



# **Equality and Diversity Policy**

**GEMS Learning Trust**

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## 1. Aims

The GEMS Learning Trust aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

- a. It is the policy of [insert school name] to create a workplace free from unlawful discrimination. Specifically it is our policy to ensure that all employees and workers associated with our School:
  - i. **Are** treated fairly regardless of their, or a person with whom they are associated, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
  - ii. **Experience** a working environment that is welcoming, inclusive, supportive and constructive.
- b. As an employer we will **not tolerate**:
  - i. behaviours that create, or seek to create, an intimidating, hostile, offensive or disturbing environment; this includes zero tolerance of all and any unwanted verbal or physical abuse and/or advances and/or behaviour, which an employee finds offensive and which causes them to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised, distressed or harassed.
  - ii. behaviours by individuals who consciously or unconsciously misuse their power or position to intimidate, humiliate or undermine others. We recognise that these behaviours can make people feel humiliated and undermine their confidence such that they become fearful, losing confidence and belief in themselves.
- c. We are committed to embedding our commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout the employment life cycle. We believe there is an implicit business case to take action to remove all forms of discrimination. Discrimination is wasteful of talent and harmful to both individuals and the organisation. It has the effect of reducing employment prospects and preventing full consideration of abilities, potential and experience. We will adopt equality of opportunity and diversity good practice within:
  - i. Recruitment practices

- ii. Promotion decisions
  - iii. Access to Learning and Development
  - iv. Selection for redundancy
  - v. Grievance case management
  - vi. Decision making within formal procedures including but not limited to conduct, performance, attendance and absence.
- d. The specific legislation to which this policy relates is the Equality Act (2010).

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to governors

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

### a. Employee and workers

i. All employees and workers,

1. **Will not** treat people unfairly on the grounds of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
2. **Will** adopt personal standards of behaviour that demonstrate their commitment to treating colleagues and co-workers with dignity and respect of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
3. **Will** adopt personal standards of behaviour that are foster a culture of inclusion and respect within the workplace towards colleagues and co-workers regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
4. **Will take** attend learning and development interventions relating to diversity and equal opportunities where directed.
5. Will speak with their line manager, or another member of the senior leadership team if they observe behaviours inconsistent with this policy.
6. **Appendix A:** Equality and Discrimination: understand the basics (<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/d/8/Equality-and-discrimination-understand-the-basics.pdf>) or the most up to date guidance available on [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).

## **b. Line Managers**

- ii. In addition, Line managers will ensure that they maintain a soundly based understanding of anti-discrimination current legislation and its application to the workplace through their programme of continuous professional development, attending learning and development interventions where directed. Line managers, including members of the Senior Leadership Team, are reasonably expected to take personal responsibility for accessing credible on line, free at the point of use, materials such as those provided by ACAS on an annual basis and recording such CPD in their annual appraisal.
- iii. Line managers have a duty under this policy to act on behaviours observed by them, or reported to them, inconsistent with this policy which may include ensuring the relevant policy (grievance, bullying and harassment and or disciplinary) is followed in dealing with allegations of discrimination and or other behaviour inconsistent with the spirit of this policy.
- iv. Line managers, including members of the Senior Leadership Team, are required to read Appendices A to E which are good practice documents available from the ACAS website.
  - 1. **Appendix A:** Equality and Discrimination: understand the basics (<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/d/8/Equality-and-discrimination-understand-the-basics.pdf>) or the most up to date guidance available on [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).
  - 2. **Appendix B:** Prevent discrimination: support equality (<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/2/e/Prevent-discrimination-support-equality.pdf>) or the most up to date guidance available on [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).
  - 3. **Appendix C:** Discrimination: what to do if it happens (<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/o/l/Discrimination-what-to-do-if-it-happens.pdf>) or the most up to date guidance available on [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).
  - 4. **Appendix D:** Social media, discipline and grievances (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3378>) or the most up to date guidance available on [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).
  - 5. **Appendix E:** Social Media and Bullying (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3379>) or the most up to date guidance available on [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk).

