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FOUR STONES GATEWAY TRUST

EQUALITY POLICY For Students

DATE POLICY WAS APPROVED	20.10.2025
DATE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED	Spring 2027
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW	Executive Headteacher

FOUR STONES GATEWAY TRUST

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Four Stones Gateway Trust is a company limited by guarantee registration number 9115941

Key Definitions

All policies incorporate the following schools or organisations within Four Stones Gateway Trust ('the Trust'):

- Clee Hill Community Academy
- Cleobury Mortimer Primary School
- Haybridge High School and Sixth Form
- Haybridge Teaching School Hub
- Haybridge SCITT
- King Charles I School
- Lacon Childe School
- SHaW (Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Wolverhampton) Maths Hub
- Stottesdon CofE Primary School
- TDMS (The De Montfort School)
- Any other schools or organisations that may join the Trust from time to time and not listed above.

The terms Academy, School, Organisation and Trust are considered interchangeable in the context of all Trust policies.

Where appropriate, in this Policy the term:

“CEO” includes the Chief Executive Officer

“CFOO” includes the Chief Financial Officer

“Trust Senior Leadership Team” includes Executive Headteachers, Headteachers, strategic operational leads and Teaching School/SCITT Directors.

“Headteacher” includes the appropriate School Headteacher.

“Trustees or Trust Board” are appointed Trustees who oversee the business of Four Stones Gateway Trust, agreeing the overarching strategic direction and ensuring robust governance.

“Local Academy Boards (LAB)” are appointed Governors at a local level associated with the Trust's Worcestershire Schools. LAB Governors act as advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

“Local Governing Bodies (LGB)” are appointed Governors at a local level associated with the Trust's Shropshire Schools. LGB Governors are advocates for their school's Safeguarding, SEND, Standards and Stakeholder engagement.

“Chair” responsible for leading the board and ensuring its effectiveness.

“Stakeholders” are any individuals or companies who are invested in the welfare and success of the Trust and/or School and its students, including staff members, students, parents, community members, LAB, LGB or Trust members, trade unions, local business leaders etc.

The Four Stones Gateway Trust (the Trust) is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students. We will ensure that we do not discriminate against students on the basis of:

- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex or sexual orientation.
- Socio-economic background
- Any combination of those listed above (the protected characteristics).

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Equality and diversity principles will be embedded in our daily practices, policies and the processes of decision-making, including:

- Admissions, induction, and attendance.
- Students' progress and achievement.
- Students' personal development and wellbeing, particularly in relation to safeguarding.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the wider community.
- Behaviour management (including suspensions and exclusions)
- Staff recruitment and professional development.
- Curriculum access and participation.
- Teaching styles and strategies.

The attainment and achievement of students will be monitored by group as appropriate to the context of the school. We will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

This Policy and all associated procedures apply to all staff (including volunteers and students on placement), young people and visitors at our academies and should be read in conjunction with the following trust-wide policies or policies of the respective school: e.g. SEN, admissions, uniform, behaviour, exclusions, complaints, employment policies, accessibility plan, Equality Action Plan.

Equality and the Law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Equality Act (2010). Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a student or prospective student by treating them less favorably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic'. The protected characteristics are:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

The following groups have been identified as key recipients in terms of the implementation of this Policy:

- Looked after children or children in need.
- Children with SEND.
- Children at risk of exclusion.
- Children from an ethnic group, including those from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller background.
- Children missing in education.

- Children with medical conditions affecting attendance at school.
- School age/teenage parents.
- Young carers.
- Children within, or at risk of joining, the criminal justice system (i.e. those at risk of child criminal exploitation).
- Children with mental health issues.
- Children in receipt of free school meals.
- Children living in areas of deprivation.
- Gifted and talented children.
- Children who are questioning their gender or who have expressed a desire to be treated as non-binary or transition to a different gender from that assigned at birth.
- Children who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not, however, apply to students, and so schools within The Trust are free to arrange students in classes based on their age group with appropriate, age-related, materials.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty which applies to public bodies, school including both LA maintained and Academies. As such, we must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications. Appendix A shows how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Trust Board

- The Trust Board has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics.
- The Trust Board take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents/carers and students.
- The Trust Board welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background or protected characteristic.
- The Trust Board ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief or the fact that they are pregnant or are undergoing gender reassignment.

