

STEEL CITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP



Steel City
Schools Partnership

SCSP EQUALITIES INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

This is reviewed every four years in the summer term
This edition: July 2021

Introduction

This single document replaces separate policies the Academy has on race, disability and gender to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It reflects the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and non-statutory guidance set out by the government.

The Public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities are required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities, to publish:

- equality objectives, at least every four years (from 6th April 2012)
- information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty (from 31st January 2012)

Part One sets out the School's aims to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the Act; Part Two sets out the legal duties which are referred to in Part One.

Part Three sets out the Equality Objectives of the Multi Academy Trust, to be reviewed and reported on annually.

PART ONE

Our Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics).

Protected characteristics

The Act defines protected characteristics as follows:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Marriage and civil partnerships

These protected characteristics apply to pupils, prospective pupils, staff, prospective staff or anybody they are associated with, with the exception of 'age' and 'marriage and civil partnership' which do not apply to pupils and prospective pupils. (see annex A)

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties:

The Public Sector Equality Duty or 'general duty'

This requires all public organisations, including schools to give due regard to the need to (in relation to the protected characteristics above):

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
3. Foster good relations between different groups

Two 'specific duties'

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

Unlawful behaviour

The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour – direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a "provision, criterion or practice" is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.

Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act - it is "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person".

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a protected act") in connection with the Act.

Discrimination arising from disability - treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (such as periods of absence from work or medical conditions) and failure to make reasonable adjustments. The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act. In particular, it works in only one direction, i.e. it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that we are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility Plans

Steel City Schools Partnership is required to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage caused by a provision, criteria or practice or a physical feature that puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. This involves removing or avoiding a physical feature, for example steps and lifts.

- Take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids/services
 - Provide information in an accessible format.
 - Develop and implement (by allocation of resources) Accessibility Plans which will;
1. Increase disabled pupils' access to the school curriculum

And for all users of the school

2. Improve the physical environment
3. Improve the provision of information

The duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that SCSP owes to all pupils with disabilities whether identified or not, and to those pupils who will be attending in the future. Our schools will seek relevant information regarding newly placed pupils to ensure as far as possible that their needs are anticipated under this Act. We will ensure that we work closely with professionals, parents and carers as appropriate to identify the challenges presented to us by new pupils under this Act.

Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty, applicable to the Trust, to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faith/beliefs and socioeconomic backgrounds. SCSP policies and activities should all be promoting community cohesion and inclusion wherever possible to comply with, and support these duties.

Roles and responsibilities

We expect all staff of the Trust and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

The Trustees

The board has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with equality legislation, the effective operation of this document and that action plans are implemented. Trustees have a watching brief regarding the implementation of this. The Trust and Governing Body keeps aspects of the Trust's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. The Trustees review the Equality information and objectives and evaluates the success of the Trust's equalities work taking account quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence.

The Chief Executive Officer, along with the executive and senior leadership team, are responsible for ensuring that:

- This information is communicated and made readily available to staff, parents and carers.
- This information and its related procedures are implemented.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support to enable them to effectively deliver this and the Equality Plan
- Appropriate action is taken in any case of actual or potential discrimination

- All staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and provide reasonable adjustments to staff when appointed. All appointment panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- All staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incident.
 - All incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, are treated with due seriousness.
 - The principle of equal opportunity is promoted when developing the curriculum,

All staff should:

- Enact all aspects of this document, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities within it
- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the head of school, headteacher or principal
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds
- Attend training and information sharing opportunities as necessary to use this and associated documents with confidence, and keep up to date with current equality legislation
- Promote equal opportunities through their words and actions

Pupils according to their ability and understanding should:

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour, or any other behaviour that could cause offence to others.

Parents and Carers

- Parents and carers will be encouraged to participate fully in implementing this document within the academy and across the Trust, particularly by reinforcing its ethos at home. They will be invited to comment on the Equality Objectives and will be regularly updated on progress.

All Visitors, Volunteers and Contractors should:

- Make themselves aware of, and comply with the expectations contained within this document
- To refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or language on school premises
- Bring to the attention of a member of staff any act, or behaviour that concerns them

Publishing the plan and links to other policies and documentation

Although this is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our Trust and academy development plans. We will publish our approach and plan on the Trust and schools website and raise awareness of the plan through the academies' newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications; This document has links with the Behaviour, Admissions, SEN and Anti-bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving Trustees, local governors, all staff, the senior leadership team and school councils.

