



# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## Version 1.8

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| <p><b>Important:</b> This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the Trust website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.</p>   |   |
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| <p><b>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</b></p>  | <p>Trust Board</p>  |
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| <p><b>Target Audience:</b></p>   | <p>All stakeholders</p>   |
| <p><b>Related Documents:</b><br/> <b>All Trust policies and procedures referred to are located on the trust website, <a href="http://www.theeducationalliance.org.uk">www.theeducationalliance.org.uk</a>.</b><br/><br/> <b>If English is not your first language, and you require assistance/translation, please contact the HR Department.</b></p> | <p>The Equality Act 2010<br/> Grievance Procedure<br/> Complaints Procedure<br/> Expectations and Code of Conduct<br/> Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.<br/> Public Sector Equality Duty 2011<br/> Flexible Working Policy<br/> Women at Work Policy<br/> Whistleblowing Policy</p> |

## Contents

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Policy Statement   | 3    |
| 1. Purpose and Scope   | 3    |
| 2. Roles and Responsibilities                                  | 4    |
| 3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion                           | 5    |
| 4. Our Duty  | 5    |
| 5. Equality Objectives   | 7    |
| 6. Breaches  | 7    |
| 7. Monitoring Compliance With and Effectiveness of this Policy | 7    |
| 8. Review  | 8    |

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

We are here to make great schools and happier, stronger communities so that people have better lives. We do this by:

- Always doing what is right
- Trusting in each other and standing shoulder to shoulder
- Doing what we know makes the difference

Doing what is right means always acting with integrity, in the interests of others and being honest, open and transparent.

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. The Trust is fully committed to eliminating unlawful and unfair discrimination and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings. The Trust will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender identity/reassignment, gender dysphoria, transgender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.

As an educational establishment, we are well positioned to educate not only our pupils, but our staff and the communities we serve. It is our aspiration to build a culture where difference is valued, understood and respected.

### **1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

There are statutory requirements detailed under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

The Trust has an equality, diversity and inclusion action plan that goes beyond our statutory requirements, and in developing this policy the Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools has also been considered.

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities, to publish:

- equality objectives, at least every four years
- information to demonstrate compliance with the public sector equality duty annually

This policy represents a commitment to a common set of values and objectives. All schools within the Trust are committed to advancing and achieving equality of opportunity for all, and we believe that everyone is entitled to equality of opportunity and that our diversity enriches our community. All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and could be managed in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

The aim of this policy is to:

- develop an ethos which respects and values all people

- actively advance equality of opportunity
- prepare pupils to embrace a life in a diverse society
- promote good relations amongst people within the communities within which we work
- eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other oppressive behaviour across the Trust
- deliver equality and diversity through our Trust and school policies, procedures, training and practice
- make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to school provision and activities
- take effective action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural misconceptions
- monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within our schools
- ensure that Trust policies and procedures are fair, transparent and in line with our culture and ethos, and our legal and statutory responsibilities
- ensure decisions, behaviours and actions align with our ethical leadership framework

The policy applies to all employees, pupils, members, trustees and governors. The policy underpins Trust and school policies and procedures.

## 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Trust Board** is responsible for approving this policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently across the Trust. The Board will ensure that the Trust's published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years.

The Trust Board delegates responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives and their impact in our schools to Headteachers and Local Governing Bodies (LGBs). The Trust has a link Trustee for equality and diversity, who will meet with the designated member of staff for equality each term, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed. The link Trustee will ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this policy, and they will attend appropriate equality and diversity training and report back to the Trust Board regarding any issues or updates.

The **CEO and Executive Principal** are responsible for ensuring that all stakeholders adhere to this policy. They will ensure that suspected breaches are investigated and breaches are managed swiftly, effectively, fairly and consistently.

The **HR Department** is responsible for ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy and associated procedures. The team will also ensure that this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

**Leaders and managers** must ensure they implement this policy fairly and equitably, seeking guidance, clarification and support as and when required.

All **employees** must promote equality and diversity, and they must actively respond to any incidents of unfair discrimination related to protected characteristics perpetuated by pupils, staff or visitors. If employees have queries or concerns, they may wish to speak to their line manager or HR for further advice and guidance.

**Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers** are responsible for monitoring the application of this policy within their respective schools, providing a high-profile lead on equality and diversity, advancing equality and diversity inside and outside school. They must ensure school policies and procedures comply with all equality legislation.

