



**The Sycamore
Church of England
Trust**

Grow together, Learn forever

Equality Information and Objectives Policy

Applicable to: All Trust Schools

Adopted By: Trust Board

Date Adopted: September 2025

Authorised Signatory:

Mr Ian Young – Trust
Leader and CEO
ADD – Chair of
Trust Board

Review Period: Annually

Next Review: October 2026



Grow together, Learn forever

Record of Policy Changes and/ or Reviews

Date	Details	Reason for Review/Change
October 2022	Equality Information and Objectives Statement	Review
September 2025	Equality Information and Objectives Policy	Policy adoption and review of objectives
October 2025	Changes to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Awareness	Removal of references to unconscious bias training

Contents

1. Aims	4
2. Legislation and guidance	5
3. Roles and responsibilities	5
4. Eliminating discrimination	6
5. Advancing equality of opportunity	7
6. Fostering good relations	8
7. Equality considerations in decision-making	8
8. Equality objectives	9
9. Monitoring arrangements	9
10. Links with other policies	10

1. Aims

The Sycamore Church of England Trust (known hereafter as the trust) aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage or civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

At the Trust, we are committed to fostering an inclusive culture where every individual is valued and differences are celebrated. Guided by our core values — **inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience, and excellence** — we actively promote respect for diversity in all its forms. We embrace the richness that comes from varied backgrounds, identities, and experiences, and we strive to ensure that all members of our community feel seen, heard, and supported.

- **Inclusion** drives our efforts to remove barriers and create equitable opportunities for all.
- **Compassion** underpins our relationships, encouraging empathy and understanding across differences.
- **Aspiration** inspires us to empower every individual to achieve their full potential, regardless of their starting point.
- **Resilience** helps us to challenge discrimination and inequality with courage and determination.
- **Excellence** motivates us to uphold the highest standards in promoting equality, dignity, and respect.

Through our curriculum, policies, staff development, and community engagement, we aim to cultivate an environment where diversity is not only respected but actively championed.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

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

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#), 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.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The trust board will:

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

The equality link trustee is **Alan Beedie**.

The equality link trustee will:

- Meet with the designated members of staff for equality every year, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full trust board regarding any issues

Each headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to local governors
- Have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action to whether it may have particular implications for people with particular protected characteristics.

The designated member of staff for equality will:

- Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

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

4. Eliminating Discrimination

The 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.

In each of our schools, staff and local governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act – for example, during meetings. 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. To ensure effective implementation across our schools, a range of in-house training options are available from our online training providers, including:

1. Understanding the Equality Act 2010

- Overview of the Act and its implications for schools.
- Duties around protected characteristics.
- Legal responsibilities for staff, leaders, and governors.
- Case studies of compliance and breaches.

2. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Awareness

- Tailored sessions for staff, SLT, local governors, and trustees.
- Topics may include inclusive language and challenging discrimination.

3. Strategic Leadership for Equality

- Aimed at senior leaders and governors.
- A four-session online course covering:
 - Equality impact assessments.
 - Inclusive recruitment.
 - Curriculum audits.
 - Courageous conversations around EDI.

4. Safeguarding and Equality Integration

- Embedding equality into safeguarding practices.

5. Inclusive Curriculum Design

- Supporting subject leads to embed EDI across all subjects.

6. Responding to Prejudice-Related Incidents

- Training on how to identify, report, and respond effectively.

7. Positive Action in Recruitment

- Understanding lawful strategies to diversify staff teams.

8. Staff Reflection Workshops

- Encouraging self-awareness and values alignment with trust ethos.

Each school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link local governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

5. Advancing equality of opportunity

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

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

In addition to the information about pupils, we will consider how our activities as an employer affect staff with protected characteristics. As a trust, we will publish information to show:

- The make-up of our workforce, with breakdowns of staff at different grades, levels and rates of pay (including any patterns of occupational segregation and part-time work)
- Gender pay-gap reporting and other pay equality issues (this is a statutory requirement for schools with 250 or more employees)
- The profile of staff at different stages of employment including recruitment, training, promotion and leavers.
- Applications for flexible working and their outcomes for staff with different protected characteristics
- Applications for learning and development opportunities and their outcomes for staff with different protected characteristics
- Grievances and disciplinary issues and complaints of discrimination and other prohibited conduct
- Policies and programs in place to address equality concerns from staff
- Information from staff surveys and/or trade unions
- Records weighing the equality outcomes of important decisions including evidence used to make decisions

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

6. Fostering good relations

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

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

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

Each school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. We consider equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and make decisions and continue to review these on a continuing basis.

Each school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

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

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

8. Equality objectives

As a trust, we are required to publish equality information every year. As we grow to be beyond 250 employees:

- We must report pay gap information by 30 March each year
- And we must report on our equality objectives at least once every 4 years.

Our priority objectives are:

Objective 1: Increase Representation in Curriculum

By July 2026, all schools within the trust will audit and revise their curriculum to ensure that at least **30% of core texts and learning materials** reflect diverse cultures, identities, and experiences — including race, gender, disability, and family structures — to promote inclusion and compassion.

- **Measure:** Curriculum audit reports; pupil voice surveys.
- **Impact:** Pupils see themselves and others positively represented, fostering respect and aspiration.

Objective 2: Narrow the Attainment Gap for Pupils with SEND

By July 2027, the trust will reduce the attainment gap in reading and writing between pupils with SEND and their peers by **at least 10%**, through targeted interventions, staff training, and inclusive teaching strategies.

- **Measure:** Trust-wide data tracking; progress reports; SEND reviews.
- **Impact:** Improved outcomes and resilience for pupils with SEND.

Objective 3: Improve Staff Confidence in Addressing Equality Issues

By December 2026, **100% of staff** across all schools will complete annual training on the Equality Act 2010 and inclusive practice, with **80% reporting increased confidence** in identifying and addressing equality-related issues.

- **Measure:** Training completion records; post-training evaluations.
- **Impact:** A more inclusive and respectful school culture aligned with trust values.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The trust board will update the equality information we publish, at least every year.

School-specific equality objectives will be reviewed by the Headteacher and local governors at least every 4 years.

This document will be reviewed by the trust board annually, to ensure continued compliance with the PSED.

This document will be approved by The Sycamore Trust Board of Trustees and adopted by each school, including our local academy committees.

10. Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment
- SEN information report
- SEND policy