

Single Equality Policy

Designated Person:	Director of Human Resources
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SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 replacing all existing legislation and statutory duties in relation to protected characteristics with a consolidated legal framework to discrimination law and a duty to promote community cohesion.
- 1.2. The GORSE Academies Trust (TGAT) is committed to providing an educational environment which recognises and celebrates diversity and removes barriers to individuals realising their full potential.
- 1.3. TGAT is committed to narrowing the gap between students from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. We are committed to ensuring that students who are vulnerable, those who have been identified as having Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) and students with protected characteristics are treated equally and that support is provided to meet the individual needs of students and is in the best interests of the child.
- 1.4. The Trust will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and we will support all members of staff and students in challenging and removing all forms of prejudice and discrimination from the Trust establishments.

2. AIMS

- 2.1. The aims of this policy are to provide a framework which:
- 2.2. Actively encourages people with protected characteristics and other socially disadvantaged groups to participate fully in all aspects of the life of their Trust establishment and public life and achieve the best possible outcomes
- 2.3. Removes or reduces any disadvantage suffered by people owing to their protected characteristics, background or socio-economic situation, including the elimination of discrimination, prejudicial treatment, harassment and bullying
- 2.4. Ensures that the needs of people subject to protected characteristics and other socially disadvantaged groups, where these are different from the needs of other people, are appropriately met
- 2.5. Ensures all aspects of prejudice and stereotyping are effectively addressed and challenged
- 2.6. Promotes cooperation and understanding between different groups through curricular and extra-curricular activities and that the curriculum is inclusive and reflects the diverse population of the Trust
- 2.7. Ensures information is published to demonstrate how we are complying with the general duties and we have robust systems in place to monitor equal opportunities
- 2.8. Ensures all processes pertaining to recruitment, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and induction programmes have due regard for equal opportunities.

3. RELATED POLICIES

3.1. This policy is written in conjunction with Trust policies including:

- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying and Hate Incidents/Crimes
- Classroom Visitors
- Complaints
- General Data Protection Regulations
- Health and Safety
- Managing Attendance
- Positive Discipline
- Professional Principles
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE)
- Safer Recruitment
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- SEND
- Teacher Appraisal
- Support Staff Appraisal
- Whistleblowing

3.2. This policy supersedes all previous Trust policies regarding Race, Disability and Equal Opportunities.

4. DUTIES UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT 2010

4.1. The Equalities Act 2010 replaces a number of separate pieces of discrimination legislation and introduces a single Act which introduces 9 protected characteristics which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation

4.2. The general duties set out by The Equality Act 2010 are:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those without
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

4.3. In order to meet these general duties TGAT will annually:

- Publish equality information, ensuring it does not identify specific individuals, to demonstrate how we are complying with the general duties
- Publish and review Equality objectives – which should be formally reviewed every 4 years at a maximum

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1. Direct discrimination

5.1.1. Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are perceived to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see 5.2, Discrimination by association below).

5.2. Discrimination by association

5.2.1. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

5.3. Perception discrimination

5.3.1. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

5.4. Indirect discrimination

5.4.1. Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful.

5.4.2. Being proportionate means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you've looked at 'less discriminatory' alternatives to any decision you make.

5.5. Harassment

5.5.1. Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

5.5.2. Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. Employees will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

5.6. **Third party harassment**

5.6.1. The Equality Act makes you potentially liable for harassment of your employees by third parties. You will only be liable when harassment has occurred on at least two previous occasions, you are aware that it has taken place, and have not taken reasonable steps to prevent it from happening again.

5.7. **Victimisation**

5.7.1. Victimisation occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. Individuals are not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

5.8. **Positive action**

5.8.1. Positive action is where an employer chooses to hire or promote candidates who possess a protected characteristic, as long as they are as qualified for the role as other applicants. Positive discrimination is unlawful, whereas positive action is lawful.

5.8.2. The Equality Act 2010 allows employers to take a protected characteristic into consideration when deciding who to recruit or promote should you choose to do so. However, you can only do this when you have candidates who are “as qualified as” each other for a particular vacancy. This does not mean they have to have exactly the same qualifications as each other, it means that the selection assessment on a range of criteria rates them as equally capable of doing the job.

