



SAPIENTIA
EDUCATION TRUST

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

1. Sapientia Education Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust. All members of the Trust community will receive equality of opportunity and regard, so far as this is possible within available resources, and the Trust has made the following commitment:

“At Sapientia Education Trust, we seek to promote and create a fairer school community where everyone can participate and fulfil their potential. We also recognise individual differences and seek to ensure that everyone is treated as an individual while placing positive value on diversity within the Trust.”

2. This policy is the over-arching policy on Equal Opportunities that applies to all persons associated with the Trust (staff, students, governors, parents/carers, volunteers and alumni). It forms part of the Trust’s Single Equality Scheme and is supplemented by the following policies:

a. Anti-Bullying Policy. Each school within the Trust has its own Anti-Bullying Policy relating to its students. It is available to staff and students and the general public in the public policies section on the school’s website.

b. Dignity At Work Policy. The Trust’s Dignity at Work policy relates to all staff and volunteers within the Trust. It is issued to all new staff and is available in the staff policies section on the SET website.

3. Each Headteacher/Principal within the Trust will ensure that the Trust’s commitment to equal opportunities is restated in all public documents and policies are regularly reviewed to ensure compliance.

LEGISLATION

4. The Equality Act 2010 provides a single consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful and provides extended protection in some areas.

5. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

6. The Trust will not accept any form of behaviour, activity or policy which discriminates on the grounds of the protected characteristics of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender Reassignment
- Marital/Civil Partnership Status
- Pregnancy/Maternity/Paternity issues
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual Orientation

7. However, the Trust extends its equality commitment to prevent discrimination on the following grounds:

Socio-economic Status
Boarding/Day Status
Family Circumstances/Profession
Trade Union Membership
Health
Part-time/Full-time working
Protected Criminal Convictions

8. All Trust staff are responsible for ensuring that any behaviour or activity that discriminates on any of the grounds listed above is not tolerated and, where appropriate, reported.

TYPES OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

9. Direct Discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

10. Indirect Discrimination is where a policy, procedure or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic, such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

11. Bullying & Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

12. Associative Discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

13. Perceptive Discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

14. Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

15. Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a policy, procedure or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

EQUALITY MEASURES

16. The Trust has equality of opportunity embedded in its ethos and values. The key requirements of this policy are listed below and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the equality measures listed below are implemented and monitored regularly.

17. Students. In relation to its students, the Trust will take the following measures to ensure equality:

- a. The Trust will aim to provide reasonable access for all students to the curriculum, buildings and facilities;
- b. Each school will enforce its Anti-Bullying Policy so that students can study free from any bullying and harassment.
- c. All notices, displays and resource centres will be consistent with this policy;
- d. Publicity materials and admission procedures will be non-discriminatory;
- e. Selection procedures will aim to achieve equality of opportunity for all applicants;
- f. Student support systems within the Trust will follow this policy and guidance and counselling given to students, or potential students, will be impartial;
- g. Students who need more flexible arrangements in relation to examination and assessment will receive assistance;
- h. The Trust will regularly analyse results and assessment data to ensure it is achieving equality of opportunity for all students.

18. Staff. In relation to its staff, the Trust will take the following measures to ensure equality:

- a. Recruitment and selection procedures will afford equality of opportunity to all applicants and applicant data will be monitored and analysed;
- b. The Trust will aim to provide reasonable access for all staff to the relevant buildings and facilities;
- c. All staff will receive Equality and Diversity awareness training and where staff have specific needs under equality legislation, line managers will receive appropriate training;
- d. Staff who feel that they have been the victim of any discrimination will be able to pursue the matter through the Trust Grievance Procedures;
- e. Bullying and harassment amongst staff will not be tolerated;
- f. The Trust will regularly monitor and review posts and terms and conditions of employment to ensure compliance with equal pay legislation and