



What is Accord?

Accord is a wide coalition of organisations, including religious groups, humanists, trade unions and human rights campaigners. We share a common view on many issues to do with state-funded schools and believe that the current legislation on faith schools in particular is counter-productive.

We campaign to make admissions and recruitment policies in all state-funded schools free from discrimination on grounds of religion or belief.

We want schools to follow an objective, fair and balanced syllabus for education about religious and non-religious beliefs.

We want accountability under a single inspection regime for Religious Education, Personal, Social & Health (PSHE) education and Citizenship.

We believe all schools should provide their pupils with inclusive, inspiring and stimulating assemblies in place of compulsory acts of worship.

Inclusivity Award 2015

August 16, 2013

The scope of the awards

The Accord Coalition's 2015 Inclusivity Award is open to all schools in England and Wales. Nominated schools will not be disadvantaged for having to operate under a different legal framework from some other schools, being located in a diverse or relatively mono-cultural area or necessarily because of the profile of their student body. Instead they will be rewarded for how they have gone about making that extra step within the particular setting that they find themselves in. The annual Accord Inclusivity Award was first run in 2010 and since then winning institutions have included rural, suburban, inner city, faith and special schools. Participating in the Award has been highlighted by Ofsted (please see [Annex 2](#)) as a way schools can complement their duties under the Equality Act to advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations and tackle discrimination. Winning schools regularly [obtain national media coverage for their success](#).

How the Awards will be judged

Ofsted describes the features of a school with an outstanding contribution to community cohesion as:

“The school has made an important and beneficial contribution to promoting community cohesion in its wider region or even nationally. Its planned actions to promote community cohesion are underpinned by an effective analysis of the school’s context (including faith, ethnic and cultural, and socio-economic factors). The school’s evaluation of its actions shows a significant impact on its own community. Learners have a strong sense of common values, integrate actively with learners from other groups, and are respectful of others’ differences. Learners themselves make a strong contribution to the promotion of equalities and the elimination of prejudice and discrimination.”

We agree with Ofsted. The Award judges want to hear about and celebrate those schools that promote inclusion, cohesion, equality and the growth of mutual understanding as a core part of their ethos, and that nurture active citizens, who are confident in themselves, tolerant and respectful of others, and keen to make a difference in society. The judges are especially interested in the way that schools address issues of religion and philosophical belief, both inside the school and through any relationships with local, national and international communities. In addition, the judges would like to know how the school’s inclusive ethos guides its policies on ethnic, cultural and socio-economic differences, as well as those based on gender, age, disability and sexual orientation.

The key way that your school will be evaluated is through the [nomination form](#) that is received on its behalf. The judges will not just be looking for details about specific initiatives established to promote the growth of mutual understanding and improved community cohesion, but also about a broad range of activities (such as approaches in the curriculum, the admissions policy, the kind of assemblies provided, invited speakers, visits etc). In addition to individual projects and initiatives, judges would also like to see evidence of the school’s strategic vision and ethos that underpin its work.

We will accept all completed nomination forms, but because of the relatively detailed nature of the information required, forms should probably be answered with the advice of a governor or/ and a teacher, if not by a teacher or governor themselves. If you know of an inclusive school that you think should be considered then please suggest that they apply, and tell us about their strongest attributes, and we will ask them to consider submitting a nomination as well.

We know teachers are very busy and have tried to make the process of applying as simple as possible. Most of the questions that are asked will have already been answered, or at least seriously considered, in material already produced for Ofsted, the school prospectus, school newsletters or internal policy documents.

Prizes will be awarded to the schools that have done the most to embody an ethos of inclusion, but some schools may also be commended for specific aspects of their work on inclusion, cohesion and equality. This is another reason why we ask schools highlight one policy or initiative that they feel has been especially successful or innovative.

The judges will also access recent Ofsted inspection reports (for schools in England) and look online at the school website for the most recent prospectus, admission requirements and other available school policies. Although Ofsted stopped inspecting how schools promote community cohesion in 2012, it continues to look at how schools develop their pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and how pupils contribute to the wider community. If there is any other external evidence that the judges should be made aware of (for example, involvement in well regarded projects, testimonies from community groups who have worked with students etc) then please include appropriate website links in the nomination form.

Applicants that go over the word limit will be disadvantaged. We also cannot accept hard copies of extra information, so if you want judges to see extra information in support of the school's work please consider including web links. If you only have supporting information in hard copy then please consider scanning and hosting a copy of it somewhere and then linking to it.

Judging panel

Previous Award judges include the former Secretary of State for Education, Lord Baker of Dorking; the then Shadow Minister for Children, Lisa Nandy MP; the Bishop of Buckingham, The Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson; the former Bishop of Edinburgh, the Rt Rev Richard Holloway, and the journalist and writer Polly Toynbee. The 2015 Inclusivity Award judging panel will be announced in due course.

How to apply

Please complete the contact details sheet and answer the four questions contained in the [application form](#), and return it to paul@accordcoalition.org.uk.

If you have any questions then please email Paul or call on 020 7324 3071. The deadline for entries is Sunday December 7th.