PACE Academy Trust

Celebrating Diversity, Striving for Equity: Our Policy and Commitments

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 12: Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.

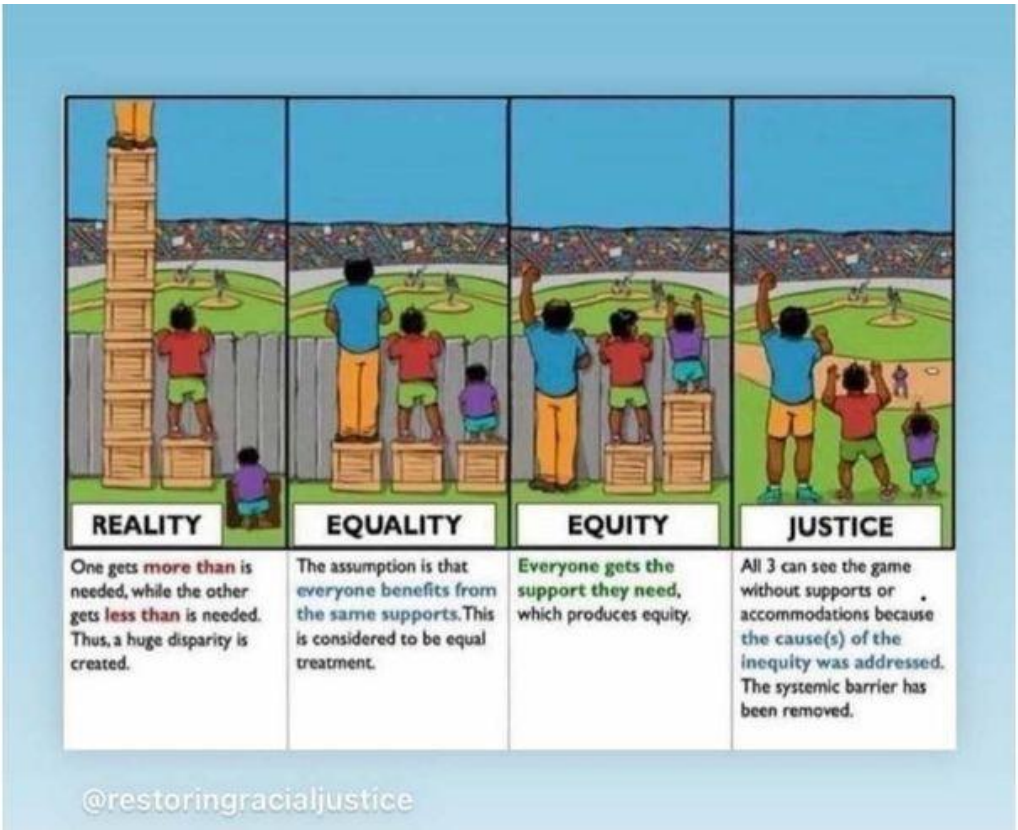
Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

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Celebrating Diversity, Striving for Equity

Context



Here we reproduce a powerful pictorial illustration to show the difference between equality and equity. In this image, the illustration goes further than equity, envisioning a world where systemic barriers to equity have been removed in the fourth image entitled 'Justice'.

1. Overview

This document outlines the commitment of the staff, governors and trustees of PACE Academy Trust to promote and celebrate diversity, and to strive for equity and inclusion.

Our schools respect, value and celebrate diversity within our communities. We recognise that we are all different; the contributions of all our children are seen, heard and valued. We enjoy our differences and take time to understand our varied experiences. We encourage one another to challenge our assumptions. We respect, appreciate and embrace our diversity. Every child in PACE Academy Trust is equally important to us. We recognise that not all of our differences or disabilities are visible.

Our schools teach children about their rights as set out within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These rights are fundamental and we work every day to uphold them. The rights that are particularly relevant to the commitments in this document are:

> Article 12: Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.
>
> Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.
>
> Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

We recognise that both children and adults require *different rather than equal* levels of support in order to thrive. In 2025 we are lifted our ambition from striving for *equality* to striving for *equity:*

> "Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities." My Little Black Book: A Blacktionary' by J. Oremosu and M. Semple. 2023

> "Equity: The quality of being fair and impartial. It recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome." My Little Black Book (op cit).

