

Rise Multi Academy Trust: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy 2025



Date of Policy: June 2025

Approved by the Trust Board: July 2025

Review Date: July 2026

Signed: 

Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines Rise's commitment to fostering an equitable, inclusive, and diverse environment for all members of its community. It reflects how Rise's EDI strategy has influenced specific policies, procedures, and practices to ensure an inclusive organisation that upholds diversity and provides equitable opportunities for all stakeholders. The policy applies to all staff, governors, trustees, volunteers, and third parties associated with Rise. It is designed to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, promote respect for people, including students, with protected characteristics and beyond, and align with Rise's Equality Objectives.

This directs the reviewing of all existing Rise policies and serves as a foundation for developing future policies.

Vision and Commitment Statement

Our vision is to create a community where everyone feels empowered to be themselves, free from prejudice or barriers to participation, and embraced with a true sense of belonging.

Rise are committed to meaningful work on equity, diversity, and inclusion which shapes policy, practice, and procedure and provides equitable opportunities for all stakeholders.

Equality Objectives

1. To embed EDI principles across all Rise policies and practices.
2. To actively challenge all forms of discrimination, harassment, and bias, while addressing structural and cultural barriers that may marginalise individuals or groups within Rise.
3. To ensure equitable access to opportunities for all members of the community without discrimination.
4. To provide training and resources to support EDI across Rise.
5. To monitor and evaluate progress against Rise's EDI strategy, whilst reviewing and updating the EDI policy to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.
6. To foster a culture of mutual respect and collaboration

Definitions

- Equity: Ensuring fairness by recognising and addressing individual needs and barriers.
- Diversity: Embracing and valuing differences in identity, background, and perspective.
- Inclusion: Creating an environment where everyone feels that they belong, are respected, and empowered to participate fully.
- Protected Characteristics: As defined by the Equality Act 2010, these include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Legal Framework

This policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 yet goes beyond compliance with our legal obligations; promoting a culture where everyone is included, and nobody is disadvantaged.



Responsibilities

Trust Leaders:

- Set and review Rise's Equality objectives and the EDI strategy.
- Ensure compliance with statutory EDI requirements.
- Provide strategic direction and allocate resources for EDI initiatives.
- Report on progress towards Equality objectives and EDI strategy.

Schools and Central Office:

- Implement the EDI policy at the local level.
- Promote inclusive practices within the school's curriculum, environment and culture.

Local Governing Committee Members:

- Hold schools accountable for the implementation of the EDI policy.
- Monitor and challenge practices that may undermine the EDI vision.

HR Procedures

Pay and Conditions:

Ensure equitable pay and conditions across all roles and levels within Rise by conducting pay audits to identify and address any disparities.

Recruitment:

Rise's recruitment processes are designed to promote inclusivity and engage diverse candidates. The Rise website includes recruitment and advertising practices that embrace an EDI culture, ensuring transparency and accessibility. Identifiable characteristics within application forms are anonymised to support equitable evaluation. Statutory and Trust objectives align to uphold quality assurance and equity at every stage of the recruitment process. Additionally, training is provided to reduce unconscious bias, reinforcing Rise's commitment to being an inclusive organisation that values diversity.

Workplace Culture

Rise is committed to building a culture of mutual respect and collaboration by encouraging open discussions on EDI topics. We strive to create opportunities that reflect the diverse communities we serve, ensuring fair access to growth and development. Additionally, we endeavour to provide safe, supportive spaces where individuals can voice concerns, seek guidance, and contribute to meaningful change. Through these efforts, we reinforce our dedication to fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and empowered.

Addressing Harassment, Discrimination, Victimisation and Bias

Rise promotes a culture, where it is encouraged and expected to appropriately challenge behaviours that undermine our values, including:

- Harassment, including microaggressions.
- Discrimination (direct and indirect) based on protected characteristics.
- Victimisation
- Unconscious bias and deficit language.



Procedures for addressing incidents include:

- Clear reporting mechanisms.
- Thorough investigation processes.
- Appropriate disciplinary actions.

