impact	No impact
Minority ethnic groups		ü	
Gender		ü	
Disability		ü	
Religion, faith or belief		ü	
Sexual orientation		ü	
Transgender		ü	
Age (N/A to pre-school and school children)		ü	
Rurality		ü	

4. Does data inform this work, research and/or consultation, and has it been broken down by the equality strands?

	NO	YES	Uncertain
Minority ethnic groups	ü		
Gender	ü		
Disability	ü		
Religion, Faith or belief	ü		
Sexual Orientation	ü		
Transgender	ü		
Age	ü		
Rurality	ü		

Does the initial screening highlight potential issues that may be illegal? NO

Further comments:-

Do you consider that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required? NO

Initial screening carried out by Darren Barton Date 3/7/24