Our commitment is to strive for all children to thrive and achieve what is possible whatever their starting point. This requires us to adapt our support for children and adults to support fair outcomes. We recognise that the same treatment for all may unintentionally entrench disadvantage. We understand that the impact of a universal approach for all may not give equitable outcomes for all. Fairness is very important to us: fairness is about us behaving impartially without favouritism or discrimination. We treat any allegations of discrimination seriously.

We embrace our commitments under the Equality Act (2010) to eliminate discrimination, to advance equal opportunities between those with a protected characteristic and those without and to foster good relations across all characteristics. We recognise that some people have multiple protected characteristics.

Our schools publish equality information on their websites demonstrating how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. They also publish at least one equality objective.

Throughout this document we use these blue boxes to provide examples.

2. *Our Commitments*

Our schools celebrate diversity, promote and strive for equity through:

- ❖ our taught curriculum and the school environment;
- ❖ how we view, strive for, and measure, achievement and attainment;
- ❖ our ethos and how we seek to engage and nurture a sense of belonging;
- ❖ our approach to recruiting staff and to developing our team;
- ❖ our work to counter, challenge and tackle harassment and bullying; and
- ❖ our partnerships with parents, carers and our wider communities.

In this section of the document, we include some examples of how we fulfil the commitments in each of these areas. Examples are presented in pale blue text boxes throughout and are illustrative rather than exhaustive.

Our taught curriculum and the school environment

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed. To achieve this we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning embraces our commitments to diversity and equity
- Our curriculum celebrates that our pupils live in a diverse and global society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and lived experience of pupils and families in the schools and community
- We provide opportunities in the curriculum to explore and discuss concepts and issues related to identity, inequality and equity
- We promote attitudes and values that celebrate and respect diversity
- We always challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs
- We use images and materials which showcase a broad range of cultures, identities and lifestyles
- Displays around our schools and on our websites/social media accounts celebrate our own diversity and champion the achievements of people of all backgrounds. These displays are frequently monitored and extended
- We find opportunities to ask our pupils whether they can see themselves reflected in our curriculum content

> Our books for children include texts written by diverse authors who celebrate and embrace difference.

> Resources are available in our schools enabling children to create artworks in their own image.

How we view, strive for, and measure, achievement and attainment;

- We hold consistently high expectations of all pupils regardless of their age, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, religion, belief, ability, whether they have additional needs, their social background or their sexual orientation.
- We support our staff through training to celebrate and talk comfortably about difference. This helps our adults to be strong, positive role models comfortable in talking about issues relating to equity and diversity.
- Our schools' policy and practice strives to provide education that meets the specific needs of each pupil and all learners are actively encouraged to engage fully in their own learning.
- We look both at children individually and in terms of groups of learners who have barriers to learning such as English as an additional language, being disadvantaged or having special educational needs and disabilities.
- We use targeted interventions and regularly monitor attainment, progress and participation data for different groups of pupils to identify any inequities and to narrow gaps in attainment.
- We work hard to maximise school attendance for all children recognising that the reasons that children may not be at school are varied, and that families and children need support, as every single day in school matters.
- We look for opportunities to support all children to participate and engage as fully as possible in school life.

Pupil progress meetings are regularly held between a school leader and a class teacher during which all children are considered. This dialogue looks for opportunities to support children ranging frrom small group work through to access to enrichment opportunities.

Our ethos, how we seek to engage and nurture a sense of belonging;

We strive for all our children and adults to feel a sense of belonging in our schools.

