



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Contents

1. Policy statement and aims
2. Scope
3. Legal framework
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. Public Sector Equality Duty
6. Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
7. Advancing equality of opportunity
8. Fostering good relations
9. Equality analysis and decision-making
10. Resolving concerns and complaints
11. Hate crime: identification and action
12. Recruiting and employing people fairly
13. Training, development and awareness
14. Monitoring, reporting and equality objectives
15. Links with other policies
16. Policy review
17. Appendices

1. Policy statement and aims

Reach for Inclusion Learning Centre is committed to providing high-quality education and employment in an environment that is safe, inclusive and free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

This policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). We recognise our legal duties to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between different groups

We also recognise our responsibilities towards learners, staff, contractors, volunteers, visitors and others who engage with the Centre.

Our core equality and diversity principles

1. All learners are of equal value
Whatever their disability status, ethnicity, culture, nationality, gender or gender



identity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all learners are valued equally.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference
Diversity is a strength. We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and other protected characteristics.
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships
We actively promote mutual respect, challenge stereotypes and address prejudice and prejudice-based bullying and incidents.
4. We foster a shared sense of belonging
We want every member of our community to feel respected, safe and able to participate fully in the life of the Centre and the wider community.
5. We observe good equality practice for our staff
Our policies and procedures are designed to promote fairness in recruitment, selection, development, promotion, performance management and all aspects of employment.
6. We have high expectations of all learners
We expect all learners to make good progress and achieve their full potential, and we identify and remove barriers to learning wherever possible.
7. We work to raise standards for all, particularly for the most vulnerable
Improving outcomes for the most vulnerable learners improves outcomes for everyone.

Reach for Inclusion has adopted the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All learners on roll at Reach for Inclusion
- All employees (permanent, temporary and casual)
- Volunteers, consultants and agency staff
- Directors
- Contractors and service providers working on site
- Visitors to the Centre

It covers all aspects of the Centre's functions, including:

- Admissions and induction
- Curriculum and teaching
- Assessment, behaviour and exclusions
- Pastoral support and safeguarding
- Premises, facilities and resources
- Employment and recruitment practices
- Training, development and partnerships



3. Legal framework

This policy is based on and should be read in conjunction with:

- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Relevant DfE guidance, including *The Equality Act 2010 and schools*
- Relevant local authority and Shropshire Council guidance (including hate crime protocols)

Under the Equality Act 2010, the following protected characteristics are recognised:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins)
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex
9. Sexual orientation

For learners, age and marriage/civil partnership are usually not relevant protected characteristics in the education context, but remain relevant for staff and applicants.

It is also unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of:

- Trade union membership or non-membership
- Part-time or fixed-term status
- Spent convictions (except where exempt under safeguarding/DBS regulations)

Definitions of key terms and types of discrimination are set out in Appendix A.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Directors

The Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within Reach for Inclusion. They will:

- Approve and regularly review this policy
- Ensure the Centre publishes equality information and measurable equality objectives on the website at least every four years
- Monitor the implementation and impact of this policy and associated action plans



- Ensure that equality implications are considered in decision-making and policy development
- Ensure appropriate resources and training are in place to meet legal duties
- Promote a culture of respect, inclusion and high expectations for all
- Ensure staff, learners, parents/carers and visitors understand this policy
- Ensure that prejudice-based incidents, bullying and complaints are recorded, monitored and addressed appropriately
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made for disabled learners, staff and visitors
- Oversee data collection, analysis and reporting related to equality objectives

All staff, including contractors and volunteers

All staff and those working on behalf of Reach for Inclusion are expected to:

- Uphold and model the principles in this policy
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classrooms and work areas
- Challenge discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping whenever they encounter it
- Deal fairly, promptly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents
- Plan and deliver curricula and activities that reflect and promote equality and diversity, including positive representation in resources and materials
- Attend equality and diversity training as required

Learners

Learners are expected to:

- Treat one another, staff and visitors with respect
- Report any bullying, discrimination or harassment they experience or witness
- Engage with learning opportunities that promote equality and understanding

Parents and carers

We expect parents and carers to:

- Support the Centre in its work to promote equality, diversity and inclusion
- Inform the Centre of any issues that may impact on their child's participation or experience
- Work in partnership with the Centre where concerns arise

5. Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

As a publicly funded education provider, Reach for Inclusion has due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010



2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Specific duties

To meet the specific duties, Reach for Inclusion will:

- Publish information annually to show how we are complying with the PSED
- Publish measurable equality objectives at least once every four years
- Publish equality information and objectives on the Centre website

Decision-makers must consciously consider equality implications when making decisions, developing policies or changing practices. Where appropriate, an Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment will be completed (see Appendix C for reference material).

6. Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation

Reach for Inclusion is committed to preventing and tackling all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

We will:

- Reference equality and anti-discrimination responsibilities in relevant policies (e.g. behaviour, safeguarding, recruitment, complaints, bullying and harassment)
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled learners, staff and visitors can access education, employment and facilities
- Ensure that expectations about conduct are clear and embedded in staff and learner codes of conduct
- Record, monitor and respond promptly to prejudice-based incidents and bullying, including racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, faith-based prejudice and disability harassment
- Ensure disciplinary processes are used where staff conduct falls short of equality expectations, including where incidents may amount to gross misconduct

New staff receive equality and diversity training as part of induction. All staff receive periodic refresher training.

7. Advancing equality of opportunity



Reach for Inclusion will work proactively to remove barriers and improve outcomes for learners and staff who share protected characteristics.

We will:

- Identify and remove or minimise disadvantage linked to protected characteristics (e.g. ensure disabled learners have appropriate support and adjustments; address homophobic bullying)
- Meet different needs where they are different (e.g. facilitating prayer time; providing accessible materials; adapting communication methods)
- Encourage participation where it is disproportionately low (e.g. encouraging under-represented groups to take part in particular subjects or activities, or to stand for learner leadership roles)

In practice, this means we will:

- Collect and analyse data (e.g. attainment, attendance, exclusions, participation in enrichment, complaints and incidents) by relevant protected characteristics where appropriate and lawful
- Use this data to identify strengths, patterns and areas for improvement, and implement targeted actions
- Publish information (in line with data protection requirements) about progress towards equality objectives
- Monitor and review the impact of actions taken to reduce gaps or tackle disadvantage

8. Fostering good relations

We aim to create a Centre community where people from different backgrounds have positive relationships and mutual respect.

We will:

- Promote a whole-Centre ethos and values that challenge prejudice and discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour
- Provide opportunities for learners to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use the curriculum, including citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, to promote understanding of different identities, beliefs and ways of life
- Use group discussions, workshops and external speakers to explore equality and diversity themes
- Work in partnership with the local community, including community groups and services, to promote cohesion and understanding



- Develop links with organisations and individuals who bring specialist knowledge about particular characteristics or communities
- Use displays, events, assemblies, visits and visitors to reinforce positive messages about equality and diversity

9. Equality analysis and decision-making

Reach for Inclusion will consider equality implications as part of its regular decision-making processes.

When planning significant changes, policies or activities (e.g. curriculum changes, trips, staffing restructures), decision-makers will consider:

- Whether the proposal could negatively impact people with particular protected characteristics
- Whether reasonable adjustments are required
- Whether there are opportunities to promote equality and good relations through the decision

Practical examples include:

- Checking that visits/trips do not conflict with major religious festivals where avoidable
- Ensuring activities and facilities are accessible to disabled learners and staff
- Ensuring there are equivalent facilities and opportunities for learners of different sexes

An equality impact assessment, proportionate to the decision, will be completed where appropriate.

10. Resolving concerns and complaints

The Directors and Headteacher are responsible for preventing employees and learners from suffering discrimination, harassment or victimisation in the Centre.

Internal concerns (staff)

If an employee believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment or victimisation by another member of staff, they should:

- Refer to and, where appropriate, use the Bullying and Harassment Policy, and/or
- Raise a concern or grievance using the Centre's grievance procedure

Concerns can be raised informally in the first instance or formally where appropriate. Allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and fairly.



Where conduct falls short of expected standards, the disciplinary procedure may be invoked. Serious breaches of this policy, including unlawful discrimination, victimisation, bullying or harassment, may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal.

External concerns (third parties)

- If an employee experiences discrimination or harassment from a third party (e.g. visitor, parent, contractor), they should report this through the Bullying and Harassment Policy or safeguarding procedures as appropriate.
- If a third party wishes to complain about discrimination or harassment by a member of staff or within the Centre, they should use the Complaints Procedure.

Learners and parents/carers may raise concerns or complaints about discrimination or harassment through the Centre's Complaints Procedure or, where relevant, the Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policies.

11. Hate crime: identification and action

A hate crime is an offence committed against a person or property motivated by hostility or prejudice based on protected characteristics (including race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity).

Reach for Inclusion will:

- Treat all reports of hate incidents or hate crime seriously
- Ensure staff are aware of how to recognise and report hate incidents
- Record, investigate and, where appropriate, report incidents to the police and local authority in line with local protocols
- Support victims and witnesses appropriately

Shropshire Council's Hate Crime Reporting Protocol and reporting tools are available here (see also Appendix B):

- Online reporting and information – Shropshire Council
- Hate crime reporting form – Shropshire Council

Working together on hate crime supports our legal duties around equality and promotes a safe, inclusive and resilient community.

12. Recruiting and employing people fairly



Reach for Inclusion is committed to fair, transparent and lawful employment practices.

