



Public Sector Equality Duty Audit

The Priory Witham Academy

Reviewed by: A Tallentire & M Garner

Review: July 2026

*The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (The Trust) will adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against all stakeholders with which the organisation may be working with on the grounds of any protected characteristic.
Please refer to the Federation's Public Sector Duty audit for all actions and work relating to staff.*

The Trust's Equality Objectives for 2021-2025 were:

1. To cascade and embed ongoing equality and diversity training across the Trust, using our existing support frameworks to continue to improve understanding and to help eliminate discrimination.
2. To promote and monitor the involvement of all groups of pupils, and specifically those with protected characteristics, in the extra-curricular life of all the academies within the Trust.

The Trust's Equality Objectives for 2026 – 2030 are:

1. To develop a bespoke professional learning programme for staff on equality, diversity and inclusion which enables them to deliver high-quality, specialist training to stakeholders as required.
2. To promote and monitor the involvement of all groups of pupils, and specifically those with protected characteristics, in the extra-curricular life of all the academies within the Trust.

The context in which the Academy works:

The Academy is one of twelve schools in the Priory Federation of Academies Trust. The academy largely serves the local authority housing estate in the Moorland Ward. The area has unfavourable socio-economic indicators with high levels of unemployment, families with diverse and complicated relationships, poverty and crime. Fewer than 1% of neighbourhoods in England are more deprived (ranked 91 out of 33,755 neighbourhoods) It is more deprived than all neighbourhoods within Lincoln. (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025) It has a higher rate of income deprivation affecting children (IDACI) than most neighbourhoods in England. No other neighbourhood in Lincoln is more deprived in relation to employment.

- Pupil premium numbers are well above average – 46.5% (Primary – 60.4% and Secondary – 46.2%)
- FSM is significantly above the national average of 25.7% and is currently 47.5% (nursery-Y13).
- SEN is well above the national average – 35.5% (Primary – 35% and Secondary – 32%)
- EHCP is 4.8%
- The percentage of boys and girls - Primary 56% boys, 44% girls and Secondary 49% boys and 51% girls
- Attendance continues to be prioritised and effectively driven to improve outcomes, currently at 93.8% Primary and 87.8% Secondary and 90% All-through (July 2026)
- The number of children from different cultural backgrounds is increasing and is now 18.3% (Primary – 24.6% and Secondary – 15.7%)

The Early Years Foundation Stage, at Witham Academy, is fundamental in creating positive learning experiences and securing an excellent start for pupils, many of whom arrive with personal, social and emotional development below their chronological age and significantly delayed language development.

- 87% of 2 year olds have funded places for 15 hours.

The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:

1. Age*
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment

4. Marriage and civil partnership*
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

*These characteristics apply to the Trust as employers, but not in relation to our provision for pupils.

What do we do to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between individuals who share a protected characteristic and those who do not? Map to evidence/examples/records kept.

- Audits, enrichment and provision trackers allow the engagement of pupils with protected characteristics to be reviewed and monitored.
- The Witham Values programme and Personal Development Days (PD Days) are used to increase understanding and build confidence amongst pupils to ask questions and develop social interactions with their peers.
- A dedicated PD programme that runs for 30 minutes at the start of each day in secondary ensures that knowledge and understanding is developed through quality first teaching.
- Curriculum intent is shaped by the PSHE Association guidance and implemented through the 'Life Lessons' Curriculum ensuring themes of tolerance, difference and respect are taught appropriately at every age and stage throughout the academy. If necessary, this curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of particular cohorts.
- Resources and books are carefully selected to give a good representation to the protected characteristics and help all pupils to feel a sense of recognition and belonging.
- Pastoral support and tracking systems alongside SIMS and My Concern, ensure incidents are reported promptly and dealt with, the impact of which demonstrates to pupils the importance of such matters, ensuring there is no discriminatory behaviour.
- The 'Life Lessons' resources are used to support at an individual pupil level where challenges may have been identified that need additional intervention.
- The Academy maintain a log of racist and discriminatory incidents.
- Each Year Group have a Phase Leader or Year Director who are supported by a team of pastoral staff. They support both pupils and parent/carers need. They support pupil's re-education, restoration and reintegration.
- Tutor time and PSHE lessons can be utilised to develop an adaptive curriculum that looks at the trends taken from My Concerns.
- Clubs, trips and other enrichment opportunities are open to all pupils. They are equitably provided for, for example, educational visits are planned to ensure that all pupils are able to participate.
- Translators are used for meetings with parents where required.
- Exam access arrangements ensure that we meet the needs of all pupils within the cohort i.e. size of desks, font size, scribe, rest breaks etc.