5.9. **Positive Discrimination**

5.9.1. Positive Discrimination is where an employer discriminates in favour of a certain group with the intent of raising the profile of that particular group and is illegal.

5.9.2. An example would be where a company advertises for a member of staff from a specific ethnic origin due to the fact that they are underrepresented in a particular segment of the workforce.

6. **MONITORING**

6.1. Equality monitoring data is collected and used to inform decision making. The collection of such data is of vital importance in assisting in the process of ensuring that our services are delivered in line with this policy.

6.2. The Trust will ensure it monitors the following:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Positive Discipline
- Exclusions
- Bullying and Hate Incidents/Crimes
- Harmful Sexual Behaviours
- Complaints
- Progress and Attainment
- Recruitment and Retention
- Teaching and Learning

6.3. The Single Equality Policy will be reviewed on a 3-year cycle or sooner if legislation changes.

6.4. It is the responsibility of the Local Governing Body and Principal within each Trust establishment to:

- Monitor the progress of students based on gender, ethnicity, disadvantage (including student's in receipt of Free School Meals and those identified as Pupil Premium), SEND, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and those who are New to English (NtE) and any other minority groups
- Monitor the recruitment process to ensure that no one applying for a post within the Trust is discriminated against
- Direct all staff to attend any training that allows the Trust establishment to keep up to date with equality issues

6.5. Any identified improvements will be included in the Trust Academy/College Improvement/Development Plan

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. The Trust Board:

- Ensure that the Trust complies with equality legislation
- Meet the requirements of the general duties to publish equality information and objectives
- Ensure that the Trust's procedures and strategies are undertaken and monitored
- Scrutinise recording and reporting procedures
- Ensure the Trust's admissions policies are applied fairly and equitably to all groups
- Have due regard for equal opportunities when engaging in high quality staff and governor recruitment ensuring that they receive appropriate CPD
- Provide information in appropriate, accessible formats

- Appropriately manage serious breaches of the policy

7.2. **The Local Governing Body will:**

- Ensure that the Trust establishment complies with equality legislation
- Meet the requirements of the general duties to publish equality information and objectives
- Ensure that the Trust establishment's procedures and strategies are undertaken and monitored
- Scrutinise recording and reporting procedures
- Ensure the Trust establishment's admissions policy is applied fairly and equitably to all groups
- Monitor attendance and exclusions data and take appropriate action where necessary
- Have due regard for equal opportunities when engaging in high quality staff and governor recruitment ensuring that they receive appropriate CPD
- Provide information in appropriate, accessible formats
- Appropriately manage serious breaches of the policy

7.3. **The Principal will:**

- Implement and ensure compliance with the Single Equality Policy, strategies and procedures
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support to deliver them
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant CPD and induction programmes
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action to address cases of discriminatory practice and appropriately manage any reported incidents of harassment, discrimination, hate incidents/crimes or bullying
- Ensure that all visitors, guests and contractors are aware of the ethos outlined in the Trust's Single Equality Policy

7.4. **The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will:**

- Ensure that the standards established within this policy are adhered to within their own area of responsibility
- Familiarise themselves and ensure compliance with the Single Equality Policy strategies and procedures
- Ensure that no one is subjected to unfair or unequal treatment or discriminatory practices and actively challenge cases of discriminatory practice
- Provide information and guidance for members of staff with regards to the Single Equality Policy, strategies and procedures.

- Ensure that information on equal opportunities is incorporated into all induction processes for new or temporary staff and is supported by on-going training

7.5.

All Staff will:

- Be vigilant in all areas of the Trust establishment for any type of harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, prejudicial treatment, discrimination, incidents related to hate and bullying.
- Deal effectively with any incidents of unfair or unequal treatment or discriminatory practices, examples may include overt name-calling or more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos throughout the Trust establishment with due regard for equality and positive working relationships
- Promote an inclusive curriculum and ethos which reflects our diverse society
- Keep up to date with equality legislation and developing practice by attending relevant CPD and induction programmes as well as accessing information from appropriate sources
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action to address cases of discriminatory practice and appropriately manage any reported incidents of hate, harassment or bullying including harmful sexual behaviours.
- Support students who are identified as EAL/NtE, SEND or disadvantaged and those who have a protected characteristic.

