

AQUINAS Church of England Education Trust

"Life - Transforming - Learning"

Policy Title:	EQUALITY EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY
Responsibility:	CEO
Review Body:	Board of Trustees
Date:	March 2022
Review:	September 2023

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Trust is committed to:

- Creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.
- Promoting dignity and respect for all.
- Training all employees and educating all pupils about their rights and responsibilities under this policy.
- Promoting equality of opportunity for all stakeholders and those that interact with the Trust.

We aim to create an environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their talent and skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit and in the best interests of the individual concerned. We are committed to supporting our pupils, staff, stakeholders and those that interact with the Trust to be their authentic selves without judgement and ensuring that diverse communities are celebrated.

We do not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender identity and/or reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics), amended in line with the Equality Act 2010 (the Act). Further details of each protected characteristic are found at Appendix 1. Forms of discrimination are found at Appendix 2.

We are also mindful of intersecting identities within the Trust and will work with our communities to better understand the experience of multiple minority identities for individuals.

All pupils, staff and volunteers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat others with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass others. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff, pupils, parents, governors, third party organisations and former staff members treat one another.

This policy has been developed with the Trust's Christian values and principles as its basis. All employees, pupils and other stakeholders are required to support the Christian ethos of the Trust whilst part of the Trust community, in the tradition of the Church of England. All Trust and academy policies reflect the requirements of the Act and admission arrangements are formulated in accordance with Admissions Code 2021 for faith schools as appropriate.

The entitlement to develop, learn and work in an environment free from discrimination is implicit in the Trust's Christian ethos, the core of which is the ultimate worth and dignity of every human being before God. Central to the Trust's mission is the promotion and understanding of human diversity in the community which is positive and celebrated. No member of the Trust community shall suffer unfair direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of a protected characteristic or none.

Allegations of victimisation or harassment associated with discrimination shall be investigated and pursued in line with the Trust's grievance and disciplinary policies and the relevant academy's anti-bullying policy.

The Trust recognises that in some cases it may be necessary to put in place more favourable treatment for some individuals or groups in the interests of securing sustainable equality or access and opportunity.

The assurance of equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination must permeate all aspects of Trust life, including:

- All Trust and academy policies and procedures
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- Attainment and progress in all areas of activity and across all groups of pupils, particularly those with a protected characteristic (analysing group level data over time to identify any impact on pupils)
- Behaviour and sanctions
- Pupil rewards
- Advice and guidance
- Personal development and pastoral care
- Extra-curricular opportunities and participation
- Admissions and attendance
- Curriculum and options
- Staff recruitment, promotion and professional development
- Partnerships with parents and communities
- Governance and leadership

Equal opportunity is not about treating everybody the same. It is about meeting people's individual needs and appreciating their individual strengths and gifts. Everyone is different and all should be equally valued.

The Trust's responsibility does not end when a pupil has left one of its our academies, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between the academy and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to "old pupils" communications and activities.

This policy covers:

- All employees of the Trust working at all levels and grades, including members of the SLT, teachers, associate staff, trainees, home workers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual workers, agency staff, and volunteers (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy). It applies to all aspects of the school's relationship with staff and to relations between staff members at all levels. This includes job advertisements, recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- All pupils registered at an academy within the Trust (collectively referred to as 'pupils' in this policy).
- All parents/ guardians/ carers of pupils (collectively referred to as 'parents' in this policy).
- All contractors providing services to the Trust or one of its academies (collectively referred to as 'contractors' in this policy).

Instances of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination:

- By staff will be dealt with as misconduct, in line with the Trust's Grievance Policy and/or Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

- By pupils will be dealt with as misconduct under the relevant academy’s anti-bullying and behaviour management policies.
- Experienced by pupils and/or their parents as a result of the operations of the academy will be dealt with under the relevant academy’s complaints policy

Sexual harassment may also amount to a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. Harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following: UPDATED

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Act
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The Act makes it unlawful for the Trust to discriminate against, harass or victimise staff, pupils, parents, contractors or another other individual that interacts with the Trust or one of its academies in relation to any of its educational or business operations.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Flexible Working Policy
- Teacher Appraisal Policy
- Associate Staff Appraisal Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Look After policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Staff Wellbeing policy
- Whistleblowing

