



**Interaction &
Communication**

Academy Trust

Equalities and SEND Policy

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1. General Policy Statement

At the Interaction and Communication Academy Trust (ICAT) we aim to provide a safe, secure, caring environment where everyone is valued and respected equally. We aim to provide an inclusive education where children develop independent learning skills and are taught according to need whatever their age, gender, background, beliefs or abilities.

We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers, with a particular focus on those who share a protected characteristic (see below). We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We aim to include 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.

2. Legal requirements

ICAT welcomes its duties under the new Equality Act (2010).

The Equality Act 2010 ("the Act") provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations.

The Equality Act establishes 9 protected characteristics.

- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage & civil partnership
- Age (this is not a protected characteristic for pupils, but it is for others – particularly staff)

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to undertake some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties.

These are to:

- Publish equality information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across the Trust's functions. We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child.

- Prepare and publish equality objectives. To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a Trust.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Act) gives public bodies such as the Trust some more detailed requirements. The Trust and all its schools must always have due regard to the needs to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This includes taking steps to tackle prejudice, improve understanding, removing disadvantages, taking steps to meet needs, and encouraging people to take part in public life in areas where a protected characteristic is under-represented.

Equality Act 2010 (Specific duties) regulations 2011 – publication of information and equality objectives

These regulations require the trust to publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the public sector equality duty, at intervals not exceeding one year. In addition, one or more specific and measurable objectives must be published every four years or more often, to do any of the three things mentioned in the Public Sector Equality duty above. These duties are covered in this document at Appendix A.

Children and Families Act 2014 – SEN report and accessibility plan

Section 69 of the Children and Families Act makes the Trust responsible for preparing a SEN information report, including in particular:

- The arrangements for the admission of disabled persons as pupils at the school
- The steps taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils
- The facilities provided to access the school by disabled pupils
- The plan prepared by the governing body or proprietor under paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan).

This is clearly integral to our equalities policy and is therefore covered in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

This scheme sets out the steps the Trust will take that will result in improved outcomes for all members of the Trust community in all aspects of school life, taking positive action to promote equality.

3. Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of discrimination may fare less well in the education system. We ensure both our pupils and staff have an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. If incidents still occur, we address them immediately.

Appendix 1: Equality Objectives

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the trust to take a pro-active approach to make sure that equality is integrated into all decisions and activities.

This is based on guidance such as

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/objectives-and-equality-duty-guide-public-authorities>

<http://www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/the-equality-act-what-schools-need-to-know/>

We are required to publish one or more objectives, of our own choice, that we think we should achieve to ensure we fulfil our equality duties (i.e. eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations). These objectives should be specific and measurable and must be published.

The Trust will ensure that regular analysis of data including Integris and payroll is undertaken to monitor fair treatment of everyone associated with the Trust, ensure there is no inequality or unfair treatment, find out whether and where there may be inequalities or unfair treatment of people with any protected characteristic, and identify suitable objectives.

Appendix 2: SEN information report

Each school will prepare and publish on its website, a SEN information report.

Currently the information required is specified by schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and disability regulations 2014, and is as follows:

Information to be included in the SEN information report

1. The kinds of special educational needs for which provision is made at the school
2. Information, in relation to mainstream schools and maintained nursery schools, about the school's policies for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs.
3. Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not pupils have EHC Plans, including:
 - how the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such pupils
 - the school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs
 - the school's approach to teaching pupils with special educational needs;
 - how the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for pupils with special educational needs
 - additional support for learning that is available to pupils with special educational needs
 - how the school enables pupils with special educational needs to engage in the activities of the school (including physical activities) together with children who do not have special educational needs
 - support that is available for improving the emotional, mental and social development of pupils with special educational needs
4. In relation to mainstream schools and maintained nursery schools, the name and contact details of the SEN co-ordinator
5. Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and about how specialist expertise will be secured.
6. Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured
7. The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs about, and involving such parents in, the education of their child
8. The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education.

9. Any arrangements made by the governing body or the proprietor relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school.
10. How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils
11. The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those for arrangements made in accordance with section 32
12. The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in a transfer between phases of education or in preparation for adulthood and independent living
13. Information on where the Local Authority's local offer is published.

Appendix 3: Accessibility plan

In accordance with legal requirements (Paragraph 3, Schedule 10, Equalities Act 2010), each school must prepare and publish (through its website) a plan for:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum,
- improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school, and
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.
 - This must be done within a reasonable time, and in ways which are determined after taking account of pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or by their parents
- Adequate resources must be allowed for – and the plan must be implemented!
- The plan must be kept under review during the period to which it relates, and revised if necessary.
- It must be available for inspection. An OFSTED inspection may extend to the preparation, publication, review, revision and implementation of the accessibility plan

The government have also prescribed which period the plan must relate to, (in the "Disability Discrimination (Prescribed Times and Periods for Accessibility Strategies and Plans for Schools) (England) Regulations 2005"). The plan must be prepared by the 1st March in a year that's a multiple of three years since 1st March 2006. It should cover the three years starting on the 1st April. For example a plan covering 1st April 2018-31st March 2021 should be prepared by 1st March 2018.

For new schools (e.g. new academies joining the trust), the plan is supposed to be prepared within a month of commencement and should cover the period starting two months after commencement and ending at the normal time. For example a school starting on 1st April 2017 should prepare a plan by 1st May 2017, covering the period from 1st June 2017 to 31st March 2018, and then follow the normal timetable.

The template below may be helpful.

Template accessibility plan

	Curriculum	Physical environment	Information for pupils	Overall
<p>Consider whether the plan identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the curriculum and extended services. • Access to the building. • Provision for disabled students, parents and staff. <p>Also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources. • Responsibilities. • Timings. • Outcomes for students. <p>Ensure actions have clear success criteria so they can be monitored effectively.</p>				