The role of the Chief Executive Officer

It is the Chief Executive Officer's role to implement the Equality Policy, and they are supported by the trustees in doing so.

The role of the Headteacher

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the Equality Policy and they are supported by the Chief Executive Officer in doing so.
- The Headteacher's role is to ensure that the Equality Objectives are published in line with statutory guidance.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy, undertake relevant training and apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all Staff in each School

All staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the Equality Policy and objectives.

- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism, or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

Mainstreaming Equality into Policy and Practice

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, schools in the Trust operate equality of opportunity in their day-to-day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all of our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students;
- Monitor attainment and achievement data by group as appropriate to the context of the school;
- Take account of the attainment and achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population, and local community in terms of race, gender, and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations, and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students' background and needs.

Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with The Trust Special Educational Needs Policy and the individual school's Accessibility Plan. The Trustees are committed to meeting their duties under disability equality legislation and aim to follow the good practice set out in the statutory code of practice and guidance which supports the legislation.

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'. 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.

We recognise that some disability organisations recommend that all students with an Education, Health and Care plan and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to students with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on

their day-to-day activities. We do, therefore, consider carefully self or parent/carer definitions that seek to categorise students as 'disabled' under the Act.

The Equality Act 2010 places 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; and
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments.

The Trust will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments where there is a need to ensure that a disabled person has the same access to everything as a non-disabled person, as far as is reasonable. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by a disabled individual, as far as is reasonable.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments covers all aspects of school life, including the way the curriculum is taught, classroom organisation, and timetabling, access to facilities, clubs and visits, sports and policies.

In making reasonable adjustments, the Trust is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled students. Staff will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

The Trust will monitor the physical features of the academies' premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the Trust will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. Please see the Accessibility Plan for further information, which can be found on the respective school's website.

Parents should notify the Headteacher in writing if they are aware or suspect that their child has a disability, and provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information about their child's disability upon request. Providing such information will enable the school to support the student as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. Every school will have due regard to any request made by a parent or student (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

Involvement of Disabled People

We will use information collected the progress and inclusion of disabled students and seek their views and the views of significant adults about the effect of its activities on disabled people to help it to judge how well it is performing in meeting the needs of disabled people, particularly as part of wider impact assessments, and in identifying any further action required to improve disability equality.

Data collection sheets are completed by parents/carers in each school which request information related to protected characteristics.

Developing a Voice for Disabled Stakeholders

We follow good practice by enabling disabled students, parents/carers and staff to participate in public life by involving them in developing and monitoring this scheme and its action plan.

Gender Equality

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 female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

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

Sexual Orientation

The Trust is aware of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 towards students identifying as transgender and non-binary and will be sensitive to their individual needs, whilst also recognising the needs and sensitivities of other students. Students who have confirmed that they have commenced the process of transitioning and, therefore, fall under the protected characteristic of gender reassignment will be provided with appropriate pastoral care and support.

All academies have separate toilet facilities for biological male and female students aged 8 years or over, and separate changing accommodation and showers for those aged 11 and over. Some of our academies have unisex/gender neutral/accessible toilet and changing facilities for all students who wish to use them, comprising of a single room for use by one student at a time, that can be secured from the inside.

When supporting students who are questioning their gender identity the school will:

- Consider its statutory safeguarding duties and the need to promote the welfare of all children.
- Take a cautious approach following requests to support social transition (i.e. change pronouns, names etc. to the gender that differs from the one assigned at birth), with the aim of working alongside parents and seeking clinical input if there is any doubt about what is in the best interests of the child.
- Subject to any safeguarding and data protection considerations, inform parents of any disclosures around gender identity relating to their child, other than in exceptional circumstances; e.g., where staff have reasonable grounds to conclude that doing so would put the child at risk of harm.
- Respect both gender-critical beliefs and gender-affirming beliefs, whilst ensuring that the school remains a respectful place where bullying of any kind is not to be tolerated.
- Follow guidance published by the Department for Education, the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, and advice from any relevant sporting bodies, and comply with all legal duties relating to biological sex.