And the following academy policies:

- Accessibility
- Admissions
- Administration of Medicines
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour management
- Child Looked After
- Children with Medical Conditions
- Complaints
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
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PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY (PSED)

PSED requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

THE TRUST'S AIMS

- To offer an education appropriate to each individual pupil's needs.
- With regard to the SEND Code of Practice index for inclusion and the social inclusion initiatives, to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for all our pupils, and the opportunity to reach levels of attainment appropriate to their ability.
- To encourage our staff, pupils and parents to value their own cultural heritage and the culture and lifestyles of others, and to show respect for self and others while at the same time finding common ground to talk to one another and valuing living together in a community.
- To ensure that staff and pupils take responsibility for establishing a reasonable environment for debate and extending opportunities for controversial discussion. Staff and parents will address widely held misconceptions to avoid the risk of pupils with limited experience arriving at consensus views of doubtful validity.
- To ensure the provision of genuine equality of opportunity is inherent in the employment and education the Trust offers.
- To ensure that employment, promotion and curriculum opportunities are open to all.
- To challenge any gender stereotyping, which leads to constraints on the development of an individual's abilities and aspirations and should include the opportunity to study multicultural issues as an intrinsic part of all programmes and teaching.
- To demonstrate the unacceptability of attitudes, incidents, taunts or remarks that give offence, intimidate, devalue another's view or opinion, or undermine another's self-esteem.
- To ensure that everyone at our Trust academies, (staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors) are afforded the basic rights of freedom and access to opportunity, including freedom from all forms of harassment or bullying.
- To ensure that active encouragement is given to all staff and pupils in order to enable them to develop fully their talents and personal skills for co-operative interaction and employment and academic excellence. No one person has the right to deny another person his or her such opportunities.
- To regard all staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors as being of equal value and will ensure that the reasonable needs of all are identified and met, and that they are able to achieve their full potential.
- To challenge in a positive way any form of prejudice, whether overt or covert, which contradicts the Trust's aims. This means adopting a consistent and unambiguous stand, from which we strive to overcome prejudice and ensure equality of opportunity for all, thus protecting the rights and liberties of every individual.
- To create and retain a workforce that is valued for its diverse contributions and represents different perspectives, ethnic backgrounds, experience and skills. To achieve this, the Trust will maintain strong community/parental links and Aquinas Advisory Councils will give support to their academies and its stakeholders, to ensure an effective non-discriminatory environment.
- To ensure that contractors are working on site, measures will be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that their employees operate according to this policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trust Board

Through the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Board is responsible for:

- the effective operation of this policy;

- agreeing the Trust's equality, diversity and inclusivity strategy and action plan in support of this policy;
- ensuring that each academy complies with all discrimination legislation;
- ensuring that the fundamental Christian belief in the value of each person regardless of background or circumstances permeates the Trust's ethos;
- ensuring that the admission arrangements for each academy are not discriminatory;
- ensuring all pupils receive a broad, balanced and rich curriculum;
- monitoring the composition of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability;
- monitoring how the composition of the workforce encourages equality, equity, diversity and inclusion, and meets the aims and commitments set out in this policy;
- assessing how this policy, and any supporting action plans, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

It will achieve these broad aims by:

- promoting equality as an explicit aim in each of the Trust and academy policies and ensuring it underpins all aspects of its work;
- ensuring the policy reflects belief in diversity that embraces individuals and promotes community spirit;
- ensuring that this policy, the equality, diversity and inclusivity strategy and action plan is developed through wide consultation in the Trust, academies and with the wider community;
- ensuring no learners will be discriminated against in the provision of services offered to learners in relation to their education;
- ensuring all role descriptions include a commitment to equality and diversity as part of their specifications;
- ensuring that all recruitment, employment, promotion and staff development policies and practice reflect the ethos and requirements of equalities legislation; and
- incorporating equality targets into the Trust Action Plan and Academy Improvement Plans to ensure all individuals and groups, regardless of race, gender, disability or other factors achieve their potential and make good progress.

