

Equality Policy

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office@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk or 01543 472245

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Date	Version	Reason for change	Overview of changes made	Source
22.09.21	0.1	Scheduled Review	Incorporated Racial Equality Policy, which will cease to exist.	SCC
18.10.21	0.2	Scheduled Review	Board Lead. Additional changes to ensure gender issues included. C Gethin.	
19.11.21	2.0	Scheduled Review	Ratified by Board	
19.11.24	2.1	Scheduled Review internal lead	No changes made by internal leads.	
6.12.24	2.2	Scheduled Review board lead		
13.12.24	3	Scheduled review Directors to ratify		

Equality Policy

At The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust we will ensure that we provide a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination, for everyone in our communities.

Our policy aim is based upon 'the Christian message of love, joy and the celebration of our humanity without exception or exclusion' (Valuing All God's Children).

To achieve the Trust's objective of creating an environment free from discrimination and welcoming to all, the Trust will:

- ✓ Respect the different racial origins, religions, cultures and languages in a multi-ethnic society so that each child is valued as an individual without racial or gender stereotyping;
- ✓ To promote racial and cultural understanding;
- ✓ Not discriminate against children on the grounds of disability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, class, family status or HIV/Aids status;
- ✓ Help all children to celebrate and express their cultural and religious identity by providing a wide range of appropriate resources and activities;
- ✓ Strive to ensure that children feel good about themselves and others, by celebrating the differences which make us all unique individuals;
- ✓ Ensure that its services are available to all parents/carers and children in the local community;
- ✓ Ensure that the Trust's recruitment policies and procedures are open, fair and non-discriminatory;
- ✓ Work to fulfil all the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010;
- ✓ We will monitor and review the effectiveness of our inclusive practice by conducting an Inclusion Audit on an annual basis.

1. Legal Framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties 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.

2. Aims

Equality of opportunity within The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust is about providing equality and excellence for all, in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement within our Trust schools. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the Trust community – pupils; staff; Directors; parents; and community members.

We aim to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:

- ✓ Creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure;
- ✓ Building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so they can use these qualities to achieve their full potential and become rounded citizens of the wider community;
- ✓ Have consistent expectations of the pupils and their learning;
- ✓ Removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;
- ✓ Ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our curriculum and lesson planning;
- ✓ Actively tackling discrimination and promoting equality through our curriculum;
- ✓ Making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and discriminatory behaviour;
- ✓ Ensuring class and Trust resources reflect society as a whole;
- ✓ Has clear procedures for dealing with discriminatory incidents and that these are understood by all;
- ✓ Ensure all pupils develop mutual respect through the Trust ethos, teachings and adult example.

These aims are designed to ensure that the Trust meets the needs of its community as a whole, taking account of the nine protected characteristics; race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and gender reassignment. It is important that in our schools we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all, and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

3. The Trust's Commitment to Equality for All

- ✓ Ensuring that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential;
- ✓ Respecting and valuing differences between people;
- ✓ Exploring cultural diversity as part of religious education;
- ✓ Preparing pupils for life in a diverse society;

- ✓ Acknowledging the existence of discrimination and taking steps to prevent it;
- ✓ Making our schools places where everyone, irrespective of a protected characteristic, feels welcomed and valued;
- ✓ Promoting good relations between groups within our schools and the wider community;
- ✓ Ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- ✓ Opposing all forms of discrimination and harassment;
- ✓ Being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

4. Trust Ethos

The Trust ethos is to value the individual child and to prepare that child to become a well-informed and caring citizen of the future. The Trust strives towards achieving this ethos by promotion of racial and cultural understanding alongside equal opportunities and anti bullying.

The Trust opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The Trust publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within schools.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all groups.

The Trust caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different groups subject to health and safety regulations.

The Trust enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular diversity and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant Trust policies and guidance, such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant Trust policies.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff will go on courses to train them to deal effectively with bullying, discriminatory incidents, harassment and prejudice.

5. Equality Objectives

The Trust will set specific equality targets to improve the provision set out within this policy.

Trust Equality Objectives are:

1. To further improve accessibility for pupils with medical conditions within school. Arrange appropriate provisions and training;
2. To ensure pupils who are entitled to Pupil Premium grant allocation achieve levels of attainment that are in line with that of all pupils;
3. To ensure that all policies and practices meet the requirements of the Equality Act.

