



Equal Opportunities Policy in Employment

Date Approved:	July 22
Committee:	F&R
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Scheduled Review:	3 years
Policy Lead (if applicable):	

Mission, values and guiding principles

Our mission is to provide outstanding Catholic education for all the children in our schools. We are inspired by the example and teachings of Christ and we will strive for excellence in all areas of our work and support for every child in our care and staff member. The provides us with the inspiration for all that we do within our Trust and is therefore central to the realisation of the Equal Opportunities Policy. We believe that we are all equal in the sight of God and that we all have a positive contribution to make as members of the Trust community. We aim to foster an inclusive community in which all our members commit to the Gospel values of love, service, respect, justice and faith and all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and are able to participate fully in school life. Treating others equitably and promoting social justice and harmony are central to achieving this aim.

Legal context

Equality Act 2010

The statutory duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and related regulations require the school to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- publish information and objectives to show how they are meeting their duty.

These provisions apply to the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender re-assignment
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination law

The following groups also have the benefit of legal protection:

- Part time workers and fixed term employees are protected from less favourable treatment and entitled to equal pay.
- Agency Workers are who complete a qualifying period of 12 weeks in a particular job are entitled to the same basic employment and working conditions as employees.
- Trade union members and representatives are protected from discrimination and less favourable treatment on the grounds of trade union membership or trade union activities.

Family friendly rights

The law provides additional rights in relation to:

- Maternity and ante natal care leave and pay
- Paternity leave and pay
- Adoption leave and pay
- Parental / Shared Parental leave and pay
- Care or death of dependants leave
- The right to request flexible working

Scope

This policy applies to all Trust employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to job applicants and to former employees in relation to references.

It sets out a rigorous, structured approach to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity in:

- organisational and job design;
- drafting, implementing and reviewing employment policies, procedures and practices;
- procuring goods and services for staff; and
- making decisions that affect individual staff members.

It identifies:

- our commitments in terms of how we will go about implementing our statutory duty;
- our undertaking to staff to deliver equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- the roles and responsibilities of governors, school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers.

Our commitments

No prospective or actual member of staff will be treated less favourably than any other, whether before, during or after their employment at the school on the basis of any protected characteristic or length or type of contract, except when such treatment is within the law and determined by lawful requirements.

This Trust is committed to:

- appointing senior staff to take responsibility for compliance and implementation and ensuring that they have specialist training;
- ensuring that all our directors, governors and staff are aware of the requirements and receive appropriate training;
- embedding equality considerations into our planning process to put them at the heart of decision-making;
- recording data in relation to protected groups and remedying gaps in that data;
- using a consistent methodology for assessing impact to enable us to track progress;
- ensuring adequate record-keeping for decisions affecting pupils;
- engaging staff representatives and groups before making a decision where we lack reliable data;
- publishing anonymised equality information as required;
- offering information in alternative accessible formats where appropriate.

The Trust will ensure that consideration is given to promoting equality in reviewing policies, procedures and practices in all areas of employment including, but not limited to:

- Health, safety and wellbeing
- Advertising, recruitment and selection
- Training and development
- Appraisal
- Opportunities for promotion
- Job evaluation, pay and grading
- Conditions of service and benefits
- Leave of absence

- Conduct and discipline
- Grievance
- Capability
- Redundancy and organisational change
- Termination of employment
- Whistleblowing

We will be clear about how we protect the Catholic nature of the schools within our Trust in accordance with School Standards and Framework Act, 1998. This will include:

- giving preference in connection with the appointment, promotion and remuneration of teachers to practising Catholics;
- ensuring that those appointed to one of the Reserved Positions (CEO, Executive Headteacher, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher; RE coordinator; Head of RE department or a Secondary RE teacher) are practising Catholics;
- setting this out in advertisements and documentation relating to the post.

For other staff, we will state in the advertisement that preference will be given to applicants in sympathy with the Catholic character and ethos of the school and to question this at interview.

Undertaking to staff

We undertake to provide all staff with the opportunity to perform effectively, develop and progress in their careers by:

- setting a clear structure and framework to support staff development and progression;
- providing stretching opportunities for aspiring middle and senior leaders;
- advertising vacancies openly, including externally other than in exceptional circumstances such as overstaffing or redundancy, and appointing on merit.

We undertake to deliver equality of access for those with disabilities by:

- anticipating, assessing and catering for their needs;
- making reasonable adjustments to processes, working conditions or the working environment, including terms and conditions of employment, to help overcome practical difficulties;
- ensuring that premises development plans take into account requirements for equal access.

We undertake to promote the wellbeing of our staff and harmonious working relationships by:

- fostering an environment in which staff feel valued and diversity is celebrated;
- enabling staff to manage the competing demands of work and family life;
- ensuring that any allegations of discrimination, victimisation or harassment are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and robustly.

In order to ensure that these policy commitments are met, we will record and analyse data by ethnicity, gender and disability in the following areas and give consideration to positive action to address disadvantage:

- appointments and promotions;
- training and development;
- pay progression;
- incidents and grievances relating to discrimination, harassment or victimisation of staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Directors and Governors

The Trust is committed to ensuring that each academy is fully inclusive to all staff and applicants. The local school governors will ensure that:

- the school fulfils its legal responsibilities;
- this policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed;
- appropriate objectives for improvement are set and progress monitored;
- the school deals effectively with incidents and grievances.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- this policy, related plans, data and progress against objectives are made readily available to staff and staff representatives;
- senior members of staff lead on aspects of the policy and receive appropriate training;
- all staff receive training and guidance to enable them to apply the policy;
- mechanisms are in place to deliver the commitments and undertakings to staff;
- all incidents of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are handled with due seriousness;
- effective monitoring arrangements are in place and governors receive regular reports.

The Leadership Team

Senior and Middle Leaders with management responsibilities will support the Headteacher in carrying out the above by providing effective leadership and management to their staff including:

- acting as role models in promoting inclusion, staff development and wellbeing;
- providing training and guidance in applying the policy;
- devising plans, policies and procedures to deliver equality objectives and undertakings to staff;
- establishing effective monitoring processes and evaluating and reporting on progress;
- being alert to discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensuring that it is not tolerated;
- devising procedures for dealing with incidents and ensuring they are adhered to.

All staff

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore to treat colleagues fairly and with respect and dignity at all times and not to discriminate against or harass others.

Monitoring and review

This policy has been agreed by Trust Board and is available on our website and in alternative formats as appropriate. We have a rolling programme for reviewing policies and their impact.