

Equality Policy

Statement of intent

The Learning Trust recognises that certain groups in society have historically been disadvantaged on account of unlawful discrimination they have faced on the basis of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

This policy will outline a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the Trust community and workforce.

- **Legislative framework**

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

The Learning Trust fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities.

A protected characteristic, under the Act, is as follows:

- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Sex (including transgender people)
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Age (students excluded)
- Marriage and civil partnership (students excluded)

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a Trust to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for students.
- In the way it provides students access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.

• Principles and Aims

We see all students and potential students, and their parents and carers, as of equal value, regardless of their race, sex, gender, disability, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

We see all staff and potential staff as of equal value, regardless of their age, race, sex, gender, disability, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantages which people may face in relation to their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

The Learning Trust will promote race equality and have due regard to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

The Learning Trust will promote disability equality throughout the Trust, ensuring the equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination, eliminating disability related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.

The Learning Trust will promote gender equality by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote the equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'transgender' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. This Trust will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within the social community.

The Learning Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.

The Learning Trust will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.

The Learning Trust's Admissions Policy will not discriminate in any way.

The Trust will endeavour to:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given necessary training and support, and report progress to the Trustee Board.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of their race, gender, social and economic background, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the Trust, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, and showing appropriate support for students with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equalities.

• Objectives

Whilst continuously aiming to improve the implementation of equality related policies and procedures, The Learning Trust has established the requirement for all schools to create. Set and monitor equality objectives within the strategic school development plans that foster greater equality amongst its students and staff, including but limited to:

- To monitor, assess and track all students, identifying underachievement and implementing appropriate strategies.
- To implement effective strategies to support students in all vulnerable or other defined groups.
- To improve the quality of support for students in all vulnerable or other defined groups.
- To ensure all students are able to access a full range of extra curricular activities.
- To continually review the Trust's Behaviour policy to ensure it creates the correct environment to best protect and support students in all vulnerable groups in the Trust so that pupils respect one another, feel safe, valued and all are aware that any behaviour away from the expected is challenged.
- Promote equality amongst all of its staff.

Individual schools within the Trust will set and measure other specific objectives and targets as appropriate within the SSDPs.

Approved by the Trustee Board on 26 March 2019

Reviewed by Author in June 2020
Reviewed by Author in March 2021

NB: In all TLT policies, the use of the word 'Trustees' may also be read to mean 'Local Governors' and 'Head teacher' may also mean 'CEO' ... and vice versa

Equality Procedures

• Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustee Board will:

- Ensure that The Learning Trust complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish equality objectives.
- Ensure that the Trust's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity data is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Ensure that the Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the Trustee Board.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

The headteacher will:

- Implement the policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their HR induction and continuous professional development.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.

Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidence of harassment or bullying in the Trust.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying in the Trust and report any major breaches of the policy to the headteacher.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the Trust's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.

- Monitor students' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Students will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other student or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the Trust by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the Safeguarding Officer or to another member of the Trust staff.
- Abide by all the Trust's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

• Gender reassignment

The Act ensures legal protection against discrimination (direct or indirect) for everyone under the nine protected characteristics mentioned previously, including gender reassignment.

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if that person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

All members of staff and students have a right to privacy, which includes the right to keep one's transgender status confidential. Trust staff should not disclose information that may reveal a child or other staff member's transgender status.

The Trust will appoint a staff member in whom any transgender child can confide and who can deal with any issues that may arise, for instance bullying or harassment.

A glossary of terminology related to the transgender field can be found on the [Gender Identity Research and Education Society Website](#).

• Uniform/dress policy

The Act does not deal specifically with Trust uniform or other aspects of appearance, such as hair colour and style, and the wearing of jewellery and make-up, but the general requirement not to discriminate in the treatment of students applies here in relation to other aspects of the Trust policy.

The Learning Trust will ensure that blanket uniform policies do not discriminate because of race, gender, disability, religion/belief or sexual orientation.

We will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important Trust policies, such as Trust safety or discipline.

- **Curriculum**

All students will be entitled to access to a curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need. When planning the curriculum, the Trust will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality.

The Trust will develop an appropriate 11-18 curriculum for all students in all vulnerable groups.

- **Promoting equality**

In order to meet our objectives, the Trust has identified the following priorities:

We will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment so they can integrate wholly in all parts of Trust life.

Staff will ensure that all students are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the Trust will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

We will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.

There will be differential schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all students.

There will be a clearly defined behaviour policy, which will be consistently enforced.

The Trust will take appropriate steps to meet students' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled students, enabling our students to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the Trust.

The Trust will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.

The Trust will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local Trusts.

The Trust will consult with stakeholders, i.e. students, parents/carers, staff and relevant community groups, to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning. These equality objectives will be reviewed and reported on annually.

Bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with accordingly. Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

- **Addressing prejudice related incidents**

The Learning Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that students and staff who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system.

The Trust will ensure that students and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents from occurring.

If incidents still occur, the Trust will address them immediately via The Complaints policy and report them to the Trustee Board.

- **Appeal process**

Staff members retain the right to appeal against a decision on the acceptability of their appearance using The Learning Trust's grievance procedure.

- **Monitoring and review**

The Learning Trust will review the policy and these procedures annually via the headteacher, to ensure that all procedures are up-to-date.

The policy will be monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and Trustee Board in the following ways:

- Individual attainment data
- Equal opportunities recruitment data
- Equality impact assessments
- Ofsted inspection judgements on equality and diversity
- Incident records related to harassment and bullying

Any changes made to these procedures will be communicated to all members of staff.