



SIKH ACADEMIES TRUST  
Faith Inspired Education

# EQUALITY POLICY

Date of change	Overview of change
13/5	3. Definitions added against each legislation
13/5	5. Updated roles and responsibilities
13/5	9.1 Clarification on what constitutes discrimination
13/5	10. Inclusion of information regarding Sexual Harassment
14/5	2. Updated Trust vision and values, Mission statement and Trust values where two separate sections and have been combined.
22/5	5. Updated support staff with disabilities. Clarity on reporting by Headteachers through LAB

## **1. Overview**

Sikh Academies Trust (the “Trust”) is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background.

The Trust aims 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. The Trust will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At our schools we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, work and visit here.

The Trust aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

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






## 2. SAT Vision and Values

Through faith-inspired education, our vision is to nurture well-rounded individuals who demonstrate academic excellence, social responsibility, and are spiritually grounded. We are committed to providing a holistic education that balances intellectual, personal, spiritual and social development, underpinned by the three pillars of Sikhi.

<b>Kirat Karna</b> <i>(Working Honestly and with Integrity)</i>	<b>Vand Chakna</b> <i>(Sharing Selflessly with Others)</i>	<b>Naam Japna</b> <i>(repeating and internalising God's Name with every breath)</i>
Staff and pupils are encouraged to work diligently, with honesty, and a strong moral compass. At SAT, this means leading by example, acting with professionalism, and maintaining high standards in all that we do. We cultivate an environment where effort is valued, and every contribution is made with integrity and purpose.	This principle underpins our culture of Seva (selfless service) and community. Whether it's through Langar (free community kitchen), charitable initiatives, or peer mentoring, we instill in staff and pupils the importance of supporting and uplifting others. At SAT, sharing extends beyond material resources—it includes time, knowledge, care, and kindness.	At SAT, spiritual development is integrated into everyday life. Through reflection, Simran, and mindful practices, staff and pupils are supported in nurturing a deeper sense of purpose, calmness, and resilience. This principle helps cultivate inner strength, gratitude, and a connection to values that transcend the classroom.

## The Trust Values

### Our Values

				
<b>INTEGRITY</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>LEARNING</b>	<b>INNOVATION</b>
We do the right things and do things right	We speak with respect and act kindly with compassion towards a collective good	We foster a diverse, inclusive community through positive collaboration and fun	We are committed to learning through curiosity, wisdom and knowledge	We stretch towards excellence and challenge ourselves to achieve with determination
Underpinned by Sikh ethos that is built upon the three pillars of Sikhism; Kirat Karna, Vand Chakna and Naam Japna representing principles that are important to people of all faiths and no faith				

### 3. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- Human Rights Act 1998 this act makes it unlawful for schools to behave in a way that is not compatible with the provision of the European convention on human rights. Any action taken by the individual human rights must be considered if it is justified and proportionate means of achieving a legitimate end.
- Education Act 2002 (Section 78) this provision requires the governing bodies of schools to ensure that the curriculum promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school society, and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibility is an experience of adult life.
- Education and Inspectors Act 2006 (Section 38 (1)) states that the governing body of a school shall when discharging their functions relating to the conduct of the school promote wellbeing of pupils at the school and community cohesion.
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 this legislation requires schools to set measurable equality objectives to publish information about their performance on inequality annually so that the public can hold them to account.
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3) this provision sets out how the school will support children and young people with special educational needs, social care needs and health needs.
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education
- (England) Regulations 2019 this legislation ensures the school will maintain an appropriate policy in relation to these matters that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- The Worker Protection (Amendment to the Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 this act requires a school to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment staff in the workplace, which could include sexual embarrassment by pupils, parents and other visitors in the schools including contractors.

This policy is also based on DfE guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#). This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic' which are race, disability, sex/gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership and age.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff, students and other members of the Trust community have responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Trust will:

- Ensure that it meets its legal obligations relating to equality and they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this policy,
- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout its schools, including to staff, pupils and parents,
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Headteacher of each school,
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training,
- Ensure that there is a working environment that is accessible and inclusive for all disabled staff members. Reasonable adjustments will be made to employment arrangements or to the premises to enable disabled individuals to continue in their roles, and to ensure equal opportunities for disabled applicants during recruitment and throughout their employment
- Request a report from the Headteacher on progress against the schools compliance with equal opportunity policy, equality objectives and action plan. This report must include a summary of the results of any consultation, quality monitoring and equality impact assessments. This will be reported in LAB through the monitoring documents.

