



## EQUALITY POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO THE HEARTWOOD LEARNING TRUST BOARD, THE CENTRAL TEAM,  
AND ALL TRUST SCHOOLS/ACADEMIES

Document Management	
Updated Policy Approved	July 2023
Next Review Date	July 2027
Version	2.0
Approving Committee	Trust Board

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## Policy Updates

Date	Page	Policy Updates
April 2021	Whole policy	New document
October 2021	5	Section 5 - Correction made to the terminology
March 2023	4	Statement of Intent added (rather than 'aims') in line with other Trust policies
March 2023	5	1 - Legal Framework section added to include links to other policies/legislation
June 2023	Whole policy	Document changed to become joint Equality Policy and Equality Objectives for staff and students
July 2023	4	Trust Vision and Values added to the Statement of Intent
July 2023	6	2.5 - Point added about external providers and their EDI policies
July 2023	6	3.2 - Members and Trustees added for clarity
July 2023	6	4 - Bullet points amended to reflect staff equality and LGBTQ+ support
July 2023	7	5 - Bullet points added regarding an inclusive work environment and aims to reduce barriers to applications
July 2023	9	7 - Section re-written and re-formatted to reflect current equality objectives in line with strategic plans
July 2023	9	8 - Section on Compliance added
July 2023	10	9 - Responsibility of monitoring and review changed to reflect current process

This policy has been approved by:			
Signed		Date	
	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>		
Signed		Date	
	<i>Chair of the Trust Board</i>		

## Statement of Intent

Our Trust aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:





- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Trust will annually review how well we achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act 2010, i.e:

- race
- disability
- gender
- gender assignment
- age
- pregnancy and maternity
- marital status
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation

This policy supports the Trust's objective to be a respectful and inclusive community with a culture of thankfulness and appreciation, where we celebrate equality and diversity.

<b>Our Trust Vision</b> To provide environments where children and young people can thrive. <i>Life in all its fullness - a place to thrive</i>
<b>Our Trust Values</b> Respect, Teamwork, Kindness

 A respectful and inclusive community, with a culture of thankfulness and appreciation, where we celebrate equality and diversity.	 High quality first teaching across all of our schools, in every learning session, without exception.	 A broad and balanced educational offer which develops all pupils academically, practically, emotionally, socially and spiritually, leading to great outcomes.	 Resilient, sustainable and ethical leadership at all levels of the organisation.
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## 1. Legal Framework

- 1.0. This policy has due regard to all relevant statutory **legislation** including, but not limited to, the following:
- The Human Rights Act 1998
  - [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
  - [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives
- 1.1. This policy has due regard to relevant Department for Education (DfE) **guidance**:
- [The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#).
- 1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following **School/Academy** procedures:
- Accessibility Plan
  - Risk Assessments
- 1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with, but not limited to the following **Trust** Policies:
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
  - Social, Emotional & Mental Health Policy
  - Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
  - Complaints Policy and Procedure
  - Staff Grievance/Resolution Policy and Procedure

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.0. The Local Governing Committee (LGC) will:
- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school/academy, including to staff, pupils and parents.
  - Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 3 years.
  - Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Headteacher/Principal.
- 2.1. The equality link governor will:
- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every term, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed.
  - Ensure they are familiar with all relevant legislation and the content of this document.
  - Attend appropriate equality and diversity training.
  - Report back to the LGC regarding any issues.
- 2.2. The Headteacher/Principal will:
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils.
  - Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors.

- 2.3. The designated member of staff for equality will:
- Support the Headteacher/Principal in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils.
  - Meet with the equality link governor every term to raise and discuss any issues.
  - Support the Headteacher/Principal in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary.
- 2.4. All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.
- 2.5. Across the trust we will ensure that all service providers that are contracted to provide services to students, staff or visitors will comply with Equalities legislation.

### **3. Eliminating Discrimination**

- 3.0. The Trust is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.
- 3.1. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- 3.2. Staff, Members, Trustees and Governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.
- 3.3. New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every September.
- 3.4. The school/academy has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

### **4. Advancing Equality of Opportunity**

- 4.0. As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school/academy aims to advance equality of opportunity by:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. staff or pupils with disabilities, or those in the LGBTQ+ community who are subjected to bullying).
  - Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic or characteristics.
  - Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic (or characteristics) to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies, encouraging job applications from a diverse range of candidates).

- 4.1. In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the Trust will:
- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing.
  - Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information.
  - Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying).
  - Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils.

## **5. Fostering Good Relations**

- 5.0. The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:
- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.
  - Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute.
  - Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
  - Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.
  - Identifying and addressing barriers to the recruitment, training and development of staff from protected characteristic groups.
  - Promoting a positive equality culture through education and awareness at all levels to enable all staff to lead by example.
- 5.1. We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

## **6. Equality Considerations in Decision-Making**

- 6.0. The Trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.
- 6.1. The Trust always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:
- Cuts across any religious holidays
  - Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
  - Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

- 6.2. The Trust keeps a written record to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

## 7. Equality Objectives

The Trust is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff and students and other members of the school community. To achieve this the Trust has established the following objectives in line with the Trust's strategic plan:

<b>The Curriculum, its Delivery and Assessment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the individual needs of all pupils are met, so that the gap in the attainment and progress of different groups of learners is narrowed, with a particular focus on improving the achievement of students entitled to Free School Meals, those with Special Educational and Disability needs and Looked after children.</li> </ul>
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To proactively seek ways in which all members of our community have the opportunity to thrive.</li> <li>Positive promotion of inclusion, diversity and equality by raising awareness and leading by example to support inclusivity for all.</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership and Governance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure staff and governors are aware of current legislation surrounding equality and diversity and understanding how the Trust's responsibility can be put into practice.</li> <li>To promote cultural understanding, awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within the Trust schools/academies.</li> </ul>
<b>Centralised Services and Growth Strategy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote ourselves as an inclusive employer and seek ways to encourage job applications from a more diverse workforce.</li> <li>To value and support all staff within the Trust by providing career development and progression opportunities to all (including those in groups protected by the Equalities Act), so that staff performance is further enhanced, staff satisfaction increases and the staff team reflects the diversity of the local population at all levels.</li> </ul>

## 8. Compliance

- 8.0. Anyone wishing to raise a concern about an equality issue can do so via the Trust's Staff Grievance Policy or Complaints Procedure as appropriate.
- 8.1. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure.



- 8.2. Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

## **9. Monitoring and Review**

- 9.0. The Trust Board will update the equality information we publish, [described in sections 4-7 above], at least every year.
- 9.1. This document will be reviewed by The Trust Board at least every 4 years.
- 9.2. This document will be approved by the Trust Board.