



Equalities Statement

Ratified Date:

September 2020

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Signed on behalf of the CEO:

Review Date:

September 2024

Context and Policy Aims

This policy outlines the trusts' commitment to ensure that equality and diversity is promoted in the workplace and our employees and other stakeholders are not subject to or do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

The trust is committed to providing high quality learning experiences for all students. We recognise that by valuing and promoting equality and diversity for all and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services, we will be able to deliver the highest standards in education. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

Under the provisions of the general public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010), the trust must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimization.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This duty covers the protected characteristics of race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment. The first part of the duty - the duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation - also applies to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership.

We will ensure that the trust does not discriminate, harass or victimise employees on the basis of the protected characteristics. This principle also extends to how we expect employees to interact with each other, pupils, parents and carers, visitors, outside agencies, clients, and suppliers.

This policy applies to all employees, temporary and casual staff, trustees and governors, consultants, trainees and volunteers. It covers all aspects of the employment including recruitment and selection, training and development, promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, termination of employment and provision of references.

Roles and Responsibilities

The trust board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with equality legislation. Day-to-day operational responsibility has been delegated to the CEO and Heads of School.

All senior leaders must show leadership and set appropriate standards of behaviour and ensure that other employees adhere to the policy and promote equality objectives. All employees have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and not to discriminate against or harass other employees, treating them with dignity at all times. They should also apply this to how they interact with other stakeholders in upholding the trusts' commitment to equal opportunities for all and promoting diversity in the workplace.

Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

Discrimination

Discrimination is not allowed except in specific exceptional circumstances and may be **direct** or **indirect**.

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of one or more protected characteristics. This is prohibited except for specific legal exemptions in exceptional circumstances where there is a genuine occupational requirement. This requirement must be crucial to the post and represent a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, for example a female PE teacher as they must supervise the girls' changing rooms. Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that also puts people with a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Such a requirement will also need to be objectively justified.

Associative discrimination where someone is discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic is also prohibited.

Harassment

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. It is prohibited in all circumstances.

Victimisation

Victimisation is the less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint. It is prohibited in all circumstances.

Recruitment and Selection

We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of a protected characteristic. Our recruitment procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities. Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using words that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised widely so as to give an equal chance to all candidates.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, other than to establish:

- Establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job, subject to reasonable adjustments
- Establish if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable an applicant to have a fair application process
- Carry out equal opportunities monitoring

Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy, children or intentions to have children. Recruitment diversity data will be analysed to inform appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

Training, Career Progression, Pay and Conditions of Service

All employees will be provided access to appropriate training for their job and progress their careers through the trust. Pay decisions and promotion will be determined by performance, skills and experience. Conditions of service, benefits and facilities are regularly reviewed to ensure they are available to all employees who should have access to them and there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Terminating Employment

Redundancy criteria and procedures are fairly and objectively applied and not discriminatory. We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination.

Disability

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you appropriately. If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, please discuss with your line manager and/or the trust HR team to discuss any possible adjustments that can be made. This may require referral to Occupational Health or similar. The trust will carefully consider all individual circumstances and aim to accommodate any reasonable adjustments. We will monitor the premises to consider whether they place the disabled at a substantial disadvantage compared to other employees and make appropriate changes when these are discovered.

Complaints

If you believe that you may have been unfairly treated under the terms of this policy, complaints should be directed to the Grievance Policy (employees) and Complaints Policy (other stakeholders). All complaints made in good faith will be fully investigated. Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

Equality Objectives

Achievement:

- We are committed to improving the attainment of vulnerable groups of students, including students with Special Educational Needs, students with disabilities and those entitled to Free School Meals so that the gap between their attainment and that of other students is narrowed
- We aim to raise aspirations among children and young people, their parents and communities and raise awareness of career and higher education opportunities, to challenge stereotypes-

Teaching and Learning:

We will ensure that our curriculum, including our programme of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, is broad and balanced and provides opportunities for all students and promotes understanding between different groups of people, cultures and societies.

Our curriculum will include an element of PHSE education that tackles stereotypes and challenges students' perceptions.

Behaviour and Safety:

We will maintain a rigorous anti-bullying stance so that all students and staff, including those with protected characteristics, are protected from harassment and discrimination of all kinds

We will ensure that the promotion of our Christian values and British values through our curriculum. This will support and develop our students into responsible citizens of the future.

Our Behaviour for learning policies will outline how we will deal with students who use discriminatory homophobic or otherwise offensive language.

Leadership and Management:

We will demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity through consistent application of our policies and procedures.

We will ensure that our systems for recruiting, retaining and managing staff (and potential applicants) support all those in groups protected by the Equalities Act.

We will undertake equality assessments of all new and existing policies and procedures

Monitoring

The trust board will review this policy every four years, as well as reviewing equality data annually.

This document will be reviewed by the trust board at least every 4 years.