## **c. Senior Leadership Team**

- v. In addition, members of the Senior Leadership team, under the direction of the Head Teacher of [insert school name] are responsible for creating, maintaining, and monitoring progress against, a continuous improvement plan to ensure the school reviews and improves its practice in all aspects of the employment life cycle for the purposes of:
  - 1. Eliminating and preventing unlawful directly and indirectly discriminatory practices on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
  - 2. Developing a culture of welcome, support, inclusion, respect and constructive feedback.
- vi. The senior leadership team will take seriously and ensure the timely investigation of concerns raised where an individual feels that they have been subject to unlawful discrimination or experienced behaviours inconsistent with the spirit of this policy.

## **d. Governing Body**

- vii. The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for developing and maintaining this policy document, monitoring and reporting as required, compliance with this policy, and ensuring the implementation, by the senior leadership team of [insert school name] of this policy and associated improvement plans, by ensuring sufficient resources are made available to the senior leadership team for purposes of ensuring employees and workers are aware of, and fulfil, their responsibilities under this policy.

## 4. Eliminating discrimination

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year.

## 5. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

## 6. Fostering good relations

The schools aim to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

## 7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The schools keep a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

## 8. Equality objectives

1. To ensure that all staff and governors are aware of current legislation relating to equality and diversity and that all governors and staff understand the Trust's responsibility in this area
2. To monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and special educational needs or disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils
3. To promote cultural understanding and awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our academy communities
4. To raise levels of parental and pupil engagement in learning and academy life, across all activities, including regular attendance to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. We will aim to raise aspirations among children and parents and raise awareness of career options for all children, challenging gender stereotypes
5. To promote mental health awareness and develop appropriate interventions where necessary
6. Close gaps in progress between all groups of pupils, especially students eligible for the pupil's premium and others. Ensure rates of progress for other groups such as pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and pupils from minority ethnic groups are at least good.
7. Monitor the incidence of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by pupils in our academies
8. To support each academy to annually review, revise and develop the curriculum so that it represents a diverse culture and society and encourages tolerance and respect

## 9. Raising concerns

- a. If you feel that you have been treated unfairly on the grounds of your age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, please work with [insert school name] to resolve the situation at the very earliest opportunity.
- b. There are many different ways that complaints and concerns about discrimination can be brought to the attention of [insert school name]. These include:
  - i. an employee raising the matter quietly with the person who has made them feel uncomfortable if they feel able to do so;
  - ii. an employee raising the matter quietly with their line manager or any member of the senior leadership team
  - iii. an employee raising the matter through another contact - for example, their Union representative or a work colleague
  - iv. an employee raising an issue through the school's grievance or bullying and harassment policy
  - v. a member of staff observing behaviour of an employee or worker that concerns them and telling a member of the senior leadership team
  - vi. a line manager or member of the senior leadership team observing behaviour of an employee or worker that concerns them taking the appropriate action (e.g. talking with the employee concerned or ensuring the correct procedure is followed)
- c. There are ways of dealing with complaints in some circumstances which do not involve moving straight into a formal approach, such as the informal stages of the grievance procedure. These include informal discussions and mediation.
- d. If complaints cannot be satisfactorily dealt with in these less formal ways, it would usually be appropriate to move into the grievance policy or another relevant procedure such as the bullying and harassment policy.

## 10. Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Three Year Accessibility plan
- Risk assessment

Policy Review – this policy is reviewed annually

| <b>Reviewed by</b>                          | <b>Date</b>                    | <b>Changes made</b>  |
|---|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Jodie Croft</b>                          | 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2019 |  |
| <b>Strictly Education &amp; Jodie Croft</b> | 13/11 2020                     | Strictly noted: Your policy is well written. I included some bits which you may have to cover the area broadly. They are suggestions only. It would be your discretion to keep/remove them |
|   |                                |  |