THE WHITE HILLS PARK TRUST

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice (EDIJ) Policy

Version control

Scope:	**Applicable to all Trust Schools and the Executive Team**
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Statutory or non-statutory:	**Statutory**
Author/Reviewer:	**Claire Shaw CEO**

The White Hills Park Trust

1. Introduction

The White Hills Park Trust is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful and ambitious culture where equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in all aspects of our work. We

celebrate diversity across our schools and communities and recognise that equality of opportunity is fundamental to achieving excellence in education and organisational success. Equality, diversity and inclusion are not only moral imperatives but are central to our mission of improving life chances and outcomes for all.

2. Legal Framework

This policy sets out the responsibilities of the Trust for ensuring and advancing equality in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 ("PSED") and the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act"). The Equality Act 2010 also includes:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act (as amended)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998

The PSED requires organisations to demonstrate transparency in all their environments and ways of working. At The White Hills Park Trust, we will:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity for all people who share a protected characteristic and for those who do not.
- Foster positive relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Publish information to show how the Trust is complying with the Equality Duty and ensure that this is updated at least annually.
- Prepare and publish our one or more specific and measurable equality objective at least every four years.
- Ensure that our equality objectives are accessible to the public.
- Ensure our objectives are distinct and measurable.

Our approach ensures that all students, staff and stakeholders feel a strong sense of belonging and are empowered to flourish.

3. Purpose and Scope

The Trust recognises and welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

Our aims are to:

- Respect the human rights of all our students and employees
- Ensure fair access to education, services and opportunities
- Regularly review policies and practices to identify and address inequality
- Promote accessibility across all sites and services
- Take reasonable steps to remove physical and systemic barriers
- Recognise and celebrate the individuality of every member of our community, fostering respect and understanding of diverse perspectives.
- Actively promote awareness and appreciation of the richness of a diverse, multicultural society.
- Commit to advancing equality by identifying and addressing barriers that may lead to unequal outcomes or limit access to opportunities.
- Support all students in developing a strong sense of identity and belonging within both local and global communities.
- Challenge and address all forms of discrimination and prejudice, promoting education, understanding and a culture of mutual respect.
- Strive to provide a safe, inclusive and equitable working environment where all staff are treated with dignity and respect.
- Uphold and protect the rights of all members of our Trust community, ensuring fairness and equality in all that we do.

This policy applies to:

- All employees (permanent, temporary, part-time, and fixed term)
- Job applicants and prospective employees
- Agency workers, contractors and volunteers
- All individuals accessing services within the Trust

The principles of this policy extend across all Trust schools and operations.

The following policies are particularly relevant to achieving the objectives of this policy

Trust policies

- Staff code of conduct and disciplinary policies
- Grievance and Resolution policy
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Complaints policy

School policies

- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- Special Educational Needs policy
- Accessibility plans
- Equality Policy and Objectives document
- School Improvement plans

4. Discrimination

The Act defines a number of types of discrimination, including:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association)
- Indirect discrimination
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or staff
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Harassment related to a protected characteristic
- Victimisation of someone because they have made, or helped with, a complaint about discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is when a provision, criterion or practice is applied in the same wat for all people or for a particular group of people, but this has the effect of putting people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. It is immaterial that there is no intent to disadvantage those with a particular characteristic in this way. What does matter is whether the action does, or would, disadvantage such people compared with other who do not share that characteristic.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Harassment based on association. It is unlawful to discriminate against or harass any individual for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Harassment based on a perception. It is unlawful to discriminate against or harass any individual based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they do not, in fact, have the protected characteristic.

Victimisation is defined as where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. A claim of victimisation cannot be made if the employee acted maliciously, in making or supporting a complaint which was found to be false or unjustified.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

5. Protected Characteristics

The Act uses the term “protected characteristics” to refer to aspects of a person’s identity. Treating a person less favourably because they have one or more of these characteristics would be unlawful.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The protected characteristics of age and marriage and civil partnership apply to schools and academies as employers, but not in relation to their provision for pupils.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Board

Trustees will ensure that:

- Ensure that the Trust and its academies comply with the Act and with the PSED
- Equality and diversity is promoted through our educational offer.
- Ensure all Trust policies and procedures are implemented, embedded and monitored.
- The Trust’s responsibilities to the legal framework are effective across the Trust.
- Ensure Local Academy Committees are enabled to fulfil their responsibilities.

