



Nourishing the fitrah of each unique child

Equality Policy

"O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allaah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa."

(Surah Hujurat, Verse: 13)

Adopted: January 2024	Review date: January 2025	Equality Officer: Hawwa Mbombo
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Adopted: January 2024

Review date: January 2025

Equality Policy

Unique Academy is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education and employment. Prejudice, discrimination (direct or indirect), and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil in our pupils a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others. Unique Academy's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, so as to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

This plan sets out how Unique Academy will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act to eliminate all discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as race, gender, transgender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation). It is created by the Trustees and Headteacher of the school in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the **special educational needs policy, admissions policy, anti-bullying policy** and the **behaviour policy**.

These policies can be accessed on the school's website and a hard copy is available upon request at the school.

Through the creation of this equalities plan, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. The current summary of equality-based actions being undertaken by the school is set out in annex A. This document will be reviewed annually or any time there is an update or change to equality legislation, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

School Profile

Unique Academy is an independent school with a Muslim ethos. We cater for pupils who come from a range of cultures and backgrounds.

At Unique Academy, we believe that **'Equality'** means the right of different groups of people to have a similar social position and receive the same treatment.

'Diversity' means the fact that many different types of things or people can be included in something, as well as accepting the fact that there can sometimes be many different ideas or opinions about something.

'Discrimination' means treating a person or a group of people differently.

Statistics

At Unique Academy, we gather and share information regarding equality statistics at the school. This year, they are as follows:

	Number	Percentage
Number of pupils	67	100%
Number of girls	26	38%
Number of boys	41	61%
SEN pupils	1	1.5%
EAL pupils	17	25%

Aim

At Unique Academy, we aim to cater for the diverse cultures and backgrounds of the pupils who attend our school by:

- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils
- Seeking to involve all parents in supporting their child's education, through consultation, induction, workshops, invitation to assemblies, trips and other forms of active participation
- Celebrating and appreciating differences through assemblies and awareness days
- Using our circle time sessions to discuss issues regarding equality and diversity in contemporary British society
- Using our PSHE lessons to discuss issues regarding equality in an age appropriate manner
- Promoting attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Using materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping
- Monitoring achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps.
- Empowering pupils to feel good about themselves no matter who they are

Roles and Responsibilities

Unique Academy aims to create a positive Islamic school atmosphere that fosters equality and denounces discrimination as a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below.

The Trustees

The Trustees will:

- create and approve this document and ensure that is adopted correctly throughout the school
- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality objectives
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the equalities plan annually and make any amendments to improve on the plan when and where necessary
- ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child
- report to parents, carers, and the wider community on the progress of the school's equality plan through the school prospectus, the school website, and the school's annual report.

The Headteacher

The headteacher, will:

- promote the equality policy both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school
- report back to the Trustees on how the plan is working and any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs
- create an environment where staff feel they can be themselves
- educate parents on their responsibility in promoting equality

Staff

School staff will:

- ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this plan and the school's policy towards all types of discrimination
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to pupils

- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their line managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed, and action taken where necessary.
- strive to be fair in dealings with children and parents
- value and respect each child

Pupils

Pupils at Unique Academy will:

- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination
- promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site
- report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred
- work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in Unique Academy's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**
- set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger pupils and their peers.

Parents, Guardians, And Visitors

Parents, carers, and visitors to Unique Academy are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with Unique Academy's equality policy and support the scheme by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home
- take part in any consultations relating to Unique Academy's equality policy
- attend any relevant meetings, workshops, induction, trips, assemblies and other awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to relating to Unique Academy's equality policy
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- respect and follow our equality policy when visiting Unique Academy.

Key Groups At Risk

At Unique Academy, we recognise that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

Race

Definition of race

Race can be defined as a group of people with similar physical characteristics, language, history etc and are considered as belonging to the same type.

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Teach our pupils that everyone is equal in the sight of Allaah, regardless of their race, through discussions in circle time and assemblies, and through study of Islamic history, pupils will learn that some of the companions were also from different parts of the world.
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this policy and plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including the achievement levels of these pupils
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups

Disability

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities

- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Policy and plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them
- Review and revise this scheme every three years

You can find all the information about our school's SEN provision including our provision for inclusion [and reasonable adjustments] in the school's **SEN policy**, **SEN Information Report** and the school's **accessibility plan**.

Gender

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between all people.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Policy and plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

Religion or belief

The Equality Act defines 'religion' as being 'any religion' and 'belief' as any religious or 'non-religious belief'.

Discrimination because of religion or belief means treating a person less favourably than another person is or would be treated, because of their religion or belief, or the religion or belief they are perceived to have, their lack of religion or belief, or the religion or belief, or lack of it, of someone else with whom they are associated. The Equality Act makes it clear that unlawful religious discrimination can include discrimination against another person of the same religion or belief as the discriminator.

Sexual orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

Promoting Equality and Social Awareness in School and Within the Local Community

Community cohesion

At Unique Academy, we expect all students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of.

Inclusion

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds. New pupils to the school should be supported through a 'buddy' system.

Classroom language and the school culture should foster a sense of community and respect for all.

