Vantage Equality Information & Objectives Policy



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Delivering educational excellence, together.

Vantage CE Academies

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Introduction

The Vantage CE Academies Trust (herein 'the Trust') recognises that certain groups in society have historically been disadvantaged on account of unlawful discrimination they have faced based on their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age or pregnancy and maternity.
This policy will put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the school community and workforce.

Legislative Framework

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

- 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 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)Data Protection Act 2018

This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following:

- DFE 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Equality Information and Objectives Statement
- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity and Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Equality Act 2010 (herein 'the Act') provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity

- Foster good relations

For the purpose of the policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'. The Trust fully understands the principle of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. Protected characteristic, under the Act, are as follows:

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

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

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

The responsible body for the Trust is the proprietor.

The Trust's liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to former pupils' communications and activities.

The Trust will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with the Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board will:

- Ensure that all school's in the Trust complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the PSED to:
- Publish equality objectives at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication.

- Update and publish information every year to demonstrate school compliance with the PSED.
- Ensure that the Trust's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the Trust's 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 governing board.
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the school publishes information regarding how it is complying with the public sector Equality Duty and that the information is easily accessible.

The headteacher will:

- Implement and champion this policy and its procedures
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and CPD.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.
- 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.
- Produce an annual report on the progress of implementing the provisions of this policy and report it to the governing board.

Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying in the school.
- Track and monitor any instances of discrimination and deal with these in a consistent manner, making a report to the headteacher as necessary and following up with pupils as required.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils' progress and needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up to date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.
- Champion diversity and inclusion.

Pupils will:

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

Equality objectives

The Trust is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, pupils and other members in our community.

The Trust sees all members of the community as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic. The Trust's policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

The Trust's Equality Information and Objectives Statement sets out how the Trust is meeting the PSED and outlines how equality of opportunity is ensured for all members of the Trust community. The Equality Information and Objectives Statement is reviewed at least every four years and is published on the Trust website annually.

The Trust will consult with stakeholders to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning.

To achieve this, the Trust has established the following objectives:

- **Equality Information and Objectives Statement**

The Trust will regularly review the steps being taken and the progress made towards the achievement of these objectives and, in line with the specific duties of the PSED.

Collecting and using information

In accordance with the requirements outlined in the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, personal data will be lawfully collected and processed in line with the principles and practices outlined in the Data Protection Policy and only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, e.g. to comply with the school's legal obligations.

The Trust will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in teaching methods.
- Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally.

- Taking action, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics.

The Trust will build an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime. The Trust will obtain the following information from their staff:

- Recruitment and promotion
- Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- Pay and remuneration
- Training
- Return to work of staff members on parental leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities
- Appraisals
- Grievances (including about harassment)
- Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

The Trust will use the information it obtains to analyse any gaps present in its equality documentary, including the Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Publishing information

The Trust will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the Act. The school will publish information relating to people within the school community who share relevant protected characteristics, including:

The above information will be updated and published annually on the Trust website in a manner that is accessible to all its employees and to the public for a period of at least three years from the publication date.

Promoting equality

The Trust's Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy set out the approach to promoting equality and diversity across the whole Trust community.

Addressing prejudice-related incidents

The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice. The Trust will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice. The Trust will address any incidents immediately and, where appropriate, report them to the LA.

Any reports of bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with accordingly.
Annual training will be given to all staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

Complaints procedures

The Trust aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout the procedure. Any person, including a member of the public, is able to make a complaint about the provision of facilities or services that the Trust provides.

The Trust will adhere to the Complaints Procedures Policy to ensure a straightforward, impartial, non-adversarial process, that allows a full and fair investigation, respects confidentiality, and delivers an effective response and appropriate redress. If a complaint has completed the Trust's process and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to appeal, as outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.

The Trust will work to develop good professional relationships between colleagues; however, the Trust understands that sometimes conflicts may arise. Through maintaining open communication, the Trust wants its employees to feel able to raise any grievances so that appropriate and effective solutions can be put in place. Grievances raised by staff members will be processed in accordance with the Trust's Grievance Policy.

Monitoring and review

HR will review this policy annually, to ensure that all procedures are up to date.

The policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Trust 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 this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.