



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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1.Purpose

- 1.1 This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy sets out Central Academy Trust's commitment to the development of an inclusive and supportive working and learning environment for all its stakeholders.
- 1.2 The policy clarifies the Trust's requirements and responsibilities for ensuring, and advancing, equality and fairness for all members of the Academy community in accordance with The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, 2011.
- 1.3 The policy outlines the Trust's commitment to the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its service delivery to ensure that discrimination and harassment are eliminated and equality is actively advanced.

2. Scope

2.1 The policy applies to all members of The Trust community including:

- Trust Members
- The Local Governing Body
- Academy Leaders
- Academy Employees
- Academy Students
- Parents and Carers
- Contractors
- Visitors
- Volunteers

2.2 The policy covers all aspects of the Trust's business and relates to activities including:

- Enrolment of students
- Curriculum content and development
- Course delivery and assessment
- Learning and teaching materials and methods
- External contracts issued
- Employment practices of the Trust

3. Definitions

Equality	A revised term for 'equal opportunities'. It is based on the legal obligation to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. Equality protects people from being discriminated against and gives people fair access to opportunities, for example, all pupils have the same right of access to services and resources to meet their specific needs. To ensure equality of opportunity some individuals and/or groups may be treated differently in order to meet their different needs.
Diversity	The range of visible and non-visible differences that exist between people. Managing diversity effectively recognises, celebrates, and takes into account individuals' different backgrounds, knowledge, skills and experiences to create a productive educational community, in which everybody feels valued and talents are fully utilised.
Inclusion	The overarching context encompassing equality, diversity and human rights which focuses positively on enabling access to and engaging individuals and/or groups with opportunities, services and facilities. An inclusive ethos is one which encourages full participation to ensure that there is no place in the community where people feel uncomfortable, excluded or not valued.
Protected Characteristics	These are aspects of individuals' and groups' identities which are protected from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment, education, training, and in the provision of goods and services. For example, age, disability, gender.
Direct Discrimination	Treating a person less favourably than another in comparable circumstances because of a protected characteristic. In the case of pregnancy and maternity direct discrimination can occur if a person has the protected characteristic without needing to compare treatment to someone else.
Discrimination by Association	Direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person with a protected characteristic. This may include, for example, carers of disabled people and elderly relatives, or someone with a partner from another country. Discrimination by Association does not apply to marriage/civil partnerships and pregnancy and maternity leave.
Discrimination by Perception	Direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic (even if they do not). For example someone is treated unfairly as they are assumed to be gay.
Indirect Discrimination	Putting in place a policy or practice that has a differential (positive or negative) impact on someone with a protected characteristic compared to someone without one, when this cannot be objectively and legitimately justified.
Discrimination arising from disability	Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability when this cannot be objectively justified. For example, prohibiting an employee from taking time off for medical treatment.
Failure to make reasonable adjustments	Employers and service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and service users to enable fair access. This duty is anticipatory and must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure adjustments made are appropriate. Failing to do so is direct disability discrimination.
Harassment	Unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or which is hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive to someone with a protected characteristic. The Equality Act offers protection to people who do not have a "protected characteristic" but find behaviour offensive, even if not directed at them.
Victimisation	Treating someone unfavourably because they have taken (or might be taking) action under the Equality Act or are supporting someone who is doing so.

4. Legislative context

4.1 The policy is in accordance with relevant legislation, and specifically the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Duty, 2011 with particular reference to the 9 protected characteristic in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age (for service users and employees over the age of 18)
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership (in employment practices only)
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

4.2 The Trust's commitment to advancing equality as a public body, sponsor, employer and education provider goes beyond legislative compliance to promoting positive relationships with all stakeholders, partners and the local community. The Trust is further committed to the fair and non-discriminatory treatment of people with:

- Different socio – economic backgrounds
- Trade union activities
- Caring responsibilities
- Looked-after learners
- Ex-offenders with unrelated criminal convictions

5 Public Sector Equality Duty, 2011

5.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general equality duty which is supported by specific duties.

The General Equality Duty requires public authorities, including The Trust, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by, or under, the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it

5.2 Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics

- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

5.3 Having due regard to foster good relations means:

- Tackling prejudice
- Promoting understanding between people from different groups

5.4 The Specific Duties require public authorities, including The Trust, to show functional transparency by:

- Preparing and publishing one or more equality objectives which can be achieved to do any of the things mentioned in the aims of the General Equality Duty, by 6 April 2012, and at least every four years thereafter
- Ensuring that those equality objectives are specific and measurable
- Publishing those equality objectives in such a manner that they are accessible to the public

6. EDI Commitment Statement

“Central Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that every member of the Trust Community is treated with respect and dignity and does not experience less favourable treatment for reasons which cannot be legitimately justified. The Trust aims to provide an inclusive working and learning environment where each member of the Trust Community is fully respected and supported.”