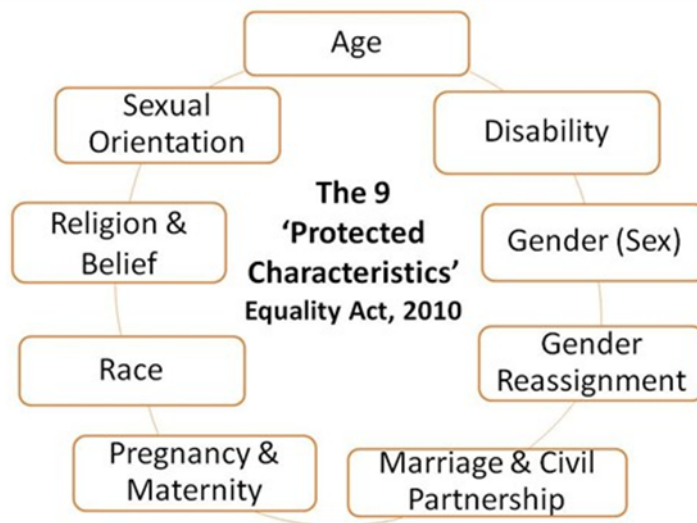
The Equality Act also applies to the Trust in its role as employer, and as such links to our Recruitment Policies, Whistle Blowing Policy, Health and Safety, Online-Safety and Acceptable Use policies.

PART TWO

Across SCSP we value the individuality of all our children, employees and stakeholders and we are committed to enabling all pupils to take part as fully as possible in every part of school life by developing each child's self-confidence, recognising their strengths and encouraging them to achieve their full potential. We are also committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and wellbeing of our children and young people, employees and stakeholders and expect everybody to share this commitment.

SCSP will take steps to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and eliminate discrimination or harassment across all the protected characteristics (age, race, gender reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, gender, sexual orientation) within the school community.

The diagram below shows how the protected characteristics inter relate and that the equality duty and associated documents are a tool to ensure that outcomes are improved for all which supports everyone's contribution towards the promotion of community cohesion and equality.



This means:

- We will take reasonable and necessary steps to meet pupils' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling our pupils to take as full a part as possible in all the activities of the school. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the school environment and its activities are as accessible and welcoming as possible for pupils, staff and visitors to the school. We are also committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.
- We will actively encourage positive attitudes towards pupils and staff and expect everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
- We will regularly consider the ways in which the taught and wider curriculum will help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals and develop the skills of participation and responsible action.

- We will regularly consider the ways in which our teaching and the curriculum provision will support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- We will monitor the progress and achievement of pupils by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics.
- This information will help the schools to ensure that individual pupils are achieving their potential, the school is being inclusive in practice, and trends are identified which inform the setting of our equality objectives in the academy development plans or through any support plan that may be in place.
- We will collect and analyse information about protected characteristics in relation to staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure all staff have equality of opportunity. We will not ask health-related questions to job applicants before offering a job, unless it relates to an intrinsic function of the work they do. We will make reasonable adjustments such as providing auxiliary aids for our disabled staff.
- Staff will ensure the curriculum is accessible to all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those for whom English is not their first language. Auxiliary aids and services will be provided for them, where reasonable adjustments are required. By planning ahead, staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the school will monitor the uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- We will seek the views of advisory staff and outside agencies and partnerships with other schools where this is needed. In planning the curriculum and resources the school will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.
- Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents will be carefully monitored and dealt with effectively. Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.
- We expect that all staff will be role-models for equal opportunities, deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Throughout the year, SCSP schools will plan on-going events to raise awareness of equality and diversity. This may include a focus on disability, respect for other cultures, religions and beliefs, anti-homophobia/gay pride, gender equality, developing community cohesion and an understanding of the effects of discrimination.
- We will ensure pupil/parent/staff consultation is regularly sought in the development and review of this policy.
- We will regularly seek the views of pupils, parents, advisory staff and visitors to the school, to ensure that the school environment is as safe and accessible as possible to all school users. We will regularly review our accessibility plans and equality plans if they are in place.