Pupil voice

Through our support of student voices, we encourage our pupils to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our children how to engage in mature social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between pupils

from different year groups, pupils and staff, and pupils and the wider community. Our daily Halaqah lessons where pupils are provided opportunities to express their ideas, is a key part of supporting pupil voice.

Recruitment

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

Staff

Equal opportunities for staff

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community wherever possible;
- as an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce including the duty to make reasonable adjustments;
- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Staff Discipline and Suspension

Unique Academy is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and anyone not adhering to the school values is held to account through our **staff discipline, conduct, and grievance policy**.

The education, growth and development of our pupils is our foremost priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for pupils, after investigation, will be disciplined. Unique Academy's **staff appraisal policy** provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance.

We hope that staff will feel confident to voice concerns in a confidential manner and that they will trust the school to deal with their concerns fully, promptly, and fairly. The school puts great faith in all its employees and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school **behaviour policy** takes full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We closely monitor data on absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and will take action to address any concerns that arise in this area.

Read our school **attendance and behaviour policies** for more information on the processes surrounding these topics.

The Curriculum

At Unique Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all children have equal access to the thematic curriculum regardless of their background. This is done in the following ways:

English, Maths and Science: All pupils will take part in the core subject lessons, learning alongside their peers. Pupils with additional learning needs will be supported through appropriate planning, differentiation, and resources to ensure that they are able to access the curriculum and make progress.

History and Geography: All pupils will take part in History and Geography lessons and activities regardless of ability.

ACDT (Arts & Crafts and Design and Technology): All pupils will have the opportunity to learn and develop skills in Arts and Crafts as well as Design and Technology lessons, regardless of their ability or background.

Computing: All pupils will have the opportunity to take part in computing activities in class and will not be discriminated against due to their background or ability

Qur'aan: All pupils will be supported to learn and make progress in their study of Qur'aan, regardless of their background.

Arabic: All pupils at Unique Academy will learn Classical Arabic language. They will be taught in order to develop skills in the language and make progress.

Halaqah (including PSHE, RE, Citizenship: All pupils will be encouraged to participate during class discussions. Pupils' contributions and opinions are valued and respected. This principle will be reinforced through ground rules at the beginning of the lesson as well as reminders during the Halaqah as well.

PE: All pupils will be able to take part in PE lessons, regardless of their background

Monitoring and review

This single equality plan will be reviewed annually by the Trustees, unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving members of the school community or new legislation). Trustees will review how effective it is in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Trustees will also review evidence that it is being put into practice in school by staff and pupils, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

Information will be gathered through:

- identification of children, parents, and staff of the school representing the different protected characteristics. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet security of information requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- children's views are actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- records of bullying on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development, and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage

The Headteacher will provide **monitoring reports** for review by the Trustees. These will include:

- progress against targets relating to equality and future plans
- school population
- recruitment and retention
- key initiatives to further community cohesion

Outcomes

At Unique Academy, when our analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an action plan will be put in place to aid these outcomes. Action plans will outline:

- objectives and specific actions to be taken
- success criteria
- timescales
- who has lead responsibility
- monitoring that will take place
- specified dates for review.

Reporting on our progress

At Unique Academy, we will share information that we gather for monitoring equality by including statistics at the beginning of this policy. The statistics will be regarding:

- The number of pupils at the school
- The number of girls
- The number of boys
- The number of SEN
- The number of EAL

The outcomes of this equality plan and updated school action plan (and any updates) will be published on the school's website.

Signed by: *Hawwa Mbombo*
Headteacher

Date: 01/01/2024

This document will be reviewed:

- after incidents that relate to, or impact on, equality in school
- after any significant changes to the workplace, working practices or staffing.

Appendix A

Protected Characteristic	Action to be taken	How it will be monitored	Who is responsible for implementation	Timeframes	Early Success Indicators
All	Publish and promote equality plan on website, newsletters etc	Include reference in annual survey of parents/staff	Headteacher	Ongoing with review after survey	Staff are aware of aims of policy and implement them throughout school. Parents acknowledge plan and question impact in survey
All	Monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils	Achievement data analysed by race, gender and disability	Head teacher / Trustees	Termly	Analysis of teacher assessments / termly data demonstrates the gap is narrowing for equality groups

Protected Characteristics¹ Incidents: Termly Report Form

Autumn / Spring / Summer Term	Year:
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I confirm that there have been Protected Characteristic Incidents altogether during the school term. The breakdown down is as follows:

	on race		on disability		on gender
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I enclose a copy of the relevant pages from the Protected Characteristic Incidents Log-Book.

(Please complete this form even if there are no incidents reported this term)

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools as from April 2012 to publish information to show their compliance with the Act. This does not include a duty to report incidents to the Local Authority but to do so would be one way for schools to demonstrate their awareness of equality legislation and the due regard they are required to have.

¹ These are age, disability, ethnicity and race gender, gender identity and transgender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual identity and orientation. Age and marriage and civil partnership are deemed not to be relevant to pupils/students but are relevant to staff.

Incidents Log-Book Log				
Date and time	Victim's initials	Alleged perpetrator's initials	Brief details and actions action	Protected characteristic