7. General Principles

- 7.1 The Trust is committed to advancing equality of opportunity and outcome for all members of the Community. The Trust will aim to actively foster social cohesion and the elimination of all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation through the Academies.
- 7.2 The Trust appreciates that the diversity of the local community is one of the Academy community’s greatest strengths and most valuable assets. This reflects funding agencies’ priorities for the UK economy and commitments to a skilled workforce needed to deliver prosperity at local and regional levels.
- 7.3 In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, The Trust will support all stakeholders to create working and learning environments in which:
- People’s ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination
 - There is respect for, and protection of, each individual’s human rights

- There is respect for the dignity and value of each unique individual
 - Each individual has an equal opportunity to engage with educational opportunities and to participate in society
 - There is mutual respect between individuals and groups based on understanding of the value of diversity and on respect for equality and human rights.
- 7.4. The Trust believes that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable. The Trust will seek to challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination, whether direct, indirect, associative or perceptive, by:
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation
 - Advancing equality of opportunity and outcome, recognising and taking account of people's differences
 - Promoting good relations between different groups in the community

8. Commitments

- 8.1 The Trust will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of all activity by:
- Requiring Governors and Academy leaders to lead by example in treating all stakeholders with dignity and respect and by being fair and reasonable in their attitudes and behaviours
 - Expecting the Trust Community to behave in a way that others will see is respectful and fair to them
 - Continuing to review systems by which any behaviour that is intimidating, discriminatory or otherwise contrary to this policy and the Public Sector Equality duties, are dealt with rapidly and effectively, in an environment which positively supports those who challenge such behaviours
- 8.2 The Trust will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all its decision making and operational functions through the effective implementation of Equality Analyses (Section 10). The Trust will conduct equality assessments on its policies and procedures as a means of identifying any potential adverse impacts and exploring possible solutions to mitigate these.
- 8.3. The Trust, when developing new policies and working practices, will ensure that it has gathered sufficient information and consulted appropriately with the Trust Community to guarantee it has taken full account of the potential impact on those affected by its decisions.
- 8.4. The Trust, in seeking to achieve a balanced workforce at all levels, will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for positions or promotions within Academies will be disadvantaged, or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the role. Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for disabled members of the Trust community or potential members.
- 8.5 The Trust will take an anticipatory approach to recognising and removing the barriers that put disabled people at a disadvantage when accessing education, services or when seeking employment, training or promotion opportunities with Academies. These barriers are recognised to include those in the

physical environment and those in all aspects which govern how The Trust and Academies carry out their functions.

- 8.6 The Trust will take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people. In particular the Trust will ensure that all pupils are enabled and supported to make appropriate choices and achieve goals.
- 8.7 The Trust will encourage partnership and agency working to provide educational opportunities that promote and develop social cohesion and celebrate diversity. Academies will be encouraged to fully embed and integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into service and curriculum delivery.
- 8.8 The Trust will consider positive action to encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

9. Positive Action

- 9.1 If Academies consider that any pupils with protected characteristics may be disadvantaged for social or economic reasons, or for reasons to do with past or present discrimination, they may consider taking 'positive action' to tackle the disadvantage. 'Positive action' is not the same as 'positive discrimination'. Positive action is about targeting lawful support to redress disadvantage.
- 9.2 Positive action allows public authorities, including Academies, to:
- Provide facilities or services (in the form of training, education, or welfare) to meet the special needs of people from particular under-represented groups
 - Target job training and/or educational opportunities at particular groups that are under-represented in a particular area of work or study and encourage applications from such groups
- 9.3 The Trust will support sponsored Academies in undertaking positive action measures allowed by the Equality Act 2010 to rectify disadvantages in employment and education revealed by monitoring.
- 9.4 Positive action strategies are intended to be temporary measures only. They will be under regular review, and will not be used once the special needs have been met, or if under-representation no longer exists. The Trust will advise Academies as to whether positive action strategies fall within the law.

10. Equality Analyses (EA)

- 10.1 The Trust is committed to carrying out Equality Analyses (EAs) on all reviewed, new and proposed policies and key decisions which impact on The Trust community and service users. An EA is a way of systematically and thoroughly assessing and consulting on the effects that any decision made is likely to have on people.
- 10.2 The assessment process will consider:
- Whether or not the policy is 'relevant' to The Trust's Equality Duties

- What is the likely impact upon the protected groups
 - Whether the policy is likely to discriminate in any way
 - The results of any service reviews
 - The results of stakeholder consultations
 - Monitoring and other profiling data to understand scope of impact
 - Other relevant considerations
- 10.3 An EA will be carried out when reviewing and developing any relevant new or existing policy or key decision that could impact on stakeholders or potential stakeholders. If a policy is 'relevant' to the equality duty, it will need to be assessed, to see if it could have any adverse effects on people from different groups, and to make changes or consider supplementary measures to mitigate any negative effects.
- 10.4 The EA process may involve consultation with people who are likely to be affected by any proposed policy, or who have an interest in it.
- 10.5 An EA will consider any potential conflict with other legislation affecting staff, learner (or service user) safety.

