



The Hill Trust

**THE HILL TRUST  
EQUALITY POLICY**

Review Deadline: Sept 2021

Author: Chair of Board of Directors

Reviewer: Board of Directors

Audience: Public Website, Staff Share, Governor's Website.

## **Why we have developed this Equality Policy**

This Equality Policy for The Hill Trust brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our Academy's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our Trust embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole Trust community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we will engage with widely in order to develop and promote this policy.

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
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between groups

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

## **Our Trust within the wider context**

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

## **Overall aims of our Equality Policy**

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our Academies and within our 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

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes<sup>1</sup>.

Issues relating to adults within the Trust community are also embraced under these themes and are reflected in the action plan.

## **Our approach**

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our Trust community, within all aspects of Academy 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
- 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 Trust and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- 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 the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

## **Our vision statement about Equality**

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

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

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 the 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 understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

## **Our duties**

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and will involve the whole Trust community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all<sup>2</sup>. 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 and the wider school community.

We will 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 an SEN statement, or where the statement does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>3</sup>.

**We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of Trust 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, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- Trust and individual Academy policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals

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<sup>2</sup> See ANNEX B for further information about legislation

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- Academy clubs, activities and Academy trips
- the Trust's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to Trust facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or Theatre in Education (TIE).
- Academy sports
- employees' and staff welfare

### **The roles and responsibilities within our Trust community**

Our CEO/Executive 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 to 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
- monitor the policy and report to the Board of Directors at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy and publish this information

- ensure that the individual Academy Senior Leadership teams are kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

Our individual Local Governing Bodies will:

- designate a governor within their individual Academy with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP)
- support the individual Academy Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy
- evaluate and review the policy bi-annually and the objectives every 4 years.

Our Academy Senior Leadership Teams 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 SIP.

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 related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.

Our Academy staff will:

- be involved in the future development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole Trust issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements.

Relevant voluntary or community groups and 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.

### **How we developed our Policy – Participation, Involvement and Work in Progress**

The development of this policy has involved the whole of our Trust community. We will continue to involve and listen to what they have to say, including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010.

- Our pupils/students

We will continue to access our pupil's/student's views through School council and the PHSE curriculum. We will continue to access the views of minority, marginalised or potentially vulnerable pupils/students through open dialogue and encouragement to speak out.

- Our staff

We will continue to engage all staff to make their contribution through facilitated dialogue and discussion at routine management meetings, forums and an openness to listen to concerns and suggestions. This includes senior management team, teaching assistants, cleaners, caretakers, mid-day supervisors, catering staff, administration staff and IT staff – working full time, part time or casually within the Trust.

- Our Local Governing Bodies

We will encourage our LGBs to both contribute to and monitor the effectiveness of this policy by directing that they have a standing agenda item at their meetings to discuss the strategic and tactical effects of this policy – feeding back to the |Board of Directors where concerns have been identified.

- Parents/carers

We will continually evaluate how easy it is for parents/carers to contribute and communicate with us using our website and newsletters.

- Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups

We support the engagement of and contributions from these groups. For example, by monitoring the effectiveness of adjustments have we made to facilitate participation by those who access Free School Meals

- Our partners in the community

We will continue to make contact with local relevant community and voluntary groups.

- Ongoing:

We will we keep the dialogue open and our new Communication Strategy will contain plans for engaging the whole community in the review and monitoring processes.



## **How we developed our Policy - Using information**

We have used data and other information about our school, and Equality Impact assessments (EQIAs) as a common sense measure to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. EQIAs help us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

OfSTED inspectors visit us regularly and report on equality issues during our inspection. We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, faith, disability and gender.

We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil/learner voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously.

We have the ability to buy in a range of services (see below) which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our Trust. From them, we learn about equality issues outside our individual Academies and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within the Trust as a whole.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

## **Commissioned services (buying in services)**

As a Trust, we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services. We seek to ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the Trust community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

## **Our Staff**

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled.

This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made<sup>4</sup> or require job applicants to complete a generic 'all encompassing' health questionnaire as part of the application procedure.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators.

We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Our staff team undertake training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community.  
We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

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<sup>4</sup> Unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work - for example ensuring that applicants for a PE teaching post have the physical capability to carry out the duties.