The Headteacher and Executive Headteacher will:

- Effectively communicate and implement this policy,
- Ensuring that pastoral support and student behaviour policies reinforce the Trust's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and that appropriate actions are taken in respect of any student breaches,
- Ensuring that procedures relating to staff recruitment, selection, career development, discipline and grievance are carried out in accordance with the statutory duties to promote equality and eliminate discrimination,
- Holding staff accountable for their behaviour, and providing support and guidance as necessary,
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils,
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to the Trust with any issues.
- Supporting all line managers in ensuring that procedures relating to staff recruitment, selection, career development, discipline and grievance are carried out in accordance with the statutory duties to promote equality and eliminate discrimination,
- When advertising positions and interviewing applicants, the staff will not

discriminate against people with protected characteristics,

- Reporting annually to the trust progress against the schools equality policy, measuring equality objectives, and action plan.
- Ensuring that the school's equality policy is followed consistently by all staff and pupils.
- Ensuring an appropriate consistent action is taken in case of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, hate incidents and hate crimes.

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Promoting equality of opportunity,
- Contributing to a safe and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity,
- Behaving with respect and fairness to all colleagues and students,
- Making the curriculum accessible to all students, addressing their individual needs and abilities and enabling them to realise their full potential,
- Providing guidance and advice that avoids stereotypes and enables students to make informed choices to help them reach their full potential,
- Taking positive action to address any instances of discrimination in a sensitive and consistent manner,
- Make it clear to the children that discrimination is unacceptable
- Be observant of all forms of discrimination,
- Take seriously any child who approaches them with a concern of discrimination.
- Reporting all incidents of harassment/sexual harassment.
- Making themselves aware of the Trusts equality policies especially in respect of harassment.

Students are responsible for:

- Contributing to a safe and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity,
- Treat others with respect,
- Recognise their own responsibility in dealing with and preventing discrimination,
- Report incidents of discrimination and support each other,
- If you suspect someone is being discriminated - tell a teacher about it,
- If you feel you are being discriminated against or treated unfairly, tell your teacher, any member of staff, your friend, anyone at home who will tell the school,
- Any concerns will be dealt with promptly, and fairly, and due consideration will be given to your rights maintaining confidentiality, privacy and dignity.

Parents and Guardians are expected to:

- Make their child aware of the importance of treating people equally

**REMEMBER**

You are NOT TO BLAME for discrimination – DO NOT SUFFER in silence. By telling someone a support plan will be put in place to help solve the problem.

## **5. Eliminating discrimination**

The Trust complies with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Trustees, Local Governors and all staff are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

The Trust monitors, records and deals effectively with incidents of prejudice, bullying and harassment, and for students this includes taking into account the rates of exclusion or behaviour issues among students from particular groups.

The Trust encourages all staff to raise any potential concerns that they may have in respect of how equality, diversity and inclusiveness is managed within the Trust and will investigate all allegations of unacceptable behaviour.



## **6. Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected by a particular characteristic they have,
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic,
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities,
- Monitoring the academic progress of groups with and without protected characteristics and tackling underperformance by any particular group.

## **7. Fostering good relations**

The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Ensuring that lessons across the curriculum promote the Trust's values of knowledge, aspiration and respect, and help students to value differences and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping.
- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of the curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas:
  - Holding assemblies that address relevant issues,
  - Providing opportunities for students to engage with their local community, such as through guest speaker events, school trips or community events,
  - Encouraging all students to participate in extra-curricular activities,
  - Developing links with external organisations that have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics.

## **8. Equality considerations in decision-making**

The Trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. In all of our schools, the Trust will always consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- cuts across any religious holiday,
- is accessible to pupils with disabilities,
- has equivalent facilities for all pupils irrespective of their gender.

## **9. Breach of the policy**

The Trust will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to this policy by students, staff, contractors or visitors. Any instances of non-adherence will be investigated with the intent of resolving matters. Where appropriate, such instances will be considered under the relevant disciplinary or behaviour policy. There is not a separate channel for addressing non-adherence to this policy.

The Trust strongly encourages informal and local resolution of issues or complaints and will facilitate mediation where necessary.

Concerns about breaches of the policy should be raised at a local level in the first instance, with a view to informal and timely resolution. If such attempts to resolve complaints are not successful, or are inappropriate due to the nature of the breach, then

- Students should raise concerns through their Teacher,
- Instances of a student breaching the policy will be investigated and handled in line with the school behaviour policy,
- Employees who believe there has been a breach of this policy may raise this through the Grievance Policy and Procedure

Support is available for students and staff when these procedures are invoked. For students, support is available from the pastoral team. For staff, advice and guidance is available from their line manager, Headteacher or Executive Headteacher. Any visitor who believes there has been a breach of this policy may complain in writing to the Headteacher or Executive Headteacher.