- We recognise the importance of building positive, warm relationships with children to develop their sense of belonging. We get to know our children, we are interested in them, and we show that we care for them and like them.
- We encourage our parents, carers and children to come and talk to one of us to discuss any concerns.
- We model inclusive behaviour and set clear and consistent expectations about behaviour for the children. Whilst consistency is important, we will adapt our approach for a child in need of something different to support their learning.
- We make reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access for pupils, staff and visitors (including parents) with disabilities or specific needs (this not only includes physical access, but considers wider access to school information and activities).
- We consider and vary our approach to take into account the cultural, moral, spiritual and emotional needs of all children through our planning of assemblies, classroom based and off-site activities.
- We encourage our children to share their views with us and one another and listen carefully. We look for opportunities for the children to shape a decision or lead an initiative.
- Our children learn about their rights as part of our UNICEF 'Rights Respecting' work which we believe gives them the language to be able to advocate for themselves and for one another.

All our schools have different approaches to hearing from and listening to our children including school councils, rights respecting champions, 'Equality Diversity Inclusion' (EDI) champions, and eco committees. Listening to our children also involves using surveys and votes to encourage wide engagement, inclusive of all personalities.

Our school calendars highlight all religious or culturally significant dates so that all staff are aware of these and take them into account within school life.

School leaders share data about our school cohort, such as languages in our school, so that our staff have an up to date understanding of our community.

Our approach to recruiting staff and to professionally developing our team;

- We advertise all posts either across PACE or externally.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained to avoid discrimination including unconscious or conscious bias.
- We make recruitment and progression decisions on merit.
- We consider our language in adverts to actively encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions.
- We take any complaints of bullying, harassment or discrimination seriously and these are referred to the Headteacher or CEO.
- We follow our grievance and/ or disciplinary procedures to address any bullying, harassment or discrimination.
- We provide wide access to opportunities for professional development for all through our continual professional development programme for all staff.
- Our lead professionals encourage all staff to access developmental activities and support to develop to their full potential.
- We keep our employment policy and procedures under review to check conformity with legislation.

Lead professionals are given regular training to undertake their role well including on being consistent in performance development practice.

Our work to counter, challenge and tackle harassment and bullying

- Our schools counter and challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to staff, pupils, parents and governors.

- Our schools have a clear, agreed procedures for dealing with prejudice related incidents whether those are isolated or prolonged (bullying) and the Headteacher is responsible for recording, monitoring and addressing incidents. This recording/monitoring will include recording whether incidences are of racial prejudice or discrimination.
- Our schools report to local governing bodies on an termly basis the number of incidences of racial discrimination, other incidences of discrimination and bullying related incidents recorded in the school. Our CEO reviews this data and engages with school leaders on the detail every term.

Our partnerships with parents, carers and our wider communities.

We work in partnership with our parents/carers:

- We encourage all parents/carers to participate in the life of the school through a wide range of opportunities throughout the school calendar to join in school life through activities, events, workshops and celebrations;
- We work hard on our channels of communication using messages, letters and newsletters.
- We invite parents and carers to share their views with us through parent questionnaires to inform practice;
- We work hard to think about the needs of the families of newly arrived pupils as we want them to feel welcome;
- We organise local visits for the children;
- We encourage and support fundraising activities.

All of schools hold open access events for parents and carers to give them opportunities to engage with and support their child's learning. These range from joining assemblies through to focused events such as celebratory 'international days' which encourage celebration of our diverse lives and heritages.

3. Our Equity and Equality Objectives

Every year our schools work towards improvement priorities in their school improvement plans and at the strategic level, the Trust Leadership Group works across the trust on trust wide priorities. Equity and diversity are core threads which run through all of our improvement priorities at both levels.

Our schools comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act and publish details on their websites of how they comply with the duty.

4. *Responsibility for the Policy*

In our schools, all members of the school community have a responsibility for celebrating diversity and striving for equity. We have a Diversity and Equity Network with members from all our schools who work to ensure that we consider equity and diversity implications in all aspects of our work.

