



Equality Policy

November 2018

Reviewed and approved by Sentamu Academy Learning Trust Board of Directors on 11 December 2018

The next 'Period of Review' will be **September 2021**.

Sentamu Academy Learning Trust

EQUALITY POLICY

1. Responsibilities

The Sentamu Academy Learning Trust Board of Directors has primary responsibility for the management and operation of its Academies. Some of these responsibilities, including the implementation of the Equality Policy, have been delegated to the Local Governing Committee, the Principal and/or senior managers who shall comply with all policies and procedures issued by the Board of Directors and take into consideration any subsequent advice and recommendations given to them by the Directors.

The Board of Directors maintain the right to involve itself in any area of implementing the Staff Data Protection policy and procedures that it deems appropriate.

2. Definitions

In this procedure the following words and expressions shall have the following meanings:

"Directors" or "Trust Board" means the Board of Directors of the Trust as constituted from time to time, or where appropriate any sub-committee of the Board of Directors.

"Governors" means the local governing body of each Academy referred to as the Local Governing Committee (LGC) as constituted, or where appropriate, any sub-committee of the Local Governing Committee. Each Local Governing Committee has specific delegated powers for the management of the business of each Academy as agreed by the Directors.

"Trust" means the Sentamu Academy Learning Trust;

"CEO" means the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust;

"Executive Principal" means any Executive Principal of the Trust and may also be referred to as the "Principal" in this procedure;

"Principal" means the head of the Academy and may also be known as the Headteacher.

"Vice Principal" can also be referred to as a Deputy Headteacher.

3. Policy Introduction and Aims

This Equality Policy represents a commitment to a common set of values and objectives, and to a consistent approach to communicating, implementing and monitoring the policy.

All Academies are committed to advancing and achieving equality of opportunity for all students, parents /carers / associated persons, staff, governors and visitors. We believe that all people are of equal value and are entitled to equality of opportunity and that our diversity enriches our community.

4. Scope

This policy encompasses the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

5. Values, principles and standards

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- equality and social justice
- acknowledging and valuing diversity
- respect for others
- compliance with equality legislation
- elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination
- active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour
- commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all students to develop their full potential
- commitment to the positive development of all staff and governors
- accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the Trust, academy communities and others engaged in Trust activities.

6. Objectives

The objectives of this Equality Policy are to:

- (i) develop an ethos which respects and values all people
- (ii) actively advance equality of opportunity
- (iii) prepare students for life in a diverse society
- (iv) promote good relations amongst people within the Academies community and the wider communities within which we work
- (v) eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other oppressive behaviour
- (vi) deliver equality through our Academies policies, procedures and practice
- (vii) make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to Academy provision and activities
- (viii) take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural expectations
- (ix) monitor the implementation of equality within the Academies
- (x) set targets for improvement and evaluate the impact of equality action in achieving our goals.

7. Communication of Equality Policy

We will take active steps to communicate this Equality Policy to all students, parents/carers/associated persons, staff, governors, partners, stakeholders, contractors and visitors to the Academies.

8. Responsibilities and accountabilities

The Trust Board and Local Governing Committees are responsible for:

- making sure the Academies follow all of its equality policies and codes, and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality

The CEO, Executive Principal and Principals are responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality
- advancing equality inside and outside the Academy
- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation
- ensuring that the Academies implement its equality policy and codes of practice

Academy leaders (for example senior, subject and pastoral leaders) are responsible for:

- putting the Academy equality policies and codes into practice
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) are responsible for:

- promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination or harassment
- actively responding to and reporting any incidents of unfair discrimination, related to protected characteristics perpetrated by students, other staff or visitors
- keeping up-to-date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities training

Students are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions
- obeying the Trust's equality policy and codes

Human Resources are responsible for:

- monitoring and reviewing the policy and for ensuring that all employment-related policies, procedures and practices adhere to this policy

9. Scope of the policy

This policy covers all aspects of the Trust's operation and the community within it whether on or off trust premises, including at work social events or at formal or informal events involving staff, students, parents carers or other work-related contacts.

10. Forms of discrimination

The following are forms of discrimination that this policy aims to avoid:

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic that they either have or are thought to have. Direct discrimination can also occur by way of association, which is when a person is treated less favourably because, for example, their spouse or partner or other relative has the protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on people who share a particular protected characteristic. A person with the protected characteristic who is disadvantaged in that way has the right to complain.

To be justified the provision, criterion, or practice must be necessary for legitimate business reasons in circumstances where less discriminatory alternatives are not reasonably available.

Victimisation occurs where someone is treated unfavourably because he/she has raised a complaint under this policy or taken legal action, in relation to any alleged act of unlawful discrimination, against the Company or because he/she has supported someone else in doing this.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can take many different forms and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments, emails or physical contact that causes offence or are objectionable.

Harassment may involve a single incident or persistent behaviour that extends over a period of time and can occur even if someone did not mean to cause offence. It also means that a person can be subjected to harassment by behaviour that is not aimed at them directly but which they nonetheless find unpleasant.

Harassment is always unacceptable and where it relates to a protected characteristic it will amount to an unlawful act of discrimination.

Discrimination arising from Disability - In addition to the above, it is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because of something that is the result, effect or outcome of their disability, unless the treatment is necessary and can be objectively justified. Furthermore, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled students, job applicants, employees or other workers are not substantially disadvantaged.

11. Raising a discrimination concern or complaint

All complaints about alleged discrimination will be dealt with using the Trust's Grievance Procedure or Respect at Work Policy, which are open to all employees of the Trust. The Equality Act 2010 protects the interests of those affected by unlawful discrimination and affords the right of complaint to an Employment Tribunal regardless of length of service.

Applicants not employed by the Trust should use the Trust's Complaints Procedure.

12. Non-compliance

If an employee does not comply with the Equal Opportunities Policy they may be subject to investigation under the Respect at Work or Disciplinary Policy. In some circumstances employees may be personally liable for discrimination and some acts of discrimination may result in legal action and criminal offence where the harassment was intentional.

13. Monitoring and review

The Board of Directors has agreed that this policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or as required to ensure it remains compliant with Equality legislation. This review will take into consideration all aspects of applicable legislation and advice current at the time of the review. The next 'Period of Review' will be **September 2021**.