

Equality Policy

Documentation Information			
Reviewed By	COO	Responsibility	Trust Board
Review Cycle	Annually	Next Review	31.12.2024
		Ratified by Trust Board	Annually

Legal framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to disability, ethnicity, sex (gender), religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender identity (and as relevant, pregnancy/maternity, and in relation to employment; age and marriage/civil partnership).
2. We recognise and act on all opportunities to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these duties and intentions reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding principles

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations and our intentions cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their sex (gender)
- whatever their gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual orientation

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference. Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of prejudice that people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- sex (gender), so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual orientation
- gender identity (and as relevant, pregnancy/maternity, and in relation to employment; age and marriage/civil partnership).

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents

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- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual, homophobic, and gender identity based harassment

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment. This Policy Framework has been adapted courtesy of Insted Publications retention and development. We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their sex (gender) and sexual orientation
- whatever their gender identity (and as relevant, in respect of pregnancy/maternity, age and marriage/civil partnership).

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist. In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist in relation to:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- sexual orientation
- gender identity (and as relevant, in respect of pregnancy/maternity, and in relation to employment; age and marriage/civil partnership).

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely. We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. As appropriate, we consult and involve groups and individuals in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity
- ethnicity

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit. We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of all groups and individuals in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity
- ethnicity
- age

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence and information. We maintain and publish at least annually, quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- religion/belief
- sexual orientation
- sex (gender)
- gender identity

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- ethnicity

The objectives that we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

5. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.

6. We revisit our equalities action plan annually within the framework of the overall trust improvement plan and processes of self-evaluation which is filtered down to school level.

7. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

The curriculum

8. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the relevant principles set out in paragraph 4 above.

Ethos and organisation

9. We ensure guiding principles listed in paragraph 4, apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

10. The trust and its schools are opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudice around disability and special educational needs
- prejudice around racism and xenophobia, including that directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudice reflecting sexism and homophobia
- prejudice against gender identity issues

11. There is guidance in each school's staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

12. We record and report incidents regarding equality, including racism and homophobia in each school across the Trust.

Roles and responsibilities

13. The Board of Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Trust and its schools complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

14. A designated member of the Local Governing Body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

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15. The Head of School is responsible for implementing the policy in each school; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

16. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

17. All Trust schools are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the relevant principles in paragraph 4 above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Information and resources

18. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and local governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

19. All staff and local governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

20. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

21. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

22. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other trust policies are dealt with, as determined by the CEO and Board of Trustees.

Monitoring and evaluation

23. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

24. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.