Diversity and Equity Network

Our **Diversity and Equity Network** will work with our Executive Leaders to:

• Collaborate with colleagues to promote equity and diversity;
• Recognise and promote good practice whether that is in the classroom, leading a subject/phase, operating a school site or any aspect of our work to deliver inclusive education.
• Be proactive about the representation of everyone, everywhere: from in-school displays/ website/school social media posts and the curriculum through to representation/participation in extra curricula or other opportunities for children (such as school council, reading/performing at school events).
• Model constructive challenge to colleagues and leaders when there is scope to improve our practice.

Local Governing Bodies

The local governing bodies will:

• Affirm and hold the school to account for its diversity, inclusion or equity objectives.
• Check the school is publish equality information on the school website which demonstrating how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This will include the publication of at least one equality objective which will be reviewed at least every four years.
• Scrutinise information about discriminatory incidents and bullying and ask questions about action taken.
• Champion diversity, equity and fairness and regularly ask challenging questions in support of our commitments to celebrating diversity and striving for equity.
• Check that the school has an accessibility plan that is published.

Trustees on the PACE Strategic Board

The **trustees** have responsibility for ensuring that they:

• Endorse and hold trust leaders to account for diversity, inclusion or equity objectives in its strategic plan;
• Agree policies for staff and for children which advance fair treatment and support for all to support all to achieve to their full potential. This will include different support and approaches for individual children and adults to support their starting point.
• Champion diversity, equity and fairness and regularly ask challenging questions in support of our commitments to celebrating diversity and striving for equity.

Headteachers and Senior Leadership Teams

Our Heads and Senior Leaders are key leaders in celebrating diversity and striving for equity. They will:

• Provide positive leadership and lead the vision in their school for celebrating diversity and promoting equity.
• Propose, drive forward, review and learn from the delivery of their diversity and equity targets.
• Record and take appropriate action when there are any discriminatory incidents or incidences of bullying.
• Be accountable for progress to the CEO and the governing body including reporting on incidents of discrimination.
• Be clear with staff about their responsibilities and ensure they are given relevant training and support.
• Publish equality information on the school websites demonstrating how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This will include the publication of at least one equality objective which will be reviewed at least every four years.
• Publish and implement a school accessibility plan.

All Staff

All school staff have responsibility for:

• Modelling good practice, dealing with incidences of racial prejudice or other discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.
• Celebrating diversity, promoting equity and inclusion and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of their age, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, religion, belief, ability, their special educational needs, social background or their sexual orientation.

• Engaging in training and learning opportunities to develop their understanding of difference and to extend their ability to talk comfortably about difference both with one another and with children;
• Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination.

5. *Monitoring and Review*

Our Executive Leaders are responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation of this policy. This includes supporting positively the evaluation activities that monitor the impact and success of the policy on pupils from different groups, e.g. children with special educational needs and disabilities, Looked After Children, children from ethnically diverse backgrounds, children who speak English as an additional language, and disadvantaged children. This will be done through the monitoring of:

- Pupils' progress and attainment
- Classroom practice
- Behaviour, discipline, suspension and exclusion data
- Attendance
- Admissions
- Incidents of any prejudice related discrimination or bullying, and, all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extra-curricular and extended school activities
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Visits and visitors

6. *Related policies*

This document contains our policy and commitments for celebrating diversity and striving for equity and as such is a driver for almost all of our other policies. We highlight the following in particular:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policy
- Performance Development Policies for Teachers, Leaders and Support Staff.
- Our Core Threads
- Our Teaching and Learning Principles
- Attendance Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- School Accessibility Plans

Document Control Table			
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V2	March 2021	JG	Revised and updated to reflect our 2021 vision and commitments.
V2.1	13 July 2021	JG	Revisions made following consultation with staff, governors and Directors.
V3	November 2023	JG	Revisions following policy review by Equality Network
Draft V4.1	January 2026	JG and Diversity and Equity Network (DEN)	Extensively revised policy reflecting a shift in aspiration from equality to equity.
Draft 4.2	April 2026	JG and the DEN	
Draft 4.3	April 2026	JG and the DEN	Updated draft following input from consulting staff across all schools.
4.4	June 2026	JG	Updated draft following consultation with LGBs