### **9.1 What is a discriminatory incident?**

Discrimination is an act/s or omission to act that has the effect of subjecting an individual to less favourable treatment on the grounds of a person holding a protected characteristic/s.

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 favourably, than when 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.

### **9.2 Types of discriminatory incidents**

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
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation

## **10. Sexual Harassment**

The Trust recognises that there are separate and distinct provisions for the prevention of sexual harassment. This provision sets out the Trust's specific duties in this respect.

Sexual harassment is defined as behaviour which amounts to unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or offensive environment. It can include verbal comments, physical actions, or visual displays, and can occur in various settings within the school. The Trust will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form or in any quarter. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and will not be ignored. This applies to everyone in the organisation, regardless of role or status.

If you experience or witness sexual harassment, you should report it as soon as possible to either your line manager, a more senior manager, the designated lead for sexual harassment, your trade union representative or any other person within the Trust that you feel able to speak to. If you ever have experienced sexual harassment, you may raise this informally with one of the individuals above or you may make a formal grievance in accordance with the Trust's grievance procedure. Whilst it is the choice of the individual there may be some situations which are so serious that the Trust may decide the matter must be dealt with formally.

The Trust acknowledges that harassment may be perpetrated by individuals other than people directly involved with the school which includes members of the public, contractors and parents. In these circumstances the school's disciplinary and grievance procedures will not be effective. Accordingly, if anyone experiences this or witnesses this then a report should be made to any of the individuals set out above and the matter will be dealt with appropriately taking into account the particular circumstances of the case.

The Trust will provide appropriate support for anybody that has been affected by sexual harassment through the use of the school's employee assistance program or if appropriate the school will source external services.

If an individual has to have time off school as a result of being a victim of sexual harassment the school will provide appropriate support. This means that if sickness absence is as a direct result of sexual harassment, this will be paid at full contractual rate and will not count against an employee in relation to the Trust's trigger points within its absence policy.

The Trust will undertake a sexual harassment risk assessment which will examine the potential for sexual harassment to take place within the school at all levels and will undertake to ensure that any actions that have been highlighted in that risk assessment are carried out and that the risk assessment will be reviewed regularly.

## **11. Reporting progress.**

The Trust will monitor the schools equality policy and action plan. The Headteacher will report for the Trust on progress against the equality policy and measurable objectives.

### **Links with other policies**

This Equality policy is linked to the Trust

- School Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy

## Appendix 1: Equality Act 2010 Protected Characteristics

Age	The Act protects people of all ages. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can justify it, i.e. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Age is the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination.
Disability	Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Gender Reassignment	The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected – so a woman who decides to live as a man but does not undergo any medical procedures would be covered. Where transsexual people are absent from work or study because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment, it is discrimination to treat them less favourably than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.
Pregnancy and Maternity	A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.
Race	For the purposes of the Act 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
Religious or Belief	In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief. Discrimination because of religion or belief can occur even where both the discriminator and recipient are of the same religion or belief.
Sex	Both men and women are protected under the Act.
Sexual Orientation	The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.



## Appendix 2: Equality Act 2010 Prohibited Behaviours

Direct Discrimination	Section 13 of the Act defines direct discrimination to be where people are treated less favourably than others on grounds related to their identity as one of the protected groups (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation). The definition of direct discrimination extends protection based on association and perception.
Discrimination by Association	Applies to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
Discrimination by Perception / Perception Discrimination	Applies to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.
Indirect Discrimination	Applies to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. Section 19 of the Act defines indirect discrimination as occurring when a provision, criterion or practice is neutral on the face of it, but its impact particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic, unless the person applying the provision can justify it as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Ultimately, if tested, it will be for a court of law or tribunal to determine what is justifiable.
Discrimination Arising from Disability	This can occur when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their impairment and the treatment cannot be justified.
Failure to make Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled People	The Equality Act 2010 places a duty upon organisations to make reasonable adjustments for staff, students and service users in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provisions, criteria or practices</li> <li>• physical features</li> <li>• auxiliary aids</li> </ul> These adjustments apply where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled people
Bullying	Bullying is defined as offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power which undermines, humiliates, denigrates or injures the recipient. The behaviour is unwelcome and may be carried out as a deliberate act or unconsciously.
Harassment	Harassment is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
Victimisation	Section 27 of the Act defines victimisation as less favourable treatment of someone because they have made or might make a complaint about discrimination under one of the above Protected Group categories. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.