

Equalities Policy



Review Date

April 2021

Ratified

28 April 2021

Next Review

April 2023

Responsible Directorate

Education

Our Vision



Transforming Lives of our learners

We seek to ensure that all our learners receive a high-quality education from expert staff and aspire to achieve the best they possibly can, no matter their background or ability. Our learners have safe, supportive learning environments in which they develop, grow, and challenge themselves. We are determined that our learners will receive the very best enrichment and opportunities to help them reach their full potential and ensure they are prepared for the future, wherever it might take them.



Transforming Lives of our colleagues

Our colleagues are supported with the very best professional development through our innovative ATT institute, allowing them to stay focused on learning and developing as practitioners whilst they progress in their careers. We share the very best practice across our community of academies to help build systems and processes that really work.



Transforming Lives in the communities we serve

We are committed to actively engaging with and addressing inequality in our local areas. We understand that every one of our academies and their diverse communities are different, so we aim to build a supportive, collaborative, and nurturing relationship with each whilst sharing our key values across our Trust.

Commitment to Education

Transparency and Integrity

Innovation and Improvement

Dedication to Inclusivity

Our Values

Commitment to Education

Our core purpose is to positively impact the lives of all our learners. Education will always be at the heart of everything we do.

Transparency and Integrity

We are proud of our success whilst being open and honest about our areas for improvement. Our actions are always ethical and in the best interests of all our stakeholders.

Innovation and Improvement

We are committed to innovative education- always moving forward and never standing still. Our learners are ambitious and prepared for a future that is constantly changing and developing.

Dedication to Inclusivity

Our learners are all different and all important to us. We aspire to support, challenge, and help each one of them reach their full potential, regardless of their background or level of ability.

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Statement of Intent

Our academies are inclusive academies where the focus is on the well-being and progress of every student, every colleague, and all members of our communities.

We are committed to:

- Treating everybody with equal value
- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the *Equality Act (2010)*
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic (see below) and those who do not
- Tackling prejudice and promoting understanding and fostering good relations
- Ensuring that the views of those with protected characteristics are sought and taken into account when making important decisions about our work
- Taking steps to remove or minimise the disadvantages faced by and meet the needs of those who share one or more protected characteristics.

The principles in this policy apply to both students and colleagues and we will ensure that nobody is discriminated against on the basis of any protected characteristic. This includes direct and indirect discrimination as well as discrimination due to association or perception.

1 | Aims of this Policy

- 1.1 We are committed to taking positive action regarding the needs of people with protected characteristics.
- 1.2 This policy sets out how we put our commitment into action and comply with the law, to ensure that there is no discrimination against or harassment or victimisation of any member of our family of academies – students, staff, governors, parents/carers, and visitors.
- 1.3 This applies particularly, but not exhaustively:
 - In relation to admissions
 - In the way we provide education for our pupils
 - In the application of our behaviour policy
 - In the way we provide pupils access to any benefit, facility, or service
 - In the way in which we ensure that no member of our communities is subject to any detriment.

1.4 The characteristics protected by the *Equality Act* are:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

1.5 We are also mindful of and committed to fulfilling our obligations under the *Public Sector Equality Duty* (2011).

1.6 This policy focuses largely on our obligations to students – our separate *Equal Opportunities (Staff) Policy* should be read alongside this document.

2 | Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. The Board will ensure all policies promote the equality principles as set out in this policy and monitor the progress towards our trust-wide equality objectives which can be found on our website.

2.2 The CEO and Executive Leadership team are responsible on a day-to-day basis for ensuring that the principles in this policy are enacted, and the Local Governing Board for each of our academies will monitor and scrutinise the application of this policy and the progress towards individual academy equality objectives.

2.3 The Principal and senior leadership team within each academy have responsibility for:

- Ensuring the full implementation of this policy and for providing leadership and vision in respect of equality
- Coordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact
- Ensuring that all who enter the academy are aware of, and comply with, this policy
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support

- Taking appropriate action in response to all incidents of discrimination or alleged discrimination in line with relevant policies (such as behaviour, peer-on-peer abuse, complaints, staff disciplinary and grievance)
- Analysing and responding to any patterns regarding performance, attendance, and exclusions to address direct or indirect discrimination
- Ensuring the performance of different groups of students is monitored and evaluated in relation to the protected characteristics and to meet our *Public Sector Equality Duty*
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to allow all those with a protected characteristic to access our services and activities
- Publishing and monitoring academy-level equalities objectives which are reviewed annually and revised at least every four years, in line with the *Public Sector Equality Duty*.