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths/beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds.

Tackling Discrimination

Harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a student's individual circumstances.

Staff, Trustees and Governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favorably because of a protected characteristic.

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.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to the student support team and on to the Headteacher where necessary.

What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person".

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favorably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a prohibited act") in connection with the Act. E.g. making an allegation of discrimination.

Types of Discriminatory Incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults, and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender, or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

Responding To and Reporting Incidents

All incidents of discriminatory treatment, bullying and harassment must be reported to senior staff and recorded as soon as is reasonably possible (within 24 hours of the incident). All bullying-related incidents (confirmed or otherwise) will be addressed in accordance with our Behaviour Policy (including Anti-Bullying).

We will make it clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, students and parents/carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from the parent/carer questionnaires, parents' evenings, and parent/carer forum meetings;
- Feedback from staff surveys or meetings;
- Feedback from the school council, tutor time, PSHE lessons and whole school surveys;
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on mentoring and support; and
- Feedback at Trust Board and LAB/LGB meetings.

The trustees expect all members of the Trust to be committed to this Policy and that visitors will comply with it. It accepts responsibility for ensuring that this Policy is implemented in every aspect of school life. If there is a breach of the Policy, the individual school will take appropriate action. This may include the following.

In the case of students breaching the Policy:

- staff dealing with the incident will complete an incident report form/behaviour log.
- the perpetrator will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant Behaviour Policy
- the consequences of any further breach of conduct will be clearly stated with the ultimate sanction of exclusion.

Serious breaches constitute criminal offences and will be reported to the relevant authorities.

Review of Progress and Impact

Trustees will receive updates from the Chief Executive Officer, and governors will receive updates from the Headteacher. These enable evaluation of the implementation and impact of actions taken to achieve the equality objectives.

Appendix A

Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

We will:

- Develop and adapt its procedures on anti-bullying to include equality perspectives;
- Support staff to challenge and address any bullying and harassment that is based on a person's race, gender, or ethnicity;
- Keep a record and report how these incidents are dealt with to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis; and
- Review our approach to race, gender and disability bullying and harassment whenever we review our Policy on behaviour.

Monitoring impact

- We will collect and analyse evidence and data on students' attainment, achievement, attendance, and participation by group as appropriate to context, and use this to inform strategies to raise standards; and
- Individual schools will publish annually one or more specific and measurable equality objectives- please see template in Appendix B

Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We will ensure that:

- Student achievement is monitored by group as appropriate to context and any trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action to narrow the gap are addressed;
- All staff are aware of the Equality Policy;
- The talents of disabled students are recognised, and representation on the programmes fully reflects the school population in terms of race and gender;
- There is an inclusive approach to ensuring all students are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school;
- Disabled children can take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including educational visits and journeys, lunchtime activities, PE, and assemblies;
- Extended school activities such as breakfast and after-school clubs take into account student needs and access issues and students attending reflect the diversity of the school population in terms of race, gender, disability, and socio-economic status; and
- Feedback from staff, students, parents/carers will continue to be involved in the future development of the Equality Policy.

We will provide:

- Extra and additional support for students who are under-achieving, in order to make progress in their learning and their personal well-being;
- Additional support for parents/carers of under-achieving young people; and
- Additional support for disabled parents/carers and staff to help them to play a full part in the life of the school.

Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We will:

- Promote positive images which reflect the diversity of the school and community in terms of race, gender, and disability, for example in assemblies, books, publications and learning materials and in classroom/corridor display.
- Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the school and support them in their work and career development, and try to reflect the diversity of the school community in its workforce;
 - Actively seek to recruit disabled people to the governing body and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that they can fully participate and contribute;

- Provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends, and families to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relationships, including links with different schools and communities;
- Support disabled students in the period of transition between primary and secondary school to ease the stress of moving and increase familiarity with new surroundings.
- Help children and young people to understand others and value diversity;
- Promote shared values, awareness of human rights and how to apply and defend them; and
- Develop skills of participation and responsible action.

Appendix B: Equality Action Plan

School Based Equality Objectives:

Objective	Progress