Executive Headteachers , Headteachers or Heads of School (referred to in this policy as Headteachers) and Leadership Teams of the Academies

Headteachers and Leadership Teams are responsible for:

- setting an appropriate standard of behaviour and leading by example;
- making sure the single equality scheme is published and that the staff, learners and their parents and guardians and wider community know about it;
- ensuring that those they manage adhere to this policy and promote the Trust's aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities;
- taking appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities, in line with the academy's Flexible Working Policy;
- making opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff;
- ensuring staff are helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Trust;
- making staff progression decisions based on merit are fair and actively non-discriminatory (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act 2010);
- reviewing employment practices and procedures where necessary to ensure fairness.
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment, victimisation or discrimination;
- updating employment practices and procedures, and this policy, to take account of changes in the law as advised by the Director of HR.

- ensuring that pupils are provided a broad and balanced curriculum which supports an understanding of cultural, racial, age and sexual differences.
- ensuring that all pupils can access the curriculum regardless of their protected characteristics or otherwise and reasonable adjustments are made for those with protected characteristics.
- ensuring that the academy's interaction with parents, contractors and visitors is not discriminatory and positive steps are taken to ensure that everyone is treated without bias and with equanimity.

Staff with specific responsibilities

- Line managers will participate in appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and unconscious bias.
- Line managers will participate in equal opportunities recruitment and selection good practice as outlined in the Recruitment policy.
- Staff responsible for pupil welfare and safeguarding at each academy are responsible for coordinating work on equality across the academy and dealing with incidents of harassment and victimisation and reporting them to the Trust.
- Staff responsible for curriculum at each academy are responsible for ensuring that pupil curriculum choices, attainment and progress do not reveal any embedded stereotyping or discrimination.
- Staff responsible for extra-curricular activities at the academy will monitor participation by minority groups in conjunction with the Headteachers and leadership teams.
- Staff responsible for staff development at each academy must monitor access to and participation in staff development with equalities in mind.

All staff

All staff are responsible for:

- treating each other, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors with respect;
- examining the ideas and images in books and other resources and challenging negative images and giving pupils positive images;
- ensuring that displays, notices, meals, etc. in the academy reflects its multi-racial population;
- attending in-service training courses on equal opportunities. Staff will be expected to make every effort to understand the origins and nature of racism, disability, sexism and other forms of prejudice to recognise their own prejudice where it exists;
- encouraging the teaching and/or use of community languages;
- forging positive links with the homes of pupils and their communities;
- preventing and dealing with discriminatory behaviour, abuse, bullying and intimidation. Each academy will support victims of such incidents, on or off the premises;
- dealing with any form of harassment, and being able to recognise and tackle racial, gender or disability bias and stereotyping;
- challenging negative language and actions, re-educating and using sanctions where appropriate;
- promoting positive attitudes, and avoiding discrimination against anyone on the grounds of a protected characteristic;
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination, and taking up training and learning opportunities;
- being aware of the importance of equality and fairness as a staff body, and drawing attention to any areas or events which may cause concern.

Guidance for staff for dealing with issues of prejudice and discrimination is attached at Appendix 3.

Pupils

- Pupils should treat each other and staff with respect.
- Pupils are valued for themselves and can expect to have their culture and language treated positively and with respect.
- Pupils will be given the opportunity in the classroom to discuss and to identify and understand all forms of prejudice.

- Pupils will have the opportunity to be involved in anti-bullying work and be able to contribute to the development of equal opportunities through the school councils at their academy.
- If pupils feel they have been abused or bullied they should report the matter immediately to their teacher/learning director/year co-ordinator/deputy/assistant headteacher (as appropriate). All pupils can expect to be listened to and have their complaints investigated. If a pupil feels their complaint has not been properly dealt with they may take the matter to the Headteacher.
- Pupils who have suffered discriminatory behaviour, abuse, bullying or intimidation will be supported by the academy and in particular by their teacher/tutor/learning director (as appropriate). Anyone who has committed such offences will be dealt with appropriately in accordance with the appropriate Trust or academy policy. .

