



Unity Schools Trust

'Excellence through collaboration'

Equality & Diversity Policy

Policy Reviewed:	October 2020
Next Review:	October 2023
Approved by Trust	December 2020

Introduction

This policy sets out the Unity Schools Trust's ("the Trust") approach to promoting equality, as defined within the Equality Act 2010. It covers age*, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership as well as our approach to community cohesion. The Trust also aims to comply with the terms of its Funding Agreement and Articles of Association, copies of which are available on the Trust website.

Aims and Values

The Trust aims to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards. The core values on which the policy is based include:

- a culture of respect for others
- promoting equality by recognising and celebrating differences between people
- a community where students are well prepared for life in a diverse society

This policy provides a framework to pursue its equality duties to have due regard to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations and positive attitudes between all characteristics and different groups in all of its activities

Through the Equality & Diversity Policy, the Trust will seek to ensure that no students, staff, parents, guardians or carers or any other person through their contact with the Trust receives less favourable treatment. The following characteristics are protected: age*, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership.

***(NB 'age' is a protected characteristic but not in relation to students of any age in a school)**

A Cohesive Community

The Trust seeks to:

- promote understanding and engagement between communities
- encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- understand and respond to the needs and hopes of all our communities
- tackle discrimination
- increase life opportunities for all
- ensure that learning, teaching and the curriculum explore and address issues of diversity.

The Trust serves a variety of communities including:

- extended communities (eg the 2015 Learning Partnership)
- geographical communities (eg Woking, Runnymede, Surrey)
- the community of Britain
- the global community, (e.g. through the wide range of links made with communities abroad)
- communities of interest (e.g. environmental groups, faith groups, ethnic or language groups)
- communities of friends (e.g. local clergy, business partners, arts, sports, voluntary and support groups).

Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees are responsible for:

- making sure the Trust complies with current equality legislation
- making sure this policy is properly implemented
- making sure related procedures are followed

The Local Governing Body of each school are responsible for:

- monitoring and evaluating progress of schools towards the equality aims and values
- delegating responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the aims and values on a daily basis to the head of school

The Heads of School are responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it
- making sure its procedures are followed
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working
- providing training on the policy
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- ensuring the provision of a broad, balanced and culturally-inclusive curriculum that provides opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with particular regard to the promotion of understanding and appreciation of difference and diversity, tackling prejudice and the development of skills and attitudes to enable students to participate positively in the life of the school and community
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.

Staff are responsible for:

- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom and the school as a whole
- modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping

- promoting equality and avoiding discrimination against anyone
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities.

Students are responsible for:

- supporting the equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff
- keeping equality and diversity issues on the agenda, which will recognise good practice and enable review and development. This may include:
 - engagement in the development of the Anti-Bullying Policy and specifically the issues of racist and homophobic bullying
 - developing school/class rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- supporting the Trust's equality and diversity ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- following our expectations regarding equality

We will draw their attention to this policy on our signing in system at reception. A copy of the policy will be available for them to read on request.

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the Trust lies with the Chief Executive Officer. These responsibilities include:

- co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- ensuring that reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents) are dealt with and monitored
- monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. children and young people in care, children from minority ethnic/language or traveller communities, disabled pupils etc.)
- monitoring exclusion.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

The Trust's Equality & Diversity Policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.

The Trust will ensure that SEN and Behaviour policies align with the principles of this policy with respect to equality. The schools within the Trust meet the requirements of the Local Authority with respect to recording and reporting of prejudice-related incidents, should they occur.