6. Leadership & Management

- ✓ Trust policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities;
- ✓ The Directors and the Trust leadership set a clear ethos that reflects the Trust's commitment to equality for all members of the Trust community;
- ✓ The Trust promotes positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity;
- ✓ The Trust leadership will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination;
- ✓ Directors and Staff contribute to policy documents. Parents can request to see policies and have their views taken note of.

7. Staffing: Recruitment & Professional Development

- ✓ The Trust adheres to recruitment and selection procedures that are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and guidelines;
- ✓ All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality and good practice through the recruitment and selection process;
- ✓ Equality policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions;
- ✓ All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices;
- ✓ Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

8. Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils. The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated where appropriate to ensure the inclusion of:

- ✓ Boys, girls and other gender identities;
- ✓ Pupils learning English as an additional language;
- ✓ Pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- ✓ Pupils who are gifted and talented;
- ✓ Pupils with special educational needs;
- ✓ Pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- ✓ Pupils who have previously been looked after by the local authority;
- ✓ Pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The Trust monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds. Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

We have a whole Trust approach to equality in the curriculum, including:

1. Children will explore diversity as part of their religious education;
2. Children will discuss effects of inequality as part of their P.S.H.E. and Citizenship education;
3. As part of the English Curriculum children will read and discuss poetry and stories from multicultural, multi gender, and multi ability backgrounds and authors;
4. As part of geography and RE within the Trust curriculum the children are made aware of other cultures and faiths;
5. As part of the music curriculum children will learn about the similarities and differences of music emanating from different cultural backgrounds;
6. As part of the Art curriculum children will learn about the similarities and differences of artists emanating from different cultural backgrounds;
7. As well as teaching specific language skills through MFL, children are made aware of the cultural significance of languages.

Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

9. Teaching & Learning

- ✓ Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued;
- ✓ All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum;
- ✓ Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs;
- ✓ Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals;
- ✓ Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender, SEN and social background;
- ✓ Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks;
- ✓ Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning;
- ✓ Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities;
- ✓ Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the Trust.

10. Assessment, Achievement & Progress

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The Trust ensures that assessment is as free of gender, cultural and social bias as possible, and that assessment methods are valid.

The Trust monitors and analyses pupil performance by gender, ethnicity, SEN and those entitled to Pupil Premium and is therefore able to identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The Trust ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The Trust recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on progress.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment that summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress.

11. Behaviour, Discipline & Exclusions

The Trust expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils and staff.

The Trust's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all. The Trust's procedures for managing staff behaviour and conduct are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that having a protected characteristic may affect behaviour. The Trust takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline as stated within the Trust's Behaviour Policy.

Pupils, staff, parents and Directors are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour that is damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

We will challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices by engaging children and adults in discussion, by displaying positive images of race and disability through our staff modelling anti-discriminatory behaviour at all times.

The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust believes that all racial inequality is unacceptable, nurturing an understanding, acceptance and tolerance of cultural differences that should prepare our children for a multicultural society.

Our Trust recognises that some children have additional needs or physical disabilities that require particular support and assistance. We will assess the individual needs of each child in consultation with their parents prior to their attending the Trust, and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children can access our services and are made to feel welcome. Where one-to-one support is required we will assist parents in accessing the funding required to provide the additional care.

12. Personal Development & Pastoral Care

Pastoral support takes account of differences and the experiences and needs of all individuals. Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with Trust policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

13. Admissions & Attendance

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admission forms.

The Trust and families are aware of rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision would be made for leave of absences for religious observance that includes staff as well as pupils.

Provision would be made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

14. Partnership with Parents and the Community

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the Trust Schools.

The Trust works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

The Trust's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

15. Responsibilities

The Directors and Chief Executive Officer will ensure that the Trust complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The Directors and Chief Executive Officer will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

The School's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) will:

- ✓ Manage the provision for children with special educational needs or physical disabilities;
- ✓ Be fully trained and experienced in the care and assessment of such children.

All members of staff will assist the SENCO in caring for children with additional needs or physical disabilities.

16. Promoting equal opportunities

- ✓ Staff receive relevant and appropriate training;
- ✓ The Equality Policy is consistent with current legislation and guidance;
- ✓ Appropriate action is taken wherever discriminatory behaviour, language or attitudes occur.

17. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

Written in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Equal opportunities [3.67], Information for parents and carers [3.73], and Staff qualifications, training and support [3.20].