



**Equalities policy**

**April 2021**

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**Approved by the Standards and Outcomes Committee of the Trust Board, 28 April 2021**

## **Our Vision**

### **We have one core purpose:**

To have the biggest positive impact in the varied communities we serve through ensuring top drawer education for our learners. #TransformingLives

### **How do we ensure this across our trust?**

#### In all we do we are:

1. Ethical to the core, ensuring that education is always front and centre
2. Futures focused system leaders – never simply followers
3. Collaborative in every endeavour
4. Resolutely learner centred.

### **What does this look like across our trust?**

#### Education

We are:

1. Ruthlessly ambitious for all who learn and work with us
2. Unwaveringly inclusive – determined on eradicating barriers to educational success
3. Committed to excellent teaching
4. Determined upon academic excellence for all in our communities
5. Compassionate, ethical and caring advocates for all in our communities
6. Outwardly facing and globally conscious

#### Operations

We are:

1. Committed to the very best people development and empowerment
2. Determined to shout loudly and share proudly our successes
3. The best professional and technical experts (supporting education) in the sector
4. Committed to the very best understanding and management of risk

#### Financial

We are:

1. Providing the best possible public service for the best possible value
2. Determined to supplement our public income with shrewd income generation
3. Building financially sustainable models of educational improvement in our communities
4. Demonstrably efficient in all we do

## **Our values**

- We will work inclusively within our communities, embracing the varied localities we serve while sharing our common vision and values.
- We will develop the very best leaders of the future, working to improve education and transform lives.
- We will adhere unwaveringly to the ‘Nolan Principles’ of Public Service, which is made clear in our commitment to Ethical Leadership.

## **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.

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## **1 Policy statement**

We are committed to taking positive action with regard to the needs of people with protected characteristics.

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.

This applies specifically, although 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.

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.

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

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**

### *The Board of Trustees*

The Board 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.

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 Academy Committee for each of our academies will monitor and scrutinise the application of this policy and the progress towards individual academy equality objectives.

### *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 with regard to performance, attendance and exclusions in order 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 in order 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.

### *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

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 actually correct or not.

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.

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.

Victimisation 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.

Not making reasonable adjustments to the environment, the curriculum or other activities constitutes discrimination.

### 4 Applying our policy

#### *Curriculum*

All students in our academies will experience a curriculum that

1. is **ambitious** and **enjoyable** through knowledge and skills developed from Foundation Stage to Post 16 and Adult provision.
2. is **knowledge rich**, ensuring access to a wide, global cultural capital – thus maximising lifetime opportunities.
3. is **inclusive**, nurturing and tailored towards the needs of the individual.
4. 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.
5. is **enriching**, ensuring all experience a rich variety of cultural, artistic and sporting activities.
6. is **broad** in terms of coverage and (at least) encompassing the breadth of the 2014 English National Curriculum.
7. celebrates the uniqueness of each educational setting in terms of **localised knowledge and skills**.
8. **develops** character, personal pride and the highest moral standards.
9. celebrates **diversity**, challenges **injustice**, promotes **equality** and encourages the creation of a better world.
10. is delivered by well-qualified, forward-thinking, skilled, passionate **professionals**.

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.

#### *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.

#### *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.

#### *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**

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**

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 Academy Committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees.