Gothic Mede Academy

Equality Guidance

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Ratified	Principal
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GMA Equality Guidance V2

The Gothic Mede Equality guidance has been written in line with the **Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) Equality policy**.

Rationale and Aim

Gothic Mede Academy (GMA) is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils/students, staff, parents, and carers receiving services from the academies, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. GMA aims to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the academies feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in academy life.

1. Guidance Relating to School Policies

Admissions and Exclusions

- **Admissions:** Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on protected characteristics (as defined by s149 of the Equality Act 2010).
- **Exclusions:** Exclusions always follow the GMA Behaviour Policy. GMA closely monitors exclusions/suspensions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with. This includes adherence to statutory guidance on improving school attendance.

Teaching and Learning

GMA aims to provide all children with the opportunity to achieve, excel, and reach their potential. To do this, the academy will:

- Ensure that the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) completes the mandatory National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for SENCOs within three years of taking up the post.
- Ensure equality of access for all children and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Have high expectations and aspirations for all students.
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender, and disability to address any gaps in progress.
- Take account of the achievement of all children when planning future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the academy population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexuality, and disability, without stereotyping in teaching resources, promotional materials, website, and prospectus.
- Take positive steps to decolonise the curriculum (so ALL children see themselves represented in the curriculum via deliberate representation).
- Promote attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour or prejudice in assemblies, class activities, notice boards, displays, and social media.
- Provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child’s education.

- Encourage discussion of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues which reflect on social stereotypes through curriculum delivery.
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole academy population, which are inclusive and reflective of all children.
- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which support is provided to individuals and groups of children.

Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins (EU-derived protection explicitly retained by the Equality Act 2010 Amendment Regulations 2023).

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with GMA's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan.

The Equality Act 2010 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'.

Gender Identity

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010 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 female and male pupils and between women and men, including transgender people. A Transgender person has a gender identity or gender expression that differs from their assigned or biological sex.

GMA will actively seek to:

- Promote equality between genders.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment.

Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999: The Equality Act 2010 states that sex discrimination is when a person is treated differently because of their sex. Direct discrimination happens when, because of one's sex, someone treats them worse than someone of the opposite sex who is in a similar situation. Indirect discrimination happens when an organisation has a policy or way of working that puts a person at a disadvantage because of their sex.

Individuals who intend to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender reassignment are protected from discrimination. Less favourable treatment relating to absences arising from gender reassignment is unlawful.

Discrimination: The Equality Act 2010 states that a school must not discriminate against a student because of their Transgender status. Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion, or practice applies to everyone but puts a person with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage without legitimate justification.

Sexual Orientation / Religion or Belief

The Equality Act 2010 made provision for regulations to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

Individuals, in relation to religious belief or lack thereof, will not be discriminated against. GMA will actively seek to:

- Promote understanding of religions and belief.
- Recognise the positive contribution that religion/belief can make to our school community.

Fostering and Adoption

Pupils undertaking the Foster to Adopt and/or adoption process will be made to feel safe and secure in their identity and family. Staff will acknowledge that family is created via different means and avoid implying that 'real' family derives only from birth. Changes in status, name, or contact-related absences will be managed sensitively.

Tackling Discrimination

Harassment or victimisation because of any protected characteristic is unacceptable. All staff are expected to challenge prejudice and stereotyping and support diverse student needs.

All incidents are reported to the Principal, and racist incidents are reported termly to the Governing Body and Local Authority.

Types of Discriminatory Incidents include:

- Physical assault based on colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, sex, or gender identity;
- Use of derogatory names, insults, and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or discriminatory graffiti/badges/insignia;
- Sexual harassment (unwanted sexual comments, touching, or sending images);
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse, threats, or incitement to discriminate/bully;
- Discriminatory comments or recruitment to discriminatory groups;
- Ridicule of difference (food, music, religion, dress, etc.).

2. Guidance Relating to Procedure

- **Changing/Toilet Facilities:** Unisex toilet provision is available at the academy.
- **Academy Uniform:** Students follow the Academy Uniform Policy, which offers a broad range of options for all genders, including gender-neutral options.
- **Reporting & Monitoring:** Incidents can be reported to any staff member and are logged/monitored on school systems to inform policy improvements.
- **Publishing Objectives:** LGB reviews equality objectives annually, with updates published on the GMA website.

3. Document Revision History

Author / Editor	Action / Status	Date	Next Review Date
Alison Sugden	Authored Initial Guidance	November 2022	November 2023
Alison Sugden	Updated Guidance	September 2025	September 2026
Alison Sugden	**Reviewed & Updated**	**November 2026**	**November 2027**