



Equality & Diversity Policy

Last Review Date: September 2023

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by seven principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their educational needs
- whatever their mental health
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background

- whatever their sexual identity.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect differences. Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- SEN, so that we support each diagnosis by tailoring need to the individual
- mental health, fostering an environment of care and understanding and challenging misconceptions and prejudice
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. Our policies, procedures and activities promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people young and old, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive engagement with SEN and mental health
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whether or not they have SEN
- whether or not they suffer with mental health issues
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. We strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take

opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people with learning difficulties, literacy, numeracy or SEN diagnosis and those who do not
- people with mental health issues and those who do not
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds of girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: Society as a whole should benefit. We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people with SEN
- people who have mental health issues
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- Gay, lesbian and bisexual people as well as heterosexual people