- Equality is also promoted across the curriculum through assemblies where the protected characteristics and British Values are planned for. This contributes to the positive and respectful ethos of the school.
- Within our secondary provision, development of the Witham Rewards Programme promotes and actively seeks out equitable provision
- There is a team of support staff that understand the complex needs of the pupils and their families. This provides a crucial layer of support to break down barriers to education that our pupils may experience, for example, Family support workers, Attendance Officer, Pastoral managers, Behaviour and Inclusion Support Workers.
- We have an 'Equality and Diversity Officer' who works across the Trust schools and was appointed to strategically develop the provision for EDI. He provides training for staff and governors and will also support with challenging needs.
- Regular communication with parents/carers
- Academy Safeguarding and SEND team host cluster meetings.
- LGBT + Awareness celebrated. Pride month is always celebrated in June across the academy.
- Visiting speakers are planned for to enhance the curriculum offer.

What do we do to engage with the protected groups to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

Map to evidence/records kept.

- Pupils with SEN profiles written to reflect areas of need incorporating student voice
- Learning Strategies provide support for social/emotional/physical issues.
- Quality First Teaching incorporates effective strategies outlined in the EEF '5 a day'
- The 'HIVE' programme at secondary and Behaviour and Inclusion support workers enable pupils to successfully access their learning.
- Regular SEN review meetings are held with parents/carers and pupils
- Through the curriculum we engage with protected groups e.g., Holocaust, Black History Month, Pride month
- Student and staff survey analysed to review opinions of all stakeholders and action taken accordingly. See Edurio 2025/2026
- Student council meet regularly, which enables pupils, including those with protected characteristics, to have a voice.
- A range of support staff operate across the academy to support all pupils including those with protected characteristics.
- All staff develop respectful and trusting relationships with pupils creating a safe space for pupils to voice any challenges or concerns. This can then inform the curriculum model as well as PD days.
- SLT review any feedback obtained that comes back from all stakeholders, including pupils, staff and parents, this is collected in a range of ways, such as pupil, parent and staff surveys. Adaptations to the curriculum are made if necessary.
- Working with the local community, such as through the Family Hub located in The Children's Centre to gain a shared and holistic overview of the community needs through the lens of a different service.
- Parent questionnaires are shared at parents' evenings in primary and in secondary go out with all reports providing an opportunity to all those with protected characteristics to celebrate success, raise concerns and share ideas for improvement.

**How effective are we at eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations?
Map to evidence/records kept.**

- The use of audits and enrichment tracking allows the engagement of pupils with protected characteristics to be reviewed and monitored. This enables us to try and understand how to further strengthen engagement and if there are particular pupil groups to target.
- All staff respond to incidents of discrimination in a timely manner. The process is clear that incidents of this nature are managed by the safeguarding team, in partnership with the year teams to ensure that it is addressed at all levels – perpetrator, victim and that all necessary family members have been communicated with regarding what has happened and the actions completed.
- Any incidents of discrimination are reviewed at the safeguarding meeting to check that the incident has been managed effectively and all actions followed through.
- All staff have engaged in CPD delivered by the EDI Champion. (IFO)
- In line with academy systems, progress and attainment data is produced for relevant groups such as SEND and EAL to closely track and monitor groups and identify where intervention is needed.
- The ethos of the school is fostered through the curriculum, Witham Values programme and Personal Development Days. Any incidents are isolated and the vast majority of pupils are very tolerant and respectful within the academy. There are very few incidents of discrimination as seen on the Priory Profiles.

Next Steps:

- To continue to develop staff expertise in inclusive provision through CPD
- To continue to make effective use of tracking through platforms such as My Concerns to highlight emerging trends and respond through our adapted curriculum.
- To update the accessibility action plan to reflect the needs of changing cohorts
- Ensure all staff are aware of the training opportunities available in relation to equality and diversity and ensure that this is part of our induction programme for new staff.
- To promote and monitor the involvement of all groups of pupils, and specifically those with protected characteristics, in the extracurricular life of the academy.
- To review use of Picture News to help promote knowledge around protected characteristics.
- To invest in a further package of CPD to support the delivery of the PSHE curriculum through Life Lessons