



Single Equality Scheme and Objectives



The Stour Federation

1. UNREASONABLE HOSPITALITY AND THE COMMITMENT TO FLOURISHING

This Single Equality Scheme (SES) outlines The Stour Federation's commitment to integrating equality, inclusion, and diversity into all that we do. It incorporates the statutory duties we must meet as a Multi Academy Trust, an employer, and a service provider. Our vision is derived from the principle of Unreasonable Hospitality—an obsessive commitment to making every member of our community feel welcome and valued.

Aligned with our 2030 Strategy North Star of Flourishing, we aim to create an environment where every child, staff member, family, and community partner experiences a deep sense of belonging, safety, value, and inspiration. We believe that true flourishing is only possible when institutional barriers are removed and diversity is celebrated.

By placing an equality perspective in all our policies and practices, we ensure that equality considerations within our academies are embedded in day-to-day practice to tackle discrimination and inequality.

Our commitment to flourishing is realised specifically through our dedication to ensuring a holistic and equitable childhood experience. For our pupils, flourishing means feeling good and functioning well, and we recognise Play as one of the essential "Five Vitamins for Flourishing". We are dedicated to providing a well-rounded education that goes "unreasonably beyond academic outcomes," offering rich opportunities in play. We believe that laughter and play are essential for well-being and learning, directly supporting our duty to advance equality of opportunity for every child to grow and succeed.

2. THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

The Stour Federation recognises its duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010. As a public body, we must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics—between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3. PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of the following protected characteristics:

- Age (relevant primarily as an employer, but not in relation to pupils 3–11).
- Disability (including the duty to make reasonable adjustments and provide auxiliary aids).
- Gender / Sex.
- Gender reassignment.
- Being Pregnant or on Maternity leave.
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin).

- Religion or belief (and having no belief).
- Sexual orientation.
- Civil partnership & marital status (relevant primarily for staff, and in teaching about marriage).

4. OUR APPROACH TO EDUCATION

As a Trust composed exclusively of primary schools (age 3–11), we ensure that education regarding protected characteristics is delivered in an age-appropriate, sensitive, reasonable, respectful, and balanced way.

The No Outsiders Approach

The Stour Federation’s Inclusion Strategy integrates the No Outsiders approach across all schools. This approach is explicitly used to fulfill our statutory duty to foster good relations and ensure that every child feels safe, valued, and that they belong.

The No Outsiders mission aligns with our strategy by:

- Building confident educators to discuss diversity and equality.
- Empowering Children to become decent human beings and critical thinkers.
- Developing community cohesion by promoting understanding and respect for diversity, which is critical to achieving Systemness across our partnership.





Prioritising Human Connection and Digital Wellbeing

The Federation acknowledges that the rise of digital communication and increased screen time is leaving people lonelier and more apart than ever before, negatively impacting the innate human need for belonging. Consequently, our approach to technology, governed by the Human Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence driver, is an explicit method of fulfilling our statutory duty to foster good relations.

We are committed to fostering uniquely human skills—such as communication, collaboration, and critical thinking—through rich and engaging learning experiences infused with hospitality, love, and connection. This commitment underpins our strategy to ensure that technology complements and amplifies the power of human relationships. Policies promoting a smartphone-free childhood are an operational measure designed to protect and prioritise face-to-face interaction, belonging, and the Socialise with Others vitamin for flourishing, ensuring we are actively removing barriers to community cohesion.

5. ALIGNMENT WITH 2030 STRATEGIC DRIVERS

Our Equality Objectives directly support our strategic goal of achieving human flourishing for all by leveraging our four strategic drivers:

| Strategic Driver | Strategic Focus | PSED Aims Supported |
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|  <p>Wellbeing and Learning</p> | <p>Fostering a supportive environment where every child and staff member feels safe and valued; prioritising staff flourishing.</p> | <p>Advance Equality of Opportunity; Foster Good Relations.</p> |
|  <p>Human Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence</p> | <p>Fostering uniquely human skills (e.g., critical thinking, collaboration) infused with hospitality and connection; valuing diverse perspectives (Synergize).</p> | <p>Foster Good Relations; Advance Equality of Opportunity.</p> |
|  <p>Equity-Equality Investments</p> | <p>Strategic resource allocation to address individual needs and close achievement gaps; championing dignity and respect for all.</p> | <p>Advance Equality of Opportunity; Eliminate Discrimination.</p> |
|  <p>Systemness</p> | <p>Working collaboratively, sharing best practices, and building strong relationships with parents and the community.</p> | <p>Foster Good Relations; Eliminate Discrimination</p> |

6. ACADEMY TRUST OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been identified to drive our strategy and comply with the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010. They are specific and measurable and will be reviewed and published at least every four years.

| Objective (Wildly Important Goals by 2030) | Aligned 2030 Driver(s) | Success Measures/Monitoring |
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| <p>1. Advancing Attainment Equity To actively close the gaps in attainment and achievement for all pupils, especially those eligible for</p> | <p>Equity-Equality Investments</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the percentage achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally. |