7.6.

Students will:

- Be taught through the curriculum and know to report any incidents of harassment, hate or bullying incidents or discriminatory behaviour or practice
- Promote an inclusive, collaborative and respectful ethos and culture throughout their Trust establishment with due regard for equality and positive relationships
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping through the curriculum

7.7.

Parents/carers will:

- Be actively encouraged to participate in Trust establishment activities
- Have access to information in appropriate, accessible formats
- Be encouraged to actively support the Single Equality Policy and the Trust's Equality Objectives
- Be informed of any incident or breach of this Policy, which may directly affect their child
- Behave in ways which demonstrate respect for others

8. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

8.1 Recruitment, Retention and Development of Staff

- 8.1.1 All job adverts and job descriptions include a short statement with regards to equal opportunities.
- 8.1.2 Selection criteria, including job descriptions and post holder specifications should be kept under review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.
- 8.1.3 The aim of selection is to appoint the most suitable candidate in relation to the job requirements. Thus, selection criteria will relate to qualifications, skills and experience relevant to the post and any tests or exercises will be carried out in circumstances similar to the normal job environment
- 8.1.4 All posts are advertised formally and open to the widest pool of applicants:
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity
 - The Single Equality policy and practice is covered in all staff inductions
- 8.1.5 Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and the impact of policies are kept under regular review

8.2 Student Admissions

- 8.2.1 The Trust establishment admissions procedures will ensure that all students and their parents/carers receive comprehensive pre-entry guidance and opportunities to take part in activities which facilitate transition. Admissions procedures will be welcoming, professional and free from bias. The Trust establishment will seek to meet the needs of all students, including those SEND.
- 8.2.2 The Trust establishment will respond positively to disability legislation by ensuring that students with a SEND and additional needs (AN) are appropriately supported through the admissions process, that steps are taken to understand and plan to meet their needs, and that priority is given to physical access to buildings and learning facilities. (For further details refer to the Trust SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan).
- 8.2.3 All students will have a planned induction process to identify their specific needs which is designed to prepare and plan for transition into their new learning environment.

8.3 Teaching and Learning

- 8.3.1 Learning resources will be free from discriminatory and prejudicial assumptions, stereotypes, images and language. The only exception to this is where materials are used to promote positive discussion with regards to equality issues. Within legislative requirements the curriculum will be designed to be inclusive and to promote accessibility and progress.
- 8.3.2 The Trust and establishments are committed to achieving the highest standards in teaching and learning. We will seek to develop inclusive, personalised learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students to help them to achieve the best

possible outcomes and qualifications for the next stages of their life and education. All students should develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need in order to participate in our multi-cultural and diverse society, in modern Britain and in the wider context of an inter-dependent world.

- 8.3.3 All students will receive support appropriate to their individual needs, age and setting. Trust establishment members of staff will adopt an inclusive, personalised approach which recognises individual student needs.
- 8.3.4 All students will be supported to develop a strong sense of self and belonging, through access to a curriculum that promotes self-esteem, confidence and resilience. Students will be exposed to a broad and balanced curriculum and enrichment activities that promote tolerance, acceptance of difference, celebration of diversity and respect, and respect for individual identities.
- 8.3.5 In consideration of the role of visitors, Trust establishments will assess the suitability and effectiveness of input from external agencies or individuals to ensure that any materials and communication with students are appropriate and in line with schools' legal duties on political impartiality. All visitors should abide by the content of the TGAT Classroom Visitors Policy.

8.4 Community Engagement

- 8.4.1 Trust establishments will act to ensure all parents/carers and partners are encouraged to participate in the life of the establishment.
- 8.4.2 Trust establishments will maintain good channels of communication, e.g. through parent/carers meetings to ensure parents/carers views are captured to inform procedures and practice.
- 8.4.3 Trust establishments will encourage members of the local community, parents/carers and partners to participate in activities, events and establishment celebrations.
- 8.4.4 Trust establishments will ensure that the parents/carers of newly arrived students e.g. English as an Additional Language/ New to English, Gypsy Roma Traveller, those seeking asylum made to feel part of the Trust establishment community.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained via:

- www.equalityhumanrights.com
- www.equalities.gov.uk
- www.direct.gov.uk
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>