

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Approved by Trustees:	

1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to confirm the Trust's commitment to equality and to valuing diversity as an employer and a provider of education. It also outlines the fair employment practices and monitoring processes that we are committed to putting into place to support this.

The Equality Act introduced specific duties, which are designed to help schools to meet their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is set out on the face of the Act, while the specific duties are set out in secondary legislation.

We are committed to the Specific Duties requiring our schools to:

- Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish equality objectives every four years (one or more as is proportionate to the organisation).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students, employees, potential employees, supply staff, agency staff, volunteers, contracted staff and members of governing bodies. This Policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies:

- Disciplinary Policy;
- Grievance Policy;
- Recruitment and selection Policy;
- Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy;
- Other relevant student policies, such as behaviour and anti-bullying.

3. Commitments

3.1 Valuing Diversity

Our schools welcome pupils from all communities and aim to help overcome any obstacles to full and equal participation in our curriculum activities.

The Trust is committed to building a workforce which reflects diversity from the communities it serves and values the contributions from all staff from a wide range of different backgrounds. The Trust actively seeks to promote an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and where all staff and students are encouraged to fulfil their full potential.

It is our policy to promote equality to all irrespective of:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Sexual orientation;
- Race (including nationality; ethnic or national origin);
- Gender (including gender reassignment);
- Marital Status including civil partnership;
- Domestic circumstances;
- Carer responsibilities;
- Religion or belief;
- Trade union membership.

3.2 Equality and Diversity

The Trust seeks to be an equal opportunities education provider and employer and is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We are determined to ensure that:

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for students with protected characteristics – designed to stop students with protected characteristics being placed at a disadvantage compared to their peers.
- The Headteacher/Principal ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

- We 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.
- We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the school. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.
- Our employment practices comply fully with current equalities legislation and associated codes of conduct. Decisions on recruitment and selection, promotions, training and any other benefit is made objectively, without unlawful discrimination and based upon objective criteria.
- We will aim for our workforce, including volunteers, to reflect the diverse society which we serve and provide a working environment free from any form of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or victimisation.
- We recognise that the provision of equality of opportunity in all our activities will benefit the Trust. Our policy will help all staff to develop to their full potential and the talents and resources of staff will be utilised fully to maximise the effectiveness of the work of the Trust.
- All employees are expected to co-operate fully with this policy and any member of staff found to have committed any act, or acts of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with under the Trust Disciplinary procedure.

4. Equality Commitments

4.1 Recruitment & Selection

- All recruitment will be carried out in accordance with The Trust's recruitment and selection procedures which are aimed at ensuring that the most suitable candidate is appointed fairly to the job.

- All advertisements will state that the Trust values equality and diversity.
- Selection will be based on objective and job related criteria and the successful candidate will be chosen on his/her merits and abilities.
- Applicants will be asked to complete an equalities monitoring form as part of their application. This information will be separated from the application form and will be used for monitoring purposes only and will play no part in the selection process.
- Our recruitment and selection practices will comply with all appropriate employment law and legislation and will be amended to reflect any subsequent legislative changes.

4.2 Nationality and Immigration

In order to comply with the provisions of the Immigration Act, we will take steps to ensure all staff are eligible to work in the United Kingdom. Successful candidates will be asked to produce original and specified documents(s) before a confirmed offer of employment is provided.

4.3 Safeguarding

In order to safeguard and protect the welfare of all the students in our care, we will ensure safe recruitment practices are followed. As such all employees, agency workers, contractors, volunteers, casual and supply staff will be required to provide relevant information for the Trust's safeguarding register to confirm their suitability to work with children.

Raising awareness of the scope of safeguarding within the Trust for staff, students and volunteers is a key part of our training and education programme.

4.4 Conditions of Service

The Trust's terms and conditions of employment will be monitored to ensure that they are consistent with the equality and diversity statement.

4.5 HR Policies and Procedures

HR policies and procedures will be reviewed regularly to improve, amend or adapt current practices to promote equality of opportunities at the Trust.

Human resources policies will be applied consistently and fairly to all staff. In addition employees of the Trust have access to a range of policies which are designed to support and encourage flexibility and diversity in the workplace.

4.6 Staff Training and Development

All employees will have access to development opportunities, promotion and training at the Trust. All new employees will be provided with an induction pack which will include a reference to the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy.

5. Implementation

5.1 Responsibilities and accountabilities

The Trust Board are responsible for:

- Making sure all academies follow all of its equality and diversity policies and codes, and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality

Headteachers/Principals are responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality and diversity;
- advancing equality and diversity inside and outside their academy;
- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation;
- ensuring academies implement equality and diversity policies and codes of practice.

All academy leaders (for example senior, subject and pastoral leaders) are responsible for:

- putting the academy equality and diversity policies and codes into practice;
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

The Headteachers/Principals and Chairs of Governors have specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy at academy level. The CEO and Trust

Directors are responsible at corporate level. We expect all employees to abide by the policy and help to create an environment where equal rights and respect for diversity are promoted.

In implementing this policy we will:

- Communicate the policy to all staff through staff briefings;
- Ensure the policy is used as a means of raising and discussing the issues covered in this policy on a periodic basis to ensure that all staff remain fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity;
- The Trust will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that it will not consciously or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants.

6. Monitoring & Review

This Equality and Diversity Policy has been approved and adopted by the SHARE Multi Academy Trust and will be reviewed every three years, or as required to ensure it remains compliant with Equality legislation.

7. Complaints

Any breaches of the policy should be reported in the first instance to the Principal/Headteacher at the academy who will deal with the matter in accordance with the Trust Complaints Policy.