



Academies Trust

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Policy details

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This policy applies to all pupils/students, colleagues (including employees, workers, agency/supply and volunteers, regardless of working hours or contractual status), Governing Council and Trust Board members.

1.2 It sets out our vision for equality, diversity and inclusion within Co-op Academies Trust ("our Trust").

1.3 Each academy is required to publish their own equality, diversity & inclusion statement, and to set equality objectives appropriate to their setting, with due regard to this policy and our [co-operative values](#).

2.0 Policy Statement

2.1 We're strongly committed to promoting equality, inclusion and celebrating diversity in all aspects of our work, preventing discrimination in both employment and education provision. We know that simply having a diverse workforce is not enough. We will:

- create an inclusive environment, where everyone can contribute their best work and develop to their full potential
- celebrate the fact that everyone is different yet valued and to make sure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect
- challenge, speak out and act against racism, homophobia, and other forms of inequality and discrimination
- create and promote opportunities for staff voice, and meaningful engagement within our Trust around these key issues.

2.2 Our vision is that by valuing diversity and being inclusive it will enable the communities we serve to achieve highly, and help our academies to provide an outstanding education for all their learners, founded on co-operative values.

2.3 We value and respect individuals' differences including, but not limited to:

- gender*
- gender reassignment*
- pregnancy and maternity*
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin*
- culture
- age**

- disability*
- sexual orientation*
- gender identity
- religion or belief*
- marital or civil partnership status*
- education
- learning styles
- caring responsibilities

*protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010

**protected characteristic for staff, but not for pupils/students

2.4 We do not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination in any form, within or outside of the workplace.

2.5 We are committed to creating a community where diverse cultures are celebrated, where everybody feels welcome and can use their differences to develop themselves and the environment they work in, and where there is consideration of how behaviour affects others both inside and outside our Trust.

2.6 We recognise the importance of the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 in promoting equality and eliminating unlawful discrimination, but seek to exceed our legal obligations and provide an inclusive environment which champions the communities we serve and within which colleagues and pupils/students can fully contribute and achieve their potential.

2.7 We will regularly reflect on our practices to ensure that they don't create barriers to participation for pupils/students, colleagues, governors or Trust Board members.

3.0 What our Trust's leaders will do

3.1 We will set equality objectives (reviewed annually), and publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

3.2 We will take action towards:

- our Trust Board having a diverse membership and, in particular, balanced gender composition
- increasing the diversity of our central and academy-based leadership teams
- creating a workforce that's representative of our communities
- our Governing Councils reflecting the diverse nature of our communities

- ensuring that any work completed as a Trust towards our equality objectives will be impactful and embedded, so sustainable in every way.

We always compare well to national benchmarks in terms of diverse representation so want to go beyond the national benchmarks for more regional data so we truly represent our communities. In terms of improving diverse representation within our Trust we will use our ITT programme, CPD and active succession planning to ensure at all levels of leadership we represent the communities we serve.

3.3 We will regularly review our policies and practices to ensure they meet legal obligations and are supportive of the vision set out in this policy.

4.0 What our Academies will do

4.1 We will provide an inclusive and safe environment where adults are dedicated to protecting the rights, meeting the needs and supporting the aspirations of all children to achieve their very best and become successful, well rounded individuals. Consideration for diversity, equality and inclusion will run through everything we do.

4.2 We will be at the heart of our communities, creating a welcoming environment for all, celebrating diversity, and promoting community cohesion.

4.3 Each academy will publish their own equality, diversity and inclusion statement which 'brings to life' this Policy within their own setting. They will publish their own equality objectives, and review progress against these annually.

4.4 We will regularly review our policies and processes, to ensure they meet legal obligations and support our vision for equality, diversity and inclusion.

4.5 We will work towards a curriculum and teaching and learning practices which are inclusive and anti-racist. All our schools within this three year policy period are working towards and will be accredited with the Leeds Beckett Anti-Racist award. This is largely about the curriculum but also about generating a truly inclusive ethos for all staff and students within the academy.

5.0 What our Governing Councils will do

5.1 We will be open and inclusive by:

- regularly reviewing the time of the day when meetings are held

- aiming to have a balanced gender composition, and governors who represent the community
- communicating in an open and inclusive manner

5.2 We will discuss equality, diversity and inclusion at least annually, and review:

- progress against the equality objectives set by the academy
- the equality & diversity profile of the staff and pupil/student population
- the admissions process
- any complaints received
- the activities taken to ensure the Governing Council is open and inclusive.

6.0 Your responsibilities

We all have a responsibility to behave in a way that is respectful of others and to understand that our views and opinions may not always be the same.

To help create an inclusive environment colleagues should:

- Try to understand other peoples' points of view, and help them to understand your own points of view
- Challenge or report inappropriate behaviour in a respectful way
- Be aware of different cultures and customs, and respect the benefits that diversity can bring
- Respect confidentiality
- Deal with others in an ethical and lawful way and with respect at all times
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Look for solutions to problems and try to resolve issues constructively.

7.0 Raising concerns about equality, diversity and inclusion

7.1 Pupils / Students

Pupils/students should raise any concerns with their teacher, head of year, or Headteacher.

7.2 Colleagues

Colleagues are encouraged to speak to their manager in the first instance. They may also wish to refer to the Dignity at Work Policy or the Whistleblowing Policy.

7.3 Governors

Governors are encouraged to speak with their Chair of Governors, a member of our Trust's Governance Team or, if they have been unable to resolve matters, a member of our Trust's senior leadership team or our Trust Board.

7.4 Parents / Carers, or members of the wider community

Please speak to the Headteacher in the first instance. If you are unable to resolve the matter informally, a copy of the Complaints Policy can be found [here](#).

8.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, in consultation with our recognised Trade Unions, or more frequently if appropriate.