Parents, visitors and contractors

- Parents are very important to the Trust and its academies and they have much to contribute to the single equality scheme; their views are welcome and valued at all times. We ask that all parents fully support the Trust's single equality scheme.
- Each academy will discuss with parents any incidents of discrimination, abuse or bullying and harassment incidents in which their sons or daughters have been involved.
- If parents are aware of incidents of discrimination, abuse, bullying or harassment then they should contact their child's teacher/tutor/learning director/year co-ordinator/senior member of staff (as appropriate).
- Any visitors or contract staff visiting or working at the Trust or an academy who become aware of any incidents of discrimination, abuse, bullying or harassment should report them to the CEO or Headteacher (as appropriate) or one of the senior staff. They should also abide by the code of conduct established by the academy in relation to the single equality scheme.
- Visitors and contractors are responsible for knowing and following the single equality duty.

INFORMATION

- Pastoral leaders will ensure that pupils receive the information that they need on how to stay safe and make informed choices, especially those groups with protected characteristics.
- The IT department should ensure that internet filters do not block information about protected groups, e.g. about mental health issues, LGBTQ issues.
- Each academy will proactively communicate information to parents about the work it is undertaking on equality issues including tackling homophobia, racial incidents, disability and mental health issues.
- The Trust will publicise its ethos and belief that all young people are unique and entitled to live freely and make their own choices, i.e. to be themselves.

STAFF

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The Trust will aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of their protected characteristics. The Trust's recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is relevant to the job and not disproportionate. The shortlisting of applicants will be done by more than one person wherever possible.

Job advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying. The Trust will take steps to ensure that vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which will only be used with the Director of HR's approval, such as:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

The Trust is required by law to ensure that all staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be expected to produce original documents, e.g. a passport, before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, the Trust will monitor applicants' ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information will be voluntary and will not adversely affect an applicant's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be removed from applications before the shortlisting process, and will be kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps the Trust take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

STAFF TRAINING AND PROMOTION

Staff training needs and associated development opportunities will be identified through regular staff appraisals, in line with the Trust's appraisal policies for both teachers and associate staff. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit. The Trust will adopt good practice in terms of data collection and use this data to monitor and measure the attraction, recruitment, retention and progression of staff.

Workforce composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

The Trust will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory. The Trust will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action, in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

The Trust encourages staff who are disabled or become disabled to inform the CEO, Headteacher or their line manager about their condition so that the Trust can support them as appropriate.

Staff experiencing difficulties at work because of their disability (physical or otherwise) may wish to contact their line manager or the Director of HR to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Their line manager or the Director of HR may wish to consult with the staff member and occupational health about possible adjustments.

The Trust supports the admission of pupils with disabilities subject to the relevant academy being the appropriate provision for the pupil. The Trust and its academies will action the requirements of the pupil's education and health care plan, where relevant and/ or put in place the appropriate reasonable measures to support pupils with disabilities. Academies will also support disabled parents of pupils to ensure that they can engage with the academy in support of their child's education.

The CEO/ Headteacher will monitor the physical environment of the Trust/ academy premises to consider whether certain features place physically disabled staff, pupils, parents, job applicants, service users, or other stakeholders at a substantial disadvantage compared to others. Where reasonable, the Trust and/ or the academy will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

PART TIME, CASUAL, FIXED TERM AND AGENCY EMPLOYEES.

The Trust monitors the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities.

The Trust will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the Flexible Working Policy.

The Trust monitors its use of casual hours and fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. The Trust will, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

PUPILS

ADMISSIONS

All Trust academies will accept applications for admission for any child that meets the admission criteria for the academy. Except as detailed in the published admission arrangements, the Trust places no restrictions on admission.

Subject to the admission arrangements for each academy, the Trust welcomes applications from children looked after and previously looked after and those with or without a protected characteristic. Applications from children with an Education and Healthcare Plan will be supported if the relevant academy can meet the needs of the applicant, it is in the best interests of the applicant to attend the academy and attendance does not prejudice other pupils.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Each academy shall have a behaviour management policy which is reflective of the pupil cohort and its specific needs. The management of behaviour shall be in accordance with the policy and shall be applied consistently and fairly not discriminating against those with a protected characteristic. All academies shall promote an inclusive environment where all pupils are valued and encouraged to achieve their best.