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| <p>Pupil Premium (PP), those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and pupils from minority ethnic groups, thereby ensuring an equitable education for all.</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average pupil outcomes for SEND and PP pupils across the Trust are above national averages. |
| <p>2. Promoting Inclusion and Belonging (Pupil and Staff) To reduce the number of suspensions and permanent exclusions for pupils with protected characteristics (especially SEND and Pupil Premium pupils), and to cultivate a nurturing, supportive environment where rich opportunities in play are provided and all staff report a strong sense of belonging and feel their voice is heard.</p> | <p>Wellbeing and Learning</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in suspension and exclusion rates across the Trust below the national average. • Increase the percentage of staff reporting a strong sense of belonging to 90% or higher in annual surveys. |
| <p>3. Curriculum and Anti-Prejudice Education To embed the No Outsiders approach alongside our Leader in Me curriculum to cultivate positive attitudes to diversity, teach the RESPECT values of Ethics and Relationships, and eliminate all forms of prejudice-based bullying and discrimination, whilst prioritising the development of human skills (communication, critical thinking, collaboration) over digital dependency.</p> | <p>Human Intelligence and AI Systemness</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual audit of curriculum implementation to evidence alignment with Trust Curriculum Principles and the six global competencies (6Cs). • Reduction in reported homophobic/transphobic, racist, and disability-related incidents in line with our Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policies. |
| <p>4. Workforce Equity and Development To use HR data to identify and act on trends to close gaps between staff who share protected characteristic(s) and those who do not, and to ensure all senior leaders and directors benefit from Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training.</p> | <p>Equity-Equality Investments Wellbeing and Learning</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve a greater understanding of HR data (e.g., pay, retention, flexible working uptake) to enable analysis and action to close identified gaps. • Increase the percentage of staff reporting they feel supported in their professional development and career progression to 90% or higher. |
| <p>5. Physical and Digital Accessibility To continuously improve the physical environment and digital accessibility across all primary sites, ensuring</p> | <p>Equity-Equality Investments Human Intelligence and</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility plans are reviewed and implemented to improve the physical environment. • Digital Champions empower colleagues to use digital tools |

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| <p>that all pupils, staff, and visitors with disabilities have equitable access to facilities, learning, and curriculum materials, and to ensure that digital wellbeing strategies (e.g., restriction of personal devices) are balanced with the statutory duty to provide auxiliary aids and reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.</p> | <p>AI</p> | <p>(including AI) to support adaptive teaching practices for all pupils.</p> |
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7. PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

The Stour Federation is dedicated to providing an exceptional, inclusive education that prepares all children for successful lives as responsible, active citizens in modern Britain. This commitment underpins our entire educational provision and directly supports our North Star of Flourishing, ensuring every member of our community experiences a deep sense of belonging through the practice of Unreasonable Hospitality.

This focus aligns with our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to foster good relations across all characteristics—between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Fundamental Principles of Life in Modern Britain

We aim to develop and deepen pupils’ understanding of the fundamental principles that define a harmonious and democratic society:

- **Democracy:** Pupils learn how individuals can influence decision-making, understanding the importance of having a voice, and developing the skills required to participate effectively in public life as young people and adults. This is fostered through leadership roles and opportunities for pupils to express their views.
- **The Rule of Law:** We teach children to recognise legal boundaries, respect the civil and criminal law of England, and understand the consequences of their behaviour and actions.
- **Individual Liberty:** We empower pupils to exercise their individual rights and freedoms safely, developing the confidence, resilience, and knowledge necessary to keep themselves mentally and physically healthy.
- **Mutual Respect and Tolerance:** We promote the appreciation of differences in the world and its people, cultivating positive attitudes towards the richness provided by individual diversity and cultural variety. We ensure pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 and do not tolerate bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Embedding Values through Strategy and Curriculum

To ensure these principles are ingrained in our culture, they are explicitly integrated into our strategies, curriculum, and ethos:

- **No Outsiders Approach:** Our Inclusion Strategy employs the No Outsiders approach across all schools. This approach is fundamental to fulfilling our duty to foster good relations by promoting understanding and respect for diversity and developing community cohesion.
- **The Trust’s RESPECT Values:** We embed the values of Ethics and Relationships to help

pupils develop their character, reflect wisely, and behave with integrity, enabling them to cooperate consistently well with others.

- **Leader in Me:** This curriculum instills the personal leadership and self-mastery skills (such as Be Proactive and Think Win-Win) that underpin responsible citizenship. This empowers children to take ownership of their choices and contribute positively to society.
- **Age-Appropriate Learning:** As a primary Trust, we ensure that education regarding protected characteristics and fundamental principles is delivered in an age-appropriate, sensitive, reasonable, respectful, and balanced way.