Equal opportunities relating to staff at SCSP.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the schools reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer Duties

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in our employment practice and advance equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as age, sex, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy

and maternity and religion and belief are considered when appointing staff and particularly when promoting within SCSP or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff, which are monitored as part of the performance management process
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

PART THREE

Equality Objectives

Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data and other information. They focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantage. We have agreed equality actions that will demonstrate what we want to achieve, how we will achieve our objectives and gives a review of progress. This includes both SCSP Trust-wide and school-level objectives.

SCSP has set the following equality objectives for the four-year period from September 2020 until September 2024:

- To monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and special educational need, disability and disadvantaged groups and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.
- To deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, that provides opportunities for all pupils to achieve the highest standards of education, using specialist programmes and dedicated resources to support pupils who need it the most. We will deliver a programme of assemblies, outside visitors, residential and education trips to promote the ethos of equality to pupils and help pupils develop good relationships with people of different characteristics.
- To raise levels of parental and pupil engagement in learning and school life, across all activities including regular attendance to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. We will aim to raise aspirations among children and parents and raise awareness of future career options for all children, challenging gender stereotypes.

The implementation and impact of these objectives and the equality plan will be monitored and reviewed by the Board of Trustees through:

- Reviewing pupil progress and attainment for different sub-groups (e.g. individual schools, boys / girls, Pupil Premium, SEN and Children in Care) annually in the autumn term, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.
- Receiving reports from the CEO, COO, Heads and Principals, SENCO and BSM's.
- Receiving reports from monitoring visits and Local Governing Bodies.
- Taking advice from relevant parties such as the Trust HR provider and Sheffield Admissions team.
- Monitoring parental engagement and attendance at all events.

Review

The Equality Policy and Objectives have been agreed by the Trust Board. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review the progress and implementation of the Equality Objectives and Equality Plan annually. This document will be reviewed every four years by Trustees.

Annex A: Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics for the Trust's provisions are:

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Age and marriage and civil partnerships are NOT protected characteristics for the trusts provisions, but do apply to staff

Disability

A person is a disabled person (someone who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has what the law calls 'a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause. In relation to physical impairment:

- Conditions that affect the body such as arthritis, hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses) diabetes, asthma epilepsy, conditions such as HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as loss of limbs or the use of limbs are covered.
- HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of diagnosis.
- Severe disfigurement (such as scarring) is covered even if it has no physical impact on the person with the disfigurement, provided the long-term requirement is met (see below)
- People who are registered as blind or partially sighted, or who are certified as being blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, are automatically treated as disabled under the Act. Mental impairment includes conditions such as dyslexia and autism as well as learning disabilities such as Down's syndrome and mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia.

The other tests to apply to decide if someone has the protected characteristic of disability are:

- The length the effect of the condition has lasted or will continue: it must be long term. 'Long term' means that an impairment is likely to last for the rest of the person's life, or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least

12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur or if the person no longer has the condition, they will be considered to be a disabled person.

- Whether the effect of the impairment is to make it more difficult and/or time consuming for a person to carry out an activity compared to someone who does not have the impairment, and this causes more than minor or trivial inconvenience.
- If the activities that are made more difficult are 'normal day to day activities' at work or at home.
- Whether the condition has this impact without taking into account the effect of any medication the person is taking or any aids or assistance or adaptations they have, like a wheelchair, walking stick, assistance dog or special software on their computer. The exception to this is the wearing of glasses or contact lenses where it is the effect while the person is wearing the glass or contact lenses, which is taken into account.

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with. This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for academy pupils, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

A person will be protected because of gender reassignment where they:

- Make their intention known to someone – it does not matter who this is, whether it is someone at an academy or at home or someone like a doctor:
- Once they have proposed to undergo gender assignment they are protected, even if they take no further steps or decide to stop later on
- They do not have to have reached an irrevocable decision that they will undergo gender reassignment, but as soon as there is a manifestation of this intention they are protected
- Start or continue to dress, behave or live (full or part time) according to the gender they identify as a person
- Undergo treatment related to gender reassignment, such as surgery or hormone therapy; or
- Have received gender recognition under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. It does not matter which of these applies to a person for them to be protected because of the characteristic of gender reassignment. This guidance uses the term 'transsexual person' to refer to someone who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Pregnancy & Maternity

The Act lists pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity means a person's:

- Colour, and/ or
- Nationality (including citizenship), and/or
- Ethnic or National Origin

And a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

A person has the protected characteristics of ethnicity if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'.