Staff at the academies will be aware through training that pupils with certain protected characteristics are susceptible to bullying; thus, academies will have anti-bullying policies which seek to eliminate such negative behaviour. Academies will use the relationship, sex and health education curriculum to promote positive relationship between students and encourage tolerance, respect and inclusivity.

CHILD LOOKED AFTER

The academy and in particular the designated teacher will work with the Virtual School Head, carers and adopted parents to ensure that children looked after and previously looked after receive the necessary support to access the full curriculum and the next phase in their education.

Children looked after and previously looked after will be given the highest priority for admissions. Academies will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state. A personal education plan will be created and implemented for all such pupils, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind. We will ensure that any special educational needs of disabilities have been taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at all academies will be broad and balanced and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes. All pupils will be supported to access all elements of the curriculum.

We believe that pupils should be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, and will not make any unjustified changes to our curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a pupil may have.

EXCLUSION

Exclusion will only be sanctioned by the Headteacher or Head of School where the academy's behaviour management policy has been contravened and exclusion is the only available sanction in accordance with the policy. In doing so the Headteacher or Head of School will be mindful of those pupils with certain protected characteristics who are more over-represented in exclusion statistics.

FIRST AID AND CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Academies will ensure that the relevant staff have the appropriate training to support pupils with particular medical conditions so that they can attend school and access the full curriculum. This may also include ensuring that there are processes to support pupils with food and other allergies

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)

Pupils with an education and health care plan (EHCP). Will be provided with the necessary support in accordance with their EHCP. Pupils without an EHCP but who have been identified as having a SEN will also be supported through an individual educational plan.

The Trust will make reasonable adjustments for such pupils in order to ensure that they can access the curriculum and extra curricula activities.

PARENTS

Where necessary, the Trust will also ensure that parents of pupils with protected characteristics are assisted so that they are able to participate in school activities and the necessary parental support a pupil needs to achieve.

IMPLEMENTATION

The principles of this policy will be applied to:

- Admissions and transfer procedures.
- Assessment, and subsequent groupings by ability/attainment levels.
- Curriculum, teaching and learning (including language and cultural needs).
- Student behaviour, discipline, punishment and reward.
- Exclusions (fixed term and permanent).
- Staff recruitment and career development.
- Membership of AACs.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the community.
- Support, advice and guidance given by teachers/tutors/learning director/mentors/counsellors (as appropriate).

All contraventions of this policy will be treated as disciplinary matters.

PUTTING THE EQUALITIES POLICY INTO PRACTICE

The Trust will provide training for all staff through the Trust or academy training and development programme. The policy will be published as part of each academy's policy documentation, and will be made available to staff, pupils, parents or others who request it. Any breaches of this policy will be treated with gravity and dealt with via normal disciplinary, behaviour management or complaints procedures.

Additionally, all academies have an accessibility plan in place which is regularly updated to ensure that progress is being made towards making the academy accessible to all staff, pupils, parents, contractors and visitors regardless of their disability.

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

If staff, pupils, parents, contractors or visitors consider that they may have been discriminated against, they are encouraged to raise the matter through the Trust's Grievance Policy in the case of staff and the Trust's Complaints policy for all other individuals. If staff believe that they may have been subject to harassment, they are encouraged to raise the matter with their line manager and/or the Director of HR. In the case of pupils, they must raise the matter with their teacher or form tutor. Where parents consider that the school has discriminated against them or their children, they should follow the Trust or academy complaint's policy. This policy does not apply to discriminatory behaviour, bullying, harassment, victimisation between parents.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations made by staff which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

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. The Trust takes a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy. Pupils involved in breaches of the policy will face sanctions in accordance with the Academy's behaviour management/ anti-bullying policies.

COMPLAINTS

Any complaints in relation to the implementation of this policy must be made in accordance with the Trust Complaint's policy where the complaint relates to the central operations of the Trust. Where the complaint relates to an academy, the academy's complaint's policy must be followed.

EVALUATION AND MONITORING

The Trust will review the equality objectives every four years and annually publish information demonstrating how they are meeting the aims of the general public sector equality duty.

