



# Equal Opportunities Policy 2024-2025

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## Contents

### [1. Introduction](#)

- [2. Equal Opportunities policy statement](#)
- [3. OMNI Ethos](#)
- [4. Admissions](#)
- [5. Teaching](#)
- [6. Leadership and Management](#)
- [7. Staff](#)
- [8. Incidents](#)
- [9. Monitoring and Review](#)

## **1. Introduction**

The guiding principles of OMNI's Equal Opportunities Policy are enshrined in the Equality Act that came into force in October 2010, replacing the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Equality Act brings together nine pieces of legislation into one single Act, simplifying the law and reducing the burden on organisations by making it easier for institutions to comply with discrimination law, which has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The overall responsibility for the policy and effective implementation of Equal Opportunities within OMNI lies with the Head of Service, reporting to the Director(s).

Compliance with the Equal Opportunities Policy is the responsibility of all staff within OMNI.

A written policy can only ever be a statement of good intent. For it to become effective it must be translated into practice. Adopting Equal Opportunities practice creates a positive, safe, and supportive environment from which all staff and young people benefit.

## 2. Equal Opportunities policy statement

OMNI recognises that in our society, groups and individuals have been and continue to be discriminated against. OMNI acknowledges that institutional structures, practices, and procedures can be discriminatory. Individuals can experience inequalities in their lives on account of ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender, social class, religious beliefs, cultural practices, or HIV status

OMNI is committed as an organisation to:

- achieving equal opportunities in all aspects of its work.
- ensuring that it applies equal opportunities principles in the implementation of its admissions, staff recruitment and staff promotion procedures.
- ensuring that all young people are given the best education regardless of ability, gender, race, culture and disability, religion, or sexual orientation.
- ensuring that prejudice and discrimination in all their forms are actively rejected.

## 3. OMNI Ethos

The ethos of OMNI is that everyone is valued equally, regardless of ability, gender, race, culture and disability, religion, or sexual orientation:

- Visitors and those who telephone or write to OMNI will be made to feel welcome.
- Positive links with the community are encouraged.
- Displays around the site will reflect positive images and the diversity of the community.
- Rules, rewards, and sanctions are applied equally to all young people
- Appropriate attitudes, language and behaviour are actively promoted.
- Procedures for dealing promptly with incidents of bullying, sexual, racial and disability discrimination are in place.
- OMNI publications will be produced with regard to the policy, and,
- Planned opportunities for young people to develop a practical understanding of appropriate social relationships and the rights and responsibilities of individuals will be included in the curriculum.

## 4. Admissions

Admissions to OMNI Alternative Provision will be governed by the agreed admission arrangements as outlined in our Admissions Policy. Within these arrangements OMNI will ensure that it pays due regard to equal

opportunities when it decides whether or not it will admit a young person referred to it by a school, academy, or local authority.

However, irrespective of equal opportunities considerations, OMNI will not accept a referral if our risk assessment indicates that the young person will pose an unacceptable level of risk to other young people and staff, or in the context of disability, an applicant's disability would not prevent OMNI from accepting a referral and integrating him/her into the Provision, unless:

- the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the young person would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
- OMNI would be unable to provide suitably trained staff or facilities to allow the requirements of the curriculum to be met.

OMNI's policies in relation to disability are detailed in our SEND policy and Disability Action Plan.

## 5. Teaching

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that:

- teaching styles, methods, language, questioning, and classroom management includes and engages all young people.
- suitable resources are chosen which motivate, are free from bias and that are sensitive to different groups, cultures, and backgrounds.
- stereotypes and what are thought to be stereotypical activities are effectively challenged.
- teaching strategies are reviewed in relation to variations in learning and attainment and in the light of known good practice.
- they are aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.
- they will teach and promote equality.

## 6. Leadership and Management

The OMNI Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged students. Measures include:

- identifying and investigating any patterns with regard to sanctions and poor attendance in respect of particular groups.
- monitoring differences in young people's attitudes to work and towards each other, with a view to identifying any significant patterns.
- addressing issues such as sexual or racial harassment, bullying and hostile behaviour and ensuring that there are effective procedures for reporting and responding to such incidents.
- ensuring that the performance of different groups of young people is monitored and evaluated so that the particular needs of different students are met; and
- the impact of additional support on standards achieved is evaluated.

It is essential that there is an appropriate response to identified patterns of attainment, progress, behaviour, attitudes, and attendance. It is the responsibility of the Head of Service to ensure that:

- strategies are implemented to raise performance, aspirations, and self-esteem.
- staff development is provided to raise awareness of differences in need and to promote strategies to raise achievement in all students; and
- an environment is created which affirms and supports ethnic, cultural, religious, and social diversity and effectively promotes good personal, community and race relations.

## 7. Staff

The Safer Recruitment Policy embodies the principles of equality. The Policy of the OMNI Alternative Provision is that it will not directly or indirectly discriminate in the provision of training courses and the performance management process reflects the principles of equality.

## 8. Incidents

Strategies are in place and communicated to all staff for dealing with breaches of the Equality Policy, and racist incidents will be recorded on the Racist Incident log.

Breaches of the Equality Policy should be reported using the Incidents Log and these will be treated as disciplinary issues. The Head of Service will monitor the incident log.

## 9. Monitoring and Review

- A log of all reported breaches of the Equality Policy is kept.
- An annual Equalities Review will be undertaken to make sure that all protected characteristics are appropriately covered and to set out clearly the position regarding claims based on association and perception. Changes should be reflected in the provision's strategic plan and reported to the Director(s).
- Directors will monitor the operation of this policy.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying)