



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for Students and Parents/Carers

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Community Inclusive Trust (CIT) will adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against students, parents/carers or anyone involved in external agencies with which the organisation may be working on the grounds of:
 - age;
 - disability
 - gender identity;
 - marriage and civil partnership;
 - pregnancy and maternity;
 - race;
 - religion or belief;
 - sex;
 - sexual orientation.
- 1.2. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat students with dignity at all times, and not discriminate against or harass students or their parents/carers, regardless of their status.
- 1.3. We are opposed to all forms of discrimination and committed to ensuring all young people are respected and treated fairly at all times.
- 1.4. No student will suffer any ill-treatment from the Trust due to the behaviour of their parents/carers and/or siblings.
- 1.5. CIT may decide to use the 'Positive Action' clause of the Equality Act 2010, which allows for the setting up of courses specifically for a certain group, such as Roma children. (Previously, this could have been considered discriminatory).
- 1.6. The Trust has a responsibility to promote good relationships and mutual respect. It is expected that every person in the organisation will make a positive contribution to this policy, namely:
 - All staff, whether paid or voluntary
 - All visitors to CIT schools and settings
 - All students at CIT schools
 - All parents/carers of students at CIT schools
- 1.7. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues and students with dignity at all times, regardless of their status.
- 1.8. Similarly, all students have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat fellow students and staff with dignity at all times, regardless of their status.
- 1.9. In addition, CIT will:
 - 1.9.1. ensure that the services it provides are accessible to all and endeavour to positively encourage and benefit people from disadvantaged groups.
 - 1.9.2. supply specialist aids and facilities to enable disabled people.
 - 1.9.3. monitor any issues that arise within the organisation and take

appropriate action, fully supporting any person in the organisation who is faced with prejudice or ill treatment.

- 1.9.4. treat seriously any breaches of the policy which may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

2. Legal Framework

- 2.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

- 2.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- School Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies

3. Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 3.1. The HR and Safeguarding Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This Committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of HR.
- 3.2. Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

4. Aim

- 4.1. This policy explains the way in which CIT is committed to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. The policy will be applied to all students and parents/carers within our academies.
- 4.2. This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination in education. It applies to all aspects of a student's education with the Trust.
- 4.3. The Trust may choose to amend this policy at any time.

5. Discrimination

- 5.1. Students must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, fellow students and parents/carers. This applies within the Trust schools, outside the Trust schools (such as when travelling on school transport) or while wearing a Trust school uniform and on school-related trips or events including social events.

- 5.2. The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
- 5.2.1. **Direct Discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, refusing a student's admission to one of the Trust's schools due to their religious views or sexual orientation.
 - 5.2.2. **Indirect Discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone, but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring that no students wear any headwear may disproportionately affect female Muslim students who wear a hijab. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
 - 5.2.3. **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Staff Handbook in the section entitled 'positive working environment'.
 - 5.2.4. **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
 - 5.2.5. **Disability Discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

6. **Complaints Procedure**

- 6.1. Any person (students/parents/carers) who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy has not been respected, whether by a student, an employee of the Trust or the Trust as a whole, should immediately bring the situation to the attention of their class-teacher. No student will suffer any detriment as a result of raising a legitimate worry under this policy.
- 6.2. If any parent/carer of a student at the Trust experiences or witnesses any behaviour from a fellow student/parent/carer on the grounds of one of the Trust schools, then they should inform reception staff immediately.
- 6.3. Details of our complaints procedure can be found in the CIT Complaints Policy.

7. **Discipline**

- 7.1. Any student who is found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary steps depending on the severity of the breach as outlined in each of our schools' Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies namely:
 - an official warning to stop offending
 - exclusion from certain areas of Trust premises

- removal from lessons
- a minor fixed-term exclusion
- a major fixed-term exclusion
- a permanent exclusion

7.2. If any parent/carer is found to have breached this policy on the grounds of Trust property then they may be subject to a fixed-term ban from entering the Trust's grounds.

8. Disabilities

8.1. If a student is disabled or becomes disabled, the Trust encourages them to explain their condition in order for the appropriate support to be put in place.

8.2. If a student experiences difficulties at school because of their disability, the student can contact their class teacher to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Trust will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the student's need within reason. If the Trust considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the Trust will explain the reasons and seek ways to find an alternative solution where possible.

8.3. The Trust will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, the Trust will take appropriate steps to improve access.

9. Education

9.1. The Trust is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, achieve their potential.

9.2. The Trust shall also ensure that all students are encouraged to develop an insight into the lives and experiences of people with different backgrounds of their own.

9.3. Students should, if they feel comfortable doing so, challenge any discriminatory behaviour and report examples of discriminatory behaviour.

10. Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED]

10.1. The Trust is committed to complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and this policy is a recognition of that duty.

10.2. The PSED requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

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

10.3. As part of its duty, the Trust has committed to the following objectives:

10.3.1. Promoting cultural understanding, awareness and tolerance of different

religious beliefs within our Trust community.

- 10.3.2. Promoting and monitoring the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the Trust, including leadership opportunities, especially students with special educational needs and disabilities and those eligible for Pupil Premium funding.
- 10.3.3. Monitoring and preventing any behaviour which may constitute prejudice or discrimination towards those with protected characteristics.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1. Every member of staff has an ongoing responsibility to monitor their teaching methods, styles and practices, with a view to eradicating discriminatory practices. The Trust is committed to ensuring an environment that actively discourages discrimination and challenges the attitudes which underlie it
- 11.2. Periodic monitoring by staff with curriculum and pastoral responsibilities will be undertaken. The headteachers of our schools have the responsibility to ensure equal opportunities are offered in all staffing appointments and promotions.
- 11.3. The Trust will regularly monitor and evaluate its practices and assess the impact of other Trust policies upon Equal Opportunities. In the light of those evaluations, the Trust will seek to improve further its practices in the delivery of the above objectives.

12. Policy Changes and Review

- 12.1. This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by the Community Inclusive Trust.
- 12.2. This Policy will be reviewed every three years.