2.4 All colleagues have responsibility for:

- Implementing this policy
- Ensuring they do not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone who shares a protected characteristic
- Knowing how to identify and challenge bias, stereotyping and discrimination
- Challenging and dealing with such incidents in line with this and other policies
- Putting into place reasonable adjustments to make sure all pupils can access the curriculum especially those pupils with a special educational need, disability or those using an auxiliary aid
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events as required.

3 | Forms of Discrimination

3.1 Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics. Direct discrimination may take the form of direct discrimination by association whereby someone is treated less favourably due to the protected characteristic of someone they are associated with. Direct discrimination can also take the form of direct discrimination by perception whereby a person is treated differently based on a protected characteristic they are thought to have, whether this perception by others is correct.

3.2 Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the shared protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

3.3 Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

- 3.4 Victimization is also prohibited. This is the less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint.
- 3.5 Not making reasonable adjustments to the environment, the curriculum or other activities constitutes discrimination.

4 | Applying Our Policy

4.1 All students in our academies will experience a curriculum that:

- Is **ambitious** and **enjoyable** through knowledge and skills developed from Foundation Stage to Post 16 and adult provision.
- Is **knowledge rich**, ensuring access to a wide, global cultural capital – thus maximising lifetime opportunities.
- Is **inclusive**, nurturing and tailored towards the needs of the individual.
- Is focused on developing the very best **oracy, literacy, numeracy, and digital** skills – enabling access to the widest learning and the very best careers possible to ensure we develop global citizens.
- Is **enriching**, ensuring all experience a rich variety of cultural, artistic, and sporting activities.
- Is **broad** in terms of coverage and (at least) encompassing the breadth of the 2014 English National Curriculum.
- Celebrates the uniqueness of each educational setting in terms of **localised knowledge and skills**.
- **Develops** character, personal pride, and the highest moral standards.
- celebrates **diversity**, challenges **injustice**, promotes **equality** and encourages the creation of a better world.
- Is delivered by well-qualified, forward-thinking, skilled, passionate **professionals**.

4.2 This curriculum statement explicitly includes the obligation to ensure that:

- All students will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need
- When planning the curriculum, we will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality
- When teaching the curriculum, we will promote equality and will not subject individuals to discrimination
- We will develop an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in all vulnerable groups.

- 4.3 **Admissions:** Admission to our academies is based on the criteria outlined in our admissions policy. This is evaluated and monitored for equality impact on pupils, parents, and carers.
- 4.4 **Accessibility:** The accessibility policy and plan are monitored for equality impact on pupils, staff, parents, and carers. Physical access, curriculum access, organisational and information access are considered as part of our accessibility plan, particularly keeping in view the needs of pupils and staff with a special educational need or disability or other protected characteristics. All students will be given full access to extra-curricular activities or visits. Our educational visits policy outlines our robust procedures for ensuring all trips and visits are available to all.
- 4.5 **Day-to-day life in our academies:** We will ensure, among other things, that:
- There is a feeling of openness and acceptance which welcomes everyone to the academy
 - The displays around the academy are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all protected characteristics and are frequently monitored
 - Provision is made to cater for the social, moral, and spiritual needs of all students through planning of both assemblies, classroom based and offsite activities
 - Students are given an effective voice through the operation of regular surveys, student councils and more informal mechanisms
 - Positive role models are used throughout the academy to ensure that different groups of pupils can see themselves reflected in the academy community.

5 | Breaches of this Policy

- 5.1 We will take any breaches or alleged breaches of this policy very seriously. These may be raised as a grievance (by colleagues) or as a complaint (by students, parents/carers, or other members of our communities).

6 | Monitoring the Impact of the Policy

- 6.1 The Principal of each academy is responsible for ensuring that progress against equality objectives and a review of equality impact is conducted at least annually and reviewed by the Local Governing Board on behalf of the Board of Trustees.