We will:

- Provide equality of opportunity in all aspects of recruitment and employment
- Demonstrate an open and transparent approach to recruitment and selection
- Use pre-agreed, objective criteria to make recruitment decisions
- Seek to appoint the best candidate for each role based on merit
- Ensure all recruitment and selection processes comply with current employment and safeguarding legislation
- Present a positive image as an inclusive employer of choice
- Demonstrate our commitment to employing, retaining and developing disabled staff, including making reasonable adjustments and, where relevant, working towards recognised standards (e.g. disability-confident style schemes)
- Provide training and guidance for those involved in recruitment and selection
- Treat all applicants fairly and respectfully, providing a positive experience irrespective of outcome
- Ensure that staff involved in recruitment do not participate where they have a personal relationship with an applicant
- Handle all recruitment documentation confidentially and in line with data protection legislation

Health-related questions will not be asked during the initial application stage unless they are intrinsic to the role (e.g. physical capability for certain posts). Sickness absence information will normally only be sought after a conditional offer has been made, and in line with safer recruitment and occupational health guidance.

13. Training, development and awareness

Equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in staff training and development.

We will:

- Include equality, diversity and anti-discrimination in induction for all new staff
- Provide regular refresher training and updates for all staff
- Identify and share good equality practice during training and meetings
- Ensure that access to training and development is fair and non-discriminatory
- Promote awareness of policies and expectations regarding discrimination, harassment and victimisation

14. Monitoring, reporting and equality objectives



Reach for Inclusion will collect and use information to:

- Monitor the impact of this policy
- Identify equality issues and priorities
- Inform the setting and review of equality objectives

Information may include:

- Learner outcomes, attendance, exclusions
- Participation in activities and enrichment
- Staff recruitment, retention, promotion and training
- Complaints, incidents and grievances

Data will be handled in line with data protection legislation and anonymised where appropriate.

We will:

- Publish equality objectives on our website and review progress regularly
- Update equality objectives at least every four years or sooner if needed

15. Links with other policies

This policy links to, and should be read alongside, the following:

- Accessibility Plan
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Complaints Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (staff)
- Data Protection Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy

17. Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Definitions (protected characteristics and types of discrimination)
- **Appendix B:** Shropshire Council Hate Crime Reporting Protocol and links
- **Appendix C:** Further reference and guidance
- **Appendix D:** Website equality statement

Appendix A – Definitions

Protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010)

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Types of unlawful discrimination

- **Direct discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Associative discrimination:** Direct discrimination because of a person's association with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- **Perceptive discrimination:** Direct discrimination based on a perception that someone has a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do.
- **Indirect discrimination:** A policy or practice that applies to everyone but which particularly disadvantages people with a protected characteristic and cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation:** Treating someone badly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or are suspected of doing so.

Appendix B – Shropshire Council Hate Crime Reporting Protocol



1. Recording

- Any member of staff who witnesses or is first informed of a racist or other hate incident must record the details, including contact details for the person reporting.
- The incident must be reported immediately to the Directors/Headteacher.

2. Investigation and response

- The Director/Headteacher has overall responsibility for investigating the incident or delegating an appropriate investigating officer.
- All reports must be handled courteously, helpfully and promptly.
- Acknowledgement should normally be sent within 5 working days; a full response should usually be provided within 20 working days or an explanation of any delay given.
- Where necessary, the Director/Headteacher will inform the police and/or local authority.

3. Referencing and recording

- Each incident will be allocated a unique reference number to avoid duplication and support monitoring (e.g. Reach for Inclusion, Ref 01/2025).

4. Escalation

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the matter may be reviewed by the Director/Headteacher and, if necessary, progressed through the Complaints Procedure.

Online reporting and further information (Shropshire Council):

- Hate crime reporting (online)
- Hate crime reporting form (PDF)

Appendix C – Further reference

- Shropshire Council equality, diversity and social inclusion
- GOV.UK Equality Act 2010 guidance
- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- DfE guidance: *The Equality Act 2010 and schools*
- Shropshire guidance on Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments
- Hate crime reporting (Shropshire Council)
- IHRA working definition of antisemitism



Appendix D – Website equality statement

Reach for Inclusion Learning Centre – Equality Statement

Reach for Inclusion Learning Centre is an inclusive education provider. We focus on the wellbeing, safety and progress of every learner and we are committed to ensuring that all members of our community are of equal worth.

We work within the framework of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to value diversity, tackle discrimination, promote equality and foster good relations between different groups. We continue to challenge disadvantage and underachievement where they occur.

Our approach is informed by international human rights standards, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Human Rights Act 1998.

We expect all members of our community and visitors to support our commitment to equality. We provide training, guidance and information to enable staff and learners to do this.

More information is available in our full **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**, which can be accessed on this website or requested from the Centre office.

| Policy | Equality & Diversity Policy |
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| Signed: | |
| Siobhan Williams | S Williams |
| Jo Garner | J. Garner |