



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY FOR PUPILS / STUDENTS

**Presented to: Full Trustees Meeting
17 March 2022**

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Date of next review: ³	

¹ This is the date the policy was approved by the meeting

² This is the date the policy was reviewed prior to its approval above

³ This is the date as set by the policy review clause or the date approved plus three years

- Headteacher also means Head of College and Principal
- School also means College, Academy or Academies
- References to School are taken to mean any school within the Four Cs Multi-Academy Trust

1.0 Introduction

The Four Cs Multi-Academy Trust will adhere to all equalities legislation, including the three duties outlined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- To eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- To foster good relations across all characteristics

This Equality and Diversity policy brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality. It includes all protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within the schools in our Trust's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our schools embrace the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and note the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing and material outcomes.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of the MAT (Multi-Academy Trust) and the whole school community within our schools. This includes pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies, who we continually engage with and are actively involved in and contribute to its development.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- To promote equality of opportunity and access within our schools and within the wider community
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins

The policy explains the MAT's and our schools' aims to listen to and involve pupils/students, staff, parents/carers and the community in achieving better outcomes for our young people.

1.1 Principles of our approach

Understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for those people who have protected characteristics within school, while celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community is the key to our approach. Those people with protected characteristics are defined as those who may be susceptible to discrimination because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, less able or socio-economic background. These include pupils/students, teaching and support staff, parents/carers, Trustees/Governors, multi-agency staff linked to the schools, visitors to schools and contractors.

As a MAT our schools value diversity and believe that equality in our schools should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of a school within our MAT should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Trustees/Governors to ensure compliance with and implementation of the policy by the whole school community as well as eliminating all unlawful discrimination. Visitors to the site will be expected to follow the principles laid down in this policy.

1.2 **Our Approach**

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcomes for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
- Social cohesion within our schools and out MAT as well as our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities
- Fairness and Social justice. We will develop our understanding of inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

The Trust's vision is to ensure that every child succeeds, building on what learners already know therefore making learning vivid and real. Making learning an enjoyable experience and enriching the learning experience offered is integral to these opportunities and is also at the heart of our vision to promote diversity and equality.

1.3 **Our Vision Statement about Equality and Diversity**

The Trust seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments in our schools which allows us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote our understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

2.0 **Our Duties**

The Trust and its schools recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process, to ensure better outcomes for each and every individual in our settings. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We

positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils/students and the wider school communities.

We consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under the SEN statement, or where the statement does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We consider the needs of our young people and ensure that they feel safe and secure. This includes reflecting on the needs of our young people who identify as Transgender. Adapting suitable accommodation including toilet facilities and changing facilities to support the young person's need and inclusivity.

We are also guided by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: non-discrimination, best interest of the child, right to life survival and development and right to be heard.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality and legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities:

- The engagement, participating and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents/carers and partner agencies
- Preparation for entry to the school
- School policies
- Breaks and lunchtimes
- The provision of school meals
- Interaction with peers
- Opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- Exam arrangements
- Behaviour management approach and sanctions
- Exclusion procedures
- School clubs, activities and school trips
- The school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- Preparation of pupils/students for the next phase of education
- Learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- Classroom organisation
- Timetabling
- Grouping of pupils/students
- Homework
- Access to school facilities
- Activities to enrich the curriculum, for example a visitor to the school or Theatre in Education (TIE)
- School sports
- Employees and staff welfare

2.1 **The roles and responsibilities within our school communities**

Our Headteacher will:

- Ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy

- Oversee the effective implementation of the policy
- Ensure staff have access to training which helps implement the policy
- Develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- Ensure that the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees / Governors are kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our Local Governing Committee and Trustees will:

- Ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan
- Support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- Engage with parents/carers and partner agencies about the policy

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- Have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- Provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- With the Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- Assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the School Improvement Plan

Our pupils/students will:

- Be involved in the development of the policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- Be expected to act in accordance with the policy
- Be encouraged to actively support the policy

Our parents/carers will:

- Be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the development of the policy
- Have access to the policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- Be encouraged to actively support the policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- Be informed of any incident relating to this policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- Be involved in the development of the policy
- Be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- Understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- Make known any queries or training requirements

Relevant voluntary or community groups or partner agencies will:

- Be involved in the development of the policy
- Be encouraged to support the policy
- Be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy

The following sections outline the ways in which our schools promote Equality and Diversity in key areas affecting pupils/students.

