



Horizons Specialist Academy Trust
Providing infinite opportunities

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust Single Equality Policy

Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Directors: Summer 2015

Date of Next Review: Summer 2017

Responsible Officer: Elizabeth Horne

Introduction

This equality policy is the Trust's response to the specific and general duties in the current equality legislation. It is an attempt to capture how we are systematically establishing and implement good practice in equality and diversity across all areas of Trust life.

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust is an inclusive organisation where we focus on the well-being and progress of every young person and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 7 key principles

- 1. All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- 2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength.** We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit a Trust academy.
- 3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- 4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of the Trust to feel a sense of belonging within the academies and the wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in Trust life.
- 5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- 6. We have the highest expectations of all our young people.** We expect all students to achieve to their highest potential.
- 7. We work to raise standards for all students.**
We believe that improving the quality of education for all groups of students raises standards across the whole Trust.

Purpose of the policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that academies cannot discriminate against pupils or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics”.

The Act requires all public organisations, including academies to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties;

The Public Sector Equality Duty or “general duty”

This requires all public organisations, including academies to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization, advance equality of opportunity between different groups and foster good relations between different groups.

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including academies to;

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty.
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the Trust is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the Trust is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Appendix 2 shows the Trusts Equality Objectives for 2015-2016 in an Equality Action Plan.

What we are doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions.

All students have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan which supports their access and participation in education.

The Chief Executive ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

We ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day today life of the academies within the Trust.

We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

We do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex,

race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The Trusts Policy on Behaviour takes account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over- representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

The Academy challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic attitudes

There is guidance in our Anti-Bullying Guidelines on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the Directors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of our Trust populations very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of students and use this data to support Trust improvement.

We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress.

We collect and analyse data across the Trust population and regularly share this with Director.

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future students – we will for example, be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired or Gypsy Roma Traveller student joins one of our academies.

We avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any student's achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able".

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all students.

We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

We ensure equality of access for all students to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

What we are doing to foster good relations

We prepare our students for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural development of our students and preparation for life in modern Britain.

We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.

We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our school populations and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.

We promote whole school ethos and values that challenge prejudice-based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.

We provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.

We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people.

We provide opportunities for our young people to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences.

We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events e.g. RE Days covering the six major faiths.

Other ways we address equality issues

We maintain records of all training relating the Equalities;

Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities;

We keep minutes where equality issues are discussed;

We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our students;

The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced.

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole Trust community we:

- review relevant feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evenings, etc.
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- review feedback and responses from the students, from the academy councils, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Education, Health and Care Plans, mentoring and support;
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Board meetings and from the Board committees e.g. Provision and Achievement.

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Trust Improvement Plans)

The objectives which we identify represent our Trust priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the Trust community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team

The Chief Executive is responsible for implementing the policy, for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Principal in each academy has day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. S/he will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the Trust's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all students
- support different groups of students in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may find aspects of learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff as part of the Trust's Training Programme.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

We are concerned to ensure, wherever possible, that the staffing of the Trust reflects the diversity of our community.

As an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy bi-annually and make adjustments as appropriate.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives and data is available

- on the school website
- as paper copies
- available to staff on the staff shared area

We ensure that the whole Trust community knows about the policy, objectives and data through newsletters, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

We publish on the Trust's website copies of all relevant policies and guidance.

Check list of key considerations for school staff and Directors

- The Trust collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to students, e.g. achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the Trust provides.
- The Trust analyses achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when there trends or patterns indicate a need.
- The Trust sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable students and monitors progress on reaching these objectives.
- A senior member of staff has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes.
- The Trust ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- The Trust encourages visitors to its academies to follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy.
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all students to understand and celebrate diversity and difference.
- All groups are encouraged to participate in academy life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and academy councils.
- The Trust monitors bullying and harassment in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern.
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of our community.
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays, discussions and assemblies.
- Academy environments are increasingly accessible to students, staff and visitors.
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the academy and issues such as language barriers are considered.
- The accessibility needs of parents, students and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information.
- The Board of Directors is increasingly representative of the community it serves, procedures for the election of parent Directors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2015 – 2017

Below are the equality objectives we have identified for the period 2015 – 2017.

Equality Objective	Action	Intended Outcome	Responsibility
<p>To ensure we consult with all groups across the Trust, including staff, Directors, children and young people and their families to raise awareness of the Single Equality Policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To raise awareness of the single equality policy by: • Bringing it to the attention of staff at staff and team meetings. • Regularly referencing it in newsletters home. • Publication on the HSAT website. • Linking it to aspects of the curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That equality for everyone becomes part of Trust life. • Staff are familiar with the single equality policy. • Parents and carers and Directors are secure that the Trust has regard to the Equality Duty as specified in the Equality Act 2010. 	<p>Elizabeth Horne - Chief Executive Mel Lyons – Principal, Green Gates Academy Kathryn Lindop – Principal, Abbey Hill Sixth Form David Penny – Principal, Westlands Academy Rebecca Whelan – Principal, Abbey Hill Academy Pete Ewart– Principal, Hollis Academy Colin Whitaker – Chair of Directors</p>
<p>To ensure where appropriate, all other Trust Policies and guidance demonstrate equality.</p>	<p>Audit all appropriate HSAT policies i.e. SEN Policy, Behaviour and Anti - Bullying guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and Directors are secure that all appropriate policies demonstrate equality. • All parents and carers are secure that all appropriate policies demonstrate equality. 	<p>Elizabeth Horne - Chief Executive Mel Lyons – Principal, Green Gates Academy Kathryn Lindop – Principal, Abbey Hill Sixth Form David Penny– Principal, Westlands Academy Rebecca Whelan – Principal, Abbey Hill Academy Pete Ewart – Principal, Hollis Academy Colin Whittaker – Chair of Directors Elizabeth Kipling-Vasey – Head of Strategy & SEN</p>