**Pupils** are responsible for respecting others in their language, behaviours and actions and they must adhere to our equality and diversity policies, procedures and practices.

### **3. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

The Trust is committed to:

- Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines
- Delivering high quality teaching and services that meet the diverse needs of its pupil population and its workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged
  - Ensuring anyone with a protected characteristic as described within the Equality Act 2010 does not experience discrimination (e.g. age, disability, sex, gender identity/reassignment, gender dysphoria, transgender, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership).
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Encouraging people to bring their whole, authentic self to work and school, with the knowledge that the Trust values difference and diversity.

### **4. OUR DUTY**

The Trust is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and whilst the Trust complies with non-discrimination provisions it aims to go above and beyond legal and statutory requirements to ensure each school operates in a climate where difference is valued and understood, where everyone experiences equal opportunities and where everyone feels part of an inclusive community. Reports and policies that go before the Trust Board have a cover sheet that includes an equality impact assessment, and the Trust Board reviews this as part of its decision-making processes and discussions.

Policies include reference to the importance of promoting equality and diversity and employees and officers of the Trust are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings and via training and development. New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction.

The Trust has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link Trustee. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of issues and subsequent actions as appropriate.

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we will also invite external speakers to contribute.
- Working with our local communities. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community. This also includes encouraging staff to attend assemblies as part of their learning and development, and to act as role models for pupils.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with any tensions which may arise between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, school councils have representatives from different year groups and are formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs our schools work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
- Encourage participation when representation is disproportionately low.

We continue to develop links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

The Trust considers equality, diversity and inclusion in its decision-making, and Trust schools always consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, our schools considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for all

The school keeps a written record of equality impact assessments to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

The Trust is required to publish information relating to those who share a relevant protected characteristic who are affected by our policies and practices. This means we are required to publish the demographic information for each of our schools for the 9 protected characteristics, for pupils and staff, ensuring that individuals aren't identifiable through the data we publish. As well as protected characteristics, the Trust aims to improve inclusion, therefore this policy not only considers our legal and statutory obligations, but also considers how the Trust can become more inclusive. For example, the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan includes socio-economic background and class, recognising that this can have an adverse impact on a pupil's ability to fully engage in all school activities and opportunities. This policy also widens the scope of EDI to include intersex and ableism. The Trust aims to create a culture of acceptance, utilising whole school training sessions to raise awareness and educate staff and pupils on the use of appropriate language. Wider stakeholder involvement will enable pupil and staff voice to influence the development and implementation of meaningful, effective action plans that include the curriculum, pastoral activities, workforce and culture.

The Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity. The Trust publishes attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing. This data is analysed to determine strengths and areas for improvement, and appropriate actions are implemented in response to the information collated. The Trust also considers trends in data and makes evidence available for identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying). The Trust publishes data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our pupils.

## **5. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

Equality objectives should align with Trust and school priorities. They should be achievable, considering the size and circumstances of the school. In developing our objectives we have considered the following potential aims:

- increase participation
- narrow gaps in performance
- reduce exclusion rates
- increase understanding between religious groups
- reduce number of homophobic incidents
- raise attainment in a specific subject
- encourage non-stereotyped career options
- anticipate needs of incoming pupils from a new group, such as Traveller children.

Our objectives for the next four years are to:

1. Reduce the incidence of sexualised language between pupils.
2. Reduce the incidence of gender bias.
3. Reduce the impact of social deprivation, socio-economic status and class and improve the involvement of pupils affected by these issues.
4. Increase support for LGBTQIA pupils and staff, ensuring that pupils and staff can bring their whole selves to work and school and feel they are in a safe inclusive environment, as well as providing staff and pupils with someone to speak to, should they need to, increasing engagement and understanding.
5. Acknowledge the inequalities and challenges women at work face, and look to reduce those inequalities and challenges, increasing understanding and equipping staff through education, signposting and support.
6. Increasing opportunities for flexible working, including flexible working in adverts and encouraging staff and managers to consider options for flexible working for the diverse range of roles we have across our Trust.

## **6. BREACHES**

If an employee feels that any member of the Trust has not treated them in accordance with this policy, they have right of complaint via the Trust's Grievance Procedure. Where an individual not employed by the Trust feels an employee, manager or officer of the Trust has discriminated against them, they should refer to the Trust's Complaints Procedure.

## **7. MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY**

Effectiveness and compliance of this Policy will be monitored on an annual basis.

## **8. REVIEW**

This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed within a year of the date of implementation via the JCNC.