11. Responsibilities & Accountability

- 11.1 Every member of The Trust Community has a responsibility to give full and active support for the EDI policy by ensuring:
- The policy is known, understood, implemented and integrated into all functions of its sponsored Academies
 - Behaviour at all times takes into account the uniqueness of others
 - Everyone is treated with respect and dignity
 - Behaviour not in accordance with the EDI policy is challenged and acted upon
- 11.2 The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of the Academies policies in order to make sure that in practice they contribute to the realisation of the Trust's Equality Duties as a public authority.
- 11.3 In order to meet its specific duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Trust will work with Academies to:
- Publish annually information relating to people who share a protected characteristic that are affected by Academy policies and procedures
 - Prepare and publish one or more objectives, at least once every four years, which the Trust has identified to support Academies in delivering the Trust's policy commitments

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 12.1 The Trust will judge its effectiveness in terms of the educational outcomes for all of the pupils of each Academy.

- 12.2 The Trust will conduct effective performance monitoring of each Academy on an ongoing basis through the collection of statistics, analysis of data and presentation of data. The Trust will monitor and act upon areas of concern and/or disparity with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion in respect of attainment and progress.
- 12.3 The Trust will maintain an overview of the composition of each Academy's workforce, aiming to ensure that the staff population is representative of the pupil and local community profiles.
- 12.4 The Trust will ensure that equalities information is accessibly and reliably store and shared optimally whilst also protecting the confidentiality of personal information.
- 12.5 Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Trade Unions and government funding agencies and with regard to data protection principles.
- 12.6 Academy leaders will monitor and evaluate achievement in respect to equality, diversity and inclusion by taking the following actions:
- Reviewing and interpreting statistical data in relation to staff and pupils to identify any issues arising and address inequalities identified
 - Ensuring that marketing, recruitment and training opportunities conform to EDI commitments and legislative requirements
 - Ensuring curriculum design takes account of equality, diversity and inclusion in terms of access, content, delivery and assessment

13 Policy Review and Action Planning

- 13.1 This policy describes the baseline expectations of the Trust and Academies to meet their Equality Duties. It provides support and guidance to inform the work of the Academies to:
- Put stakeholders at the heart of all activity
 - Demonstrate a commitment to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion
 - Involve stakeholders in celebrating equality, diversity and inclusion and in identifying areas for improvement
 - Evidence how to fulfil statutory duties
 - Establish priorities and objectives as part of an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
 - Equality Analyse key decisions, policies, practice and processes
- 13.2 Actions to implement and develop the policy are the responsibility of the Trust.
- 13.3 The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice, using the local consultation arrangements within The Trust community.

14. Consultation and Involvement

- 14.1 The Trust is committed to obtaining and listening to the experiences of different groups within The Trust community, both to celebrate the rich diversity of the community and to remove any inadvertent discrimination.

15. Procurement and Partnerships

- 15.1 The Trust acknowledges its duty to advance and promote equality, diversity and inclusion extends into situations where any of the Trust members' functions or services are contracted, or sub-contracted, to other companies, organisations, groups or individuals, as well as direct works, such as building works and repairs.
- 15.2 The Trust will support Academies in carrying out equality analyses on procurement, tendering and contract management processes as an early measure to ensure that meeting the equality duty is built into the procurement process. This will ensure that services are provided in ways which promote equality and diversity, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and promote positive inclusive attitudes.
- 15.3 The Trust recognises that if it, or its members, work in partnership with other organisations, its responsibility to promote equality, diversity and inclusion continue to apply.

16. Breaches of Policy and Complaints

- 16.1 Proven acts of discrimination, harassment, abuse or victimisation will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. Trust members and Academy stakeholders who feel they are being discriminated against should seek resolution through appropriate internal procedures if an informal resolution has not been achieved.
- 16.2 Trust members or Academy stakeholders who feel that they have experienced discrimination from third party members will receive support from The Trust who will take appropriate action where discrimination has been found.
- 16.3 No member of The Trust community shall be victimised as a result of giving information about any act by a person who contravenes this Policy. Persons making allegations, which are proved to be false, will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate grievance, harassment and disciplinary procedures, as will any person who bullies or harasses another person who they believe has made an accusation against them, whether it be proved or not. All members of The Trust will be able to report matters detailed in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.