Fostering Responsible and Resilient Citizens

Through the Curriculum and Anti-Prejudice Education objective, The Stour Federation ensures that pupils are equipped to thrive in a global society by being taught how to navigate complex social interactions and keep themselves safe:

- **Safety and Risk:** We teach pupils to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being, including risks related to radicalisation, exploitation, and inappropriate use of technology and social media, making them aware of the support that is available.
- **Ethical Teaching:** We ensure that the curriculum content and teaching methods do not promote extremist views or partisan political views, and instead offer pupils a balanced presentation of views when political issues are brought to their attention.
- **Emotional Development:** Our commitment to Wellbeing and Learning ensures pupils develop their capacity to manage their own emotions and resolve conflicts, contributing to a supportive and nurturing environment where every child feels safe and valued.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Trust Board

The Trust Board holds the ultimate legal responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and compliance with discrimination law, as they are vicariously liable for the actions of their employees.

Trust Board Directors will:

- Have ultimate legal responsibility for ensuring that the Trust and all its academies comply fully with the Equality Act 2010 and adhere to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
- Monitor and hold the CEO and Senior Leaders to account for the Trust's compliance with equalities legislation and the effective delivery of equitable outcomes, particularly concerning the strategic Equality Objectives (WIGs).
- Adopt and periodically review the Single Equality Scheme and its associated policies (such as the People Strategy, Inclusion Strategy, and Bullying and Harassment Policy) to ensure they remain effective and aligned with the Trust's vision.
- Ensure that all recruitment and appointment processes give due regard to this Scheme to prevent discrimination and promote the recruitment of diverse and talented individuals, consistent with the People Strategy.
- Ensure senior leaders and directors benefit from Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training, covering complex topics like intersectional approaches and diversifying the curriculum, which is key to Objective 4 (Workforce Equity and Development).
- Strive to make Trust-level communication and policies as inclusive as possible for staff, parents, carers, and pupils, reflecting the commitment to Unreasonable Hospitality.

Local Academy Councils

The Local Academy Council (LAC) Governors are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the SES at the individual school level.

LAC Governors will:

- Ensure the school complies with all relevant equality legislation and that the Single Equality Scheme and its procedures are rigorously followed.
- Monitor and challenge the Headteacher on the effective implementation of the SES and the Inclusion Strategy within their academy, ensuring that the culture supports the Flourishing North Star (belonging, safety, value, and inspiration).
- Hold the Headteacher to account for meeting the statutory duty to prevent all forms of prejudice-based bullying and discrimination, including those based on race, disability, and sexual orientation (including homophobic/transphobic bullying).
- Review the academy's procedures for dealing with hate incidents, ensuring that all reported incidents are followed up promptly, fully, and sensitively, consistent with maintaining a safe environment.
- Ensure the school's Accessibility Plan (part of Objective 5: Physical and Digital Accessibility) is regularly reviewed and implemented effectively to ensure equitable access to facilities and the curriculum for pupils, staff, and visitors with disabilities.
- Demonstrate commitment to ensuring inclusivity for pupils and users, and responsiveness to their needs based on protected characteristics.

Headteachers

Headteachers have the operational responsibility for implementing the SES, leading the culture, and managing all staff and pupil-related incidents.

Headteachers will:

- Have overall operational responsibility for making sure the SES and its detailed procedures are understood, implemented, and followed effectively within their academy.
- Model the Trust's RESPECT Values and the principles of Unreasonable Hospitality to set an appropriate standard of behaviour and professionalism for all staff.
- Ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities under the scheme and arrange necessary training and support (such as DEI, Adaptive Teaching, and Safeguarding training) to build collective expertise and confidence.
- Take appropriate, timely, and proportional action in all cases of discrimination, harassment, and prejudice-motivated bullying (including racist, homophobic/transphobic, and disability-related bullying), ensuring such incidents are fully investigated and recorded.
- Ensure the curriculum promotes the principles of equal opportunity, specifically embedding the No Outsiders approach to foster good relations and promoting respect for diverse people and lifestyles in an age-appropriate way.
- Produce regular reports for the LAC and CEO outlining compliance, incident monitoring, and progress towards the local actions supporting the Trust's Equality Objectives.
- Ensure that visitors and contractors are aware of and adhere to the Trust's Single Equality Scheme.

All Staff

All staff members are personally responsible for adhering to the policy and promoting equal opportunities in their daily conduct, supporting the creation of a strong, positive school culture.

All staff will:

- Adhere to the principles of the Single Equality Scheme and the People Strategy at all times, recognising their personal responsibility for promoting equal opportunities.
- Actively promote a positive and inclusive culture by embodying Unreasonable Hospitality and the RESPECT Values, contributing to an environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and that they belong.
- Be able to recognise bias and stereotyping and avoid discrimination against any pupil, colleague, or visitor based on protected characteristics.
- Report any racist, homophobic/transphobic, or other hate incidents immediately, ensuring they are documented and addressed through the school's procedures.
- Take up all training and learning opportunities related to equality, diversity, and adaptive teaching to develop their expertise and support the objective of advancing attainment equity.
- Promote equal opportunities and good relations between people of different groups in all their interactions, fostering a supportive environment where staff are encouraged to bring their whole selves to do the best work of their lives.