3.1 **Teaching and Learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils/students with the opportunity to succeed and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, learning and teaching will endeavour to:

- Ensure equality of access to the whole school experience for all pupils/students and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Promote attitudes, values and skills that challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils/students to appreciate their own culture, religion and beliefs and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils/students' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, and challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the curriculum covers issues of equality, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion
- Prepare pupils/students for living in a multicultural society and promote good relations between different racial groups
- Celebrate diversity and promote (where appropriate) the positive contribution of different ethnic minority groups to the curriculum area, as well as profiling the positive contributions made to society by other minority groups
- Celebrate what we have in common
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all pupil/student groupings
- Take account of the composition of individual teaching group
- Take account of the different learning needs of different groups of pupils/students, using an appropriate range of teaching strategies to enable all pupils/students to progress
- Utilise seating plans to foster effective learning
- Take account of the current performance of all pupils/students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils/students
- Identify resources that support staff development

3.2 **Learning Environment**

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils/students regardless of age, gender, sex, race, disability, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes for all our young people, we recognise the importance of:

- Teacher commitment, expertise and enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils/students
- Adults in the school providing good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality and diversity
- The school as a whole placing a high priority on the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We strive to meet all pupils/students' learning needs, including the more able
- The school providing an environment in which all pupils/students have equal access to all facilities and resources

- Creating an environment where all pupils/students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning
- Encouraging pupils/students and parents/carers to create an appropriate learning environment at home and providing them with advice about how to do this
- Providing opportunities for completing homework beyond the school day on the school site
- Using a range of teaching methods throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils/students

3.3 Curriculum

The Trust actively recognise differences and aims to ensure that:

- Our planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross-curricular themes, promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity
- Pupils/students will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Steps are taken to ensure that all pupils/students have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all pupils/students, their linguistic needs and their learning styles
- All pupils/students have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression

3.4 Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community. To this end:

- There should be an ‘openness’ of atmosphere and mutual respect which welcomes everyone to the school
- The pupils/students are encouraged to greet visitors to the school, and adults within the school, with friendliness and courtesy
- The displays around the school should be of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of school life and are frequently monitored
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities

3.5 Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within all schools in the Trust is a high priority. These resources will:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints
- Show positive images of different ethnic groups, males and females in society, and people with disabilities
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Include materials to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues
- Be equally accessible to all members of school community, consistent with health and safety
- Not promote, explicitly or implicitly, racist, anti-disability, sexist, homophobic or ageist views

3.6 Language

We recognise that it is important that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- Does not intentionally offend
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- Recognises the individuality and background of all members of the school community, with everyone endeavouring to spell and pronounce names correctly
- Uses appropriate terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals

3.7 Provision for Bilingual/Multilingual Pupils

We will make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual children/groups to ensure access to an appropriate curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller and Gypsy Roma children
- Those from refugee families
- Asylum seekers
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Pupils/students who are new to the United Kingdom

3.8 Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff take account of disability needs, gender, religious and racial differences, sexual orientation and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker pupils/students
- All pupils/students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, sex, gender or race
- All pupils/students, staff, parents/carers are given support as appropriate when they experience or perceive discrimination. We also recognise that the perpetrators of discrimination are themselves sometimes victims of their personal circumstances and therefore, where appropriate, remedial work is done to ensure that the actions do not occur again
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of pupils/students can see themselves reflected in the school community
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the school community rather than the challenges.

3.9 Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of the school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour. It will address this duty in a number of different ways, eg:

- Incidents where there are unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) will be tackled. The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender)
- All bullying related to those with protected characteristics will be referred to an appropriate member of staff and be dealt with as a serious incident – and will be recorded and investigated thoroughly
- Incidents involving those with protected characteristics – specifically incidents relating to race, disability, transphobic or homophobia – will be highlighted in behaviour logs in

order to ensure effective monitoring. It will be the norm for parents/carers of the victim and the perpetrator to be notified of the incident, unless there are specific circumstances that make this inappropriate

3.10 **Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community**

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help all pupils to achieve their potential. For example:

- All parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school; Literacy Ambassador Scheme, parents' evenings, transition events, communication
- Encouraging parents/carers to contact the school if they have any concerns about equality and diversity issues – the first point of contact should be the member of Senior Management with responsibility for Equality and Diversity
- Encouraging members of the local community to regularly join in school activities eg for example parent forums

3.11 **Staff Development**

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This will include pupil/student access to a range of staff of all genders and ethnicities
- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils/students in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity

4.0 **Implementation, Monitoring and Review**

This policy was published in March 2022. It will be actively promoted and disseminated. Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our Trustees/Governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

- 4.1 The Trust Board (or responsible committee) will review this policy in line with the procedure for policy review.

Date for Review

If no other reason for review (see policy review procedure) this policy will be reviewed in 3 years.