Policy Implementation

Rise will implement this policy by embedding EDI principles into strategic planning and decision-making, dedicating resources to support EDI initiatives, and ensuring clear and consistent communication of the policy to all stakeholders.

Training and Staff Development

- Deliver regular EDI training to all staff, governors, and trustees.
- Include EDI topics in professional development programmes.
- Provide resources to empower staff in integrating EDI into their roles, ensuring that knowledge of effective EDI practices is systematically embedded and widely shared across the organisation, rather than relying on a few key individuals.

Monitoring and Reviewing

- The MAT will collect and analyse a range of qualitative data to identify trends and areas for improvement.
- Annual reviews of the policy will ensure it remains relevant and effective. This process will align with the MAT's commitment to meaningful work on EDI that influences policy, practice, and procedure to ensuring an inclusive organisation.
- Progress against Equality Objectives will be reported to stakeholders.

Support and Resources

- Access to employee assistance programmes for mental health and well-being.
- Anonymous reporting tool for discrimination or harassment

Complaints

Complaints related to EDI issues will be handled in accordance with Rise's Complaints Policy, ensuring all concerns are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and resolved transparently.

The insights and experiences of minority groups will be acknowledged and integrated into the resolution process, helping to shape inclusive practices and support a comprehensive approach to addressing complaints.



Glossary

Term	Definition	Example
Equality Act 2010	UK legislation that legally protects individuals from discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics.	A school ensuring recruitment policies comply with the Equality Act to avoid discriminatory practices.
Discrimination	Unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on protected or perceived characteristics. Direct Discrimination - When someone is treated unfairly or less favourably because of a protected characteristic (e.g. race, gender). Indirect Discrimination - A policy or rule that applies to everyone but puts some people at a disadvantage due to their characteristics.	Not shortlisting a candidate because of their race. An employee is denied a promotion because they are pregnant. A company requires all staff to work Sundays, affecting Christians who observe it as a rest day.
Harassment	Unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.	Making offensive jokes about someone's gender identity in a staffroom.
Victimisation	Treating someone badly because they complained about discrimination or supported someone who did.	An employee is excluded from meetings after helping a colleague file a complaint.
Bias	A tendency, inclination, or prejudice for or against a person or group, often in a way considered to be unfair.	Assuming older employees may struggle with new technology without evidence.



Glossary

Term	Definition	Example
Unconscious Bias	Social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their conscious awareness, influencing attitudes and actions.	Believing a younger candidate is more dynamic without reviewing their experience.
Deficit Language	Language that implies a person or group is lacking or deficient compared to a perceived norm, often reinforcing stereotypes or bias.	Referring to English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils as 'low ability' learners.
Microaggressions	Everyday, subtle, often unintentional comments or actions that communicate bias or prejudice against marginalised groups.	Telling a colleague of colour, 'You speak such good English!'
Equality Objectives	Specific, measurable goals set by an organisation to advance equality and inclusion and reduce disadvantage or inequality.	Example from above: 1. To embed EDI principles across all Rise policies and practices.
Inclusive Practices	Approaches and behaviours that actively embrace diversity and promote equitable access, participation, and opportunities for all.	Offering flexible working arrangements for staff with caring responsibilities.
Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)	A confidential service providing mental health, well-being, and practical support to employees.	Well-being support to staff dealing with stress or personal challenges.



Glossary

Term	Definition	Example
Qualitative Data	Non-numerical information, such as personal experiences, opinions, or observations, used to understand perspectives and improve EDI practices.	Collecting anonymous feedback on staff experiences of inclusion in the workplace.
Structural Barriers	Systemic obstacles within policies, practices, or culture that disadvantage certain groups and limit equal participation or opportunities.	A lack of accessible entrances preventing disabled staff and visitors from entering a building.
Cultural Barriers	Social norms, values, traditions, or expectations within an organisation or community that can limit participation or disadvantage certain groups.	A workplace culture that discourages open discussion about mental health, making it difficult for employees to seek support.

