

South Bank Multi Academy Trust

EQUALITIES POLICY

Approved by Trustees: December 2017

Adopted by Governors Spring 2018

Review Date: NOVEMBER 2020

1 DEFINITION

1.1 For the purposes of this document and for the avoidance of doubt, South Bank Trust's Equalities Policy covers all those with protected characteristics, in order to ensure that they are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. This includes:

- Age (for employees, not for service provision)
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender (including issues of transgender and gender re-assignment)
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

2 DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 This document sets out how the Trust and its schools comply with the duties places upon them by the Equalities Act 2010.

2.2 The Trust welcomes its duties under the act, as these are aligned with the Trust's seven core values of:

- ◆ Equality
- ◆ Collaboration
- ◆ Autonomy
- ◆ Transparency
- ◆ Excellence
- ◆ Efficiency
- ◆ Inclusivity

2.3 The Trust is aware of its duty to:

2.3.1 publish equality information in order to demonstrate compliance with the Act.

2.3.2 uphold and publish equality objectives.

2.3.3 prepare, monitor and implement an accessibility plan

2.3.4 ensure that all other Trust and academy policies fully reflect the aims, duties and responsibilities of this Equalities Policy

2.3.5 ensure that all School Improvement Plans take full account of the aims, duties and responsibilities of this Equalities Policy

2.5 All academies in our Trust remain inclusive organisations that welcome pupils, staff, parents, governors and visitors from all walks of life and all protected characteristics.

2.6 All our academies understand their duty to encourage activities that promote all elements of Community Cohesion.

3 ELEMENT ONE: ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

3.1 The Trust has a Staff Code of Conduct which makes the duties of individual staff clear and explicit in relation to the requirement to support the Act and to eliminate discriminatory behaviour.

3.2 The Trust requires its academies to put in place and to organise a range of activities and opportunities that promote the elimination of discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act. This will include strategies such as:

- Age-appropriate assemblies on the theme discrimination
- A Behaviour Policy which will not tolerate any behaviour that is derogatory towards any other person, for any reason whatsoever
- An Anti-Bullying Policy which makes explicit the fact that discriminatory behaviour towards any individual or group will not be tolerated and will be taken extremely seriously
- A system for recording and reporting any discriminatory incidents, so that governors can monitor how effective the academy is in eliminating discrimination - this includes, but is not limited to, incidents of a racist or homophobic nature
- Pastoral staff whose remit includes working proactively where discrimination is identified or suspected
- Topics within relevant curriculum areas (e.g. RE, PSHCE, History) that explore in an age-appropriate context issues relating to discrimination

- 3.3 Trustees and Governors strive to achieve a diverse composition of their various governing bodies, in order to best reflect the school's local community.
- 3.4 When recruiting staff, Trustees and Governors seek to make appointments that reflect the diversity of the local community.
- 3.5 When promoting staff within any of its academies or within the Trust itself, decisions will be made without prejudice related to any of the protected characteristics.

4 ELEMENT TWO: ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

- 4.1 The Trust's Staff Code of Conduct makes the duties of individual staff clear and explicit in relation to the requirement to support the Act and to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 4.2 Each academy ensures that data analysis of pupil performance considers and addresses gaps between pupils with a protected characteristic and those who do not share it. Given the size of cohorts within the Trust, however, caution is taken when analysing and drawing conclusions based on the performance of extremely small groups of pupils.
- 4.3 The Trust's Admissions Policy states that pupils with a Disability (i.e. an EHCP) are given priority in allocating places at its schools.
- 4.4 Transition for those pupils with a Disability is also given a high priority, with additional opportunities for staff to exchange information, attend relevant meetings and to prepare pupils for their journey to a new setting.
- 4.5 Support for those pupils with EAL needs is given through each academy's provision for those with SEND.
- 4.6 Each academy within the Trust has a dedicated Inclusion Team, whose remit is to support pupils with disabilities and their families, including liaising with and working alongside external professionals as appropriate.
- 4.7 Each academy makes provision for those pupils with specific dietary needs, including providing meals for those linked to a disability or medical need, or those relating to a specific religious belief.
- 4.8 When recruiting new staff, governors monitor several protected characteristics for job applications, to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in relation to gender, age, disability and ethnicity.
- 4.9 Equality monitoring during the recruitment process is handled in a way that ensures sensitive information relating to any of the protected characteristics is removed prior to the shortlisting process and thus cannot be viewed by any of those involved in the selection of candidates.

5 ELEMENT THREE: FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

- 5.1 The Trust's Staff Code of Conduct makes the duties of individual staff clear and explicit in relation to the requirement to support the Act and to foster good relations across all characteristics i.e. between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 5.2 Topics are covered within relevant curriculum areas (e.g. RE, PSHCE, History, Geography) that explore in an age-appropriate way the contributions that different cultures have made to world history and modern day life.
- 5.3 Each academy's ethos seeks to promote tolerance, understanding and fairness to all.
- 5.4 The Behaviour Policy at each academy aims to reward pupils who consistently uphold the school's values and ethos, in particular in relation to demonstrating attitudes of mutual respect.
- 5.5 Both Secondary Schools take part in annual York Pride celebrations and ensure that their homophobic policies are a key aspect of managing pupil attitudes and behaviour.
- 5.6 Both Secondary Schools have Stonewall Champion status and the primary schools draw upon Stonewall information in seeking to maintain positive relations with parents and families. Our schools seek to recognise and support all families, including:
- Families with same-sex parents
 - Families with step-parents
 - Families with one parent
 - Families who have adopted a child
 - Families where other relations are the child's carer
- 5.7 As part of PSHCE work, pupils are taught about the range of different family organisations that are welcomed and valued within our school communities.
- 5.6 Academies will draw upon a range of activities that help to provide specific opportunities for the fostering of good relationships. These include:
- Foreign exchange visits
 - Trips abroad
 - Trips beyond the City of York
 - Focus weeks (on a cultural theme or a specific country)
 - Visitors from abroad
 - Classroom materials and reading books with multi-ethnic content

6 THE TRUST'S 5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

6.1 The Trust has agreed a set of guiding principles, which inform the work of each academy as well as the Trust itself:

1. All learners are of equal value
2. We recognise and respect differences
3. We foster positive attitudes and a sense of belonging
4. We are an equalities employer in all aspects of what we do
5. We seek to reduce and remove barriers to equality

6.2 In keeping with these guiding principles, we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

6.3 In order to ensure that our staff are well equipped to meet the needs of all our stakeholders, we ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

7 CURRENT OBJECTIVES

7.1 The Trust's current objectives are for each school to:

- Monitor and address any disparities between the performance of different groups of pupils
- Improve the monitoring of protected characteristics of staff
- Ensure that their staff and governance bodies fairly reflect the diversity of their community

8 BREACHES OF THE TRUST'S EQUALITY POLICY

8.1 Any breaches of this policy will be handled in the same way as breaches to any other policy. Complaints will be processed using the Trust's Complaints Policy. Any reports of breaches by staff will be handled through the academy's Disciplinary Procedures at an appropriate level.

9 MONITORING

9.1 We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

9.2 We collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.