Racial groups can comprise two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

Religion or Belief

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

A religion need not be mainstream or well known to gain protection as religion. It must, though, be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Denominations or sects within religions may be considered a religion. Cults and new religious movements may also be considered religions or beliefs.

Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.

'Religious belief' goes beyond beliefs and adherence to a religion or its central articles of faith and may vary from person to person within the same religion.

A belief which is not a religious belief may be a philosophical belief, such as humanism or atheism. A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world.

For a belief to be protected by the Equality Act:

- It must be genuinely held
- It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment.
- It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
- It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society.
- It must be compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

Sex

A person's sex refers to the fact that they are male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to either boys or girls.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

- Some people are only attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men)
- Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people)
- Some people are only attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people)

Everyone is protected from being treated worse because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian or heterosexual. Sexual orientation discrimination also covers discrimination connected with manifestation of that sexual orientation.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

At SCSP, we feel that our staff's wellbeing is of vital importance. Wellbeing is an important factor in the job satisfaction and as such is a management issue. Our strategy will bring staff wellbeing to the fore-front, whilst seeking to create a culture where negative wellbeing issues are identified, minimised and managed before they affect the wellbeing of staff. We have a clear aim to promote

the positive health and wellbeing of our staff.

The issue of staff health and wellbeing at work is recognised as part of our broader approach to health promotion that involves us all.

We aim to:

- Promote good practice in both health and wellbeing activities and share success.
- Provide relevant training for all staff.
- Ensure all necessary resources are provided.
- Identify those circumstances that may contribute to inappropriate levels of work related stress.
- Consult with relevant trade union safety representatives and other stakeholders.
- Provide confidential counselling (chaplaincy and listening service) for staff as necessary.
- Promote an emphasis on wellbeing.
- Provide central support, resources and advisory services.
- Offer practical step by step procedures and guidance.
- Provide training to staff.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

Responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team

Our Senior Leaders will:

- Ensure health and wellbeing are seen as priority.
- Establish effective monitoring processes.
- Make recommendations following consultation with staff.
- Ensure the promotion of the policy throughout the organisation.
- Provide support and guidance for individuals.
- Allocate resources necessary.

We also expect our senior staff to:

- Set an example to others
- Actively promote the principle of positive staff well being
- Be vigilant to employees personal circumstances offering additional support as necessary
- Ensure that communication is always effective
- Ensure that bullying, harassment and discrimination are never tolerated.
- Refer employees (with their consent) to Occupational Health Service or counselling services
- Work with managers to initiate staff well-being focus groups where appropriate
- Conduct any investigation necessary to protect staff well being
- Ensure effective measures are in place for monitoring all sickness absences for stress-related absence

All Staff:

Are expected to:

- Look after the health and wellbeing of their colleagues and the pupils and families they work with
- Treat each other with dignity and respect
- Take advantage of training and information sources
- Uphold confidentiality (wherever safety is not at risk)
- Recognise the limits of what they can do and seek advice at the earliest opportunity
- Share ideas for promoting health and well-being in the workplace
- Raise issues of concern with their line manager
- Accept opportunities for occupational health review or counselling when recommended

APPENDIX 1

Check list for Leaders and Trustees

Is information collected on race, gender and special educational need, disability and disadvantaged groups with regards to pupils?

Is information collected on race, disability and gender with regards to staff?
e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions, staff training. Is this information used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the academy provides?

How has your Equality Plan been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents and pupils?

Is pupil achievement analysed by race, disability and gender? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action, and has action been taken to address these?

Does the curriculum include opportunities to understand the issues related to race, disability and gender?

Are all pupils encouraged to participate in Academy life? Are pupils who make a positive contribution reflective of the Academy's diversity e.g. through assemblies/councils/ pupil leadership roles?

Is bullying and harassment of pupils and staff monitored by race, disability and gender, and is this information used to make a difference to the experience of other pupils? Are racist incidents reported to the local governing body and Trust Board on a termly basis?

Are visual displays and all marketing, including websites, reflective of the diversity of the Academy's community?

How are minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models promoted positively in all marketing, lessons, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?

Does the Academy take part in annual events such as Black History Month, Deaf Awareness Week and One World Week to raise awareness of issues around race, disability and gender?

Is the Academy's environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the academy?

Are open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend held in an accessible part of the Academy, and are issues such as language barriers considered?

Are the accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff considered in the publishing and sending out of information, in terms of race, disability and gender?