Additionally, this policy will be monitored in line with our practice for the monitoring and review of all policies, to ensure its effectiveness through the application of the Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity strategy and action plan. . Evidence will be sought to confirm that the policy is promoted effectively to all stakeholders, ensuring that staff, pupils and parents understand and meet their responsibilities. The effectiveness of the policy will be confirmed by its impact upon the increased inclusive atmosphere for all stakeholders and towards particular goals such as maintaining the gender/disability/racial balance within the staffing establishment, including at senior level.

The revision of the policy will be ongoing, ensuring the involvement and commitment of the whole Trust community.

DATA PROTECTION NOTICE

The Trust processes personal data in accordance with the data protection principles embodied in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (2018). The Trust complies with the requirements of the GDPR as detailed in the Trust data protection Policy.

All staff are aware of the principles of data protection and will not process personal data unless necessary. The Trust safeguards the personal data it collects through the operation of the Trust's data protection policy and processes, and the IT policy. In addition, the Trust has taken steps to ensure that all its contracts that process data have the GDPR compliant provisions.

Appendix 1

EQUALITY ACT 2010 PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The definitions used in this appendix are based on the Equality Act 2010, the full text of which is available here.

Age: The Act protects people of all ages; however, differential treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if it can be justified, i.e. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Age is the only protected characteristic that allows employers to justify direct discrimination.

Disability: The Act protects people who are disabled; the Act defines this as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender identity and/or reassignment: The Act protects transgender people. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected, so a person who does not undergo any medical procedures would be covered by these protections.

Marriage and civil partnership: The Act protects people who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.

Pregnancy and maternity: The Act protects people against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of their pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which they are entitled.

Race: The Act protects people of all races; the Act's definition of race includes colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins.

Religion or belief: The Act protects people of any religion, including specific denominations or sects, as well as a lack of religion, i.e. employees or jobseekers who do not follow a certain religion or do not follow any religion are protected. The Act protects people of any belief; this is defined as any religious or philosophical belief, or a lack of such belief, that is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.

Sex: The Act protects men and women.

Sexual orientation: The Act protects lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual staff.

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics outlined in Appendix 1. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not “fit in” would be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

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. Sexual harassment is described as 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature'.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

What to do if we witness actions which are prejudice?	How do we report these/record?	What sanction?
<p>Situation 1: Misuse of terms that may offend</p> <p><i>'That's so gay', 'that is mental', 'stop acting like a girl'...</i></p> <p>To deal with this you MUST challenge the student. Something like 'why have you just said this? Why use this term in a negative way? How might your actions have caused offence? That's totally inappropriate, do you know why?'</p>	<p>After each situation YOU MUST log this on your academy reporting system.</p>	<p>Challenging a first-time incident should hopefully make the student think twice before acting in this way again SO NO FURTHER SANCTION is required for a one-off incident.</p> <p>However, IF REPEATED, the form tutor needs to 're-educate' the student.</p> <p>MORE THAN 2 OCCASIONS = sanctions according to the behaviour or similar policy.</p>
<p>Situation 2: Direct name calling</p> <p><i>"You are gay/queer/homo...", 'you are a spastic'</i></p> <p>To deal with this If you deem that what the student has done has caused offence to another or their aim was to cause offence you should challenge (as with situation 1) BUT also refer this to the student's form tutor/pastoral leader. It is also ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL that you support and care for the victim.</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p> <p>BUT the form tutor/pastoral leader MUST be involved.</p>	<p>The form tutor/pastoral leader MUST give a sanction, e.g. a phone call home, detention, community service...</p>
<p>Situation 3: You are told by a student that they have witnessed or been a victim of some form of prejudice/discrimination.</p> <p>To deal with this tell the student that you will refer this to the form tutor (and then maybe the pastoral leader if you deem it very serious) to investigate.</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p> <p>BUT the form tutor/pastoral leader MUST be involved.</p>	<p>This will totally depend on the investigation by the form tutor/pastoral leader.</p> <p>The form tutor/pastoral leader should continue to follow the academy's behaviour policy for an appropriate sanction.</p>