Executive Leadership Team

- Lead the strategic implementation of this policy.
- Monitor outcomes and report to the Trust Board.
- Ensure consistency across all schools.

Local Academy Committees

The local Academy Committee is responsible for:

- Promoting equality and diversity and eradicating discrimination through a highly effective curriculum offer.

- Compliance with equality legislation, upholding policy, related procedures and ensuring these are monitored in their individual schools.

Headteachers

Headteachers are responsible for:

- Implementing and monitoring the Equality and Diversity Policy in their school.
- Ensure all staff have appropriate training and support.
- Informing the CEO in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of access arrangements.

All Employees

All employees will:

- Promote the advancement of this policy and have a duty to treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against, harass or victimise other members of staff, whether junior or senior to them.
- Ensure that any behaviour, actions or words that are contrary to this statement will not be tolerated and will be reported immediately to their line manager.
- Model an appropriate standard of behaviour, promoting the aims of the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Promote an inclusive ethos in their schools.
- Support all students with their needs.
- Understand that individual students have different learning styles and multiple intelligences and will adapt their teaching and learning to ensure that all students have equal access to a high-quality educational offer.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping.
- Ensure the teaching and learning materials promote diversity and different cultures, locally, nationally and globally.
- Ensure that they are up to date with equality legislation and associated professional development opportunities.

7. Employment and Recruitment

The White Hills Park Trust is committed to fair, transparent and inclusive employment practices.

We will:

- Recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of our communities.
- Ensure all appointments are made on merit, based on skills, experience and qualifications.
- Regularly review recruitment processes to remove barriers to access.
- Provide equitable access to professional development and career progression
- Uphold principles of equal pay and fairness.

- Support staff in balancing cultural, religious and personal needs where reasonably practicable.
- Make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities.

All staff will be treated with dignity and respect. Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be addressed promptly through appropriate procedures.

8. Monitoring and Review

The Trust will:

- Publish equality information annually
- Review progress towards objectives each year
- Conduct a full policy review every four years
- Use data (attendance, attainment, behaviour, staff experience) to inform improvements

9. The White Park Trust EDI Objectives 2026-2029

Objective 1: Inclusive Engagement and Attendance

Aim:
Ensure attendance for all student groups is at least in line with national benchmarks.

Rationale:
Regular attendance is strongly linked to attainment, wellbeing and long-term life outcomes.

Key Actions:

- Strengthen attendance systems and targeted interventions
- Promote belonging through inclusive school cultures
- Enhance family engagement and support
- Develop enrichment opportunities to increase engagement

Objective 2: Equity in Achievement

Aim:
Close attainment gaps for disadvantaged and underrepresented students.

Rationale:
Removing barriers to achievement is central to improving life chances and social mobility.

Key Actions:

- Deliver an inclusive, high-quality curriculum across all schools
- Promote diversity and representation within curriculum content
- Strengthen literacy and communication skills for all learners
- Use data-driven approaches to identify and address gaps
- Share best practice across the Trust

Objective 3: Culture of Belonging and Respect

Aim:
Reduce prejudice and increase understanding of equality and diversity across the Trust.

Rationale:
A culture of inclusion enhances wellbeing, staff retention and student success.

Key Actions:

- Embed EDI themes within curriculum, assemblies and enrichment
- Provide ongoing staff training on inclusive practices and unconscious bias
- Create safe, inclusive spaces for dialogue and feedback

- Monitor and respond to incidents of discrimination
- Celebrate diversity through events and initiatives

Objective 4: Inclusive Environments

Aim:
Ensure all learning environments are accessible, inclusive and support diverse needs.

Rationale:
Equitable access to high-quality environments supports learning and wellbeing.

Key Actions:

- Establish Trust-wide standards for inclusive environments
- Conduct accessibility audits across all sites
- Incorporate inclusive design into refurbishments and new builds
- Engage stakeholders in shaping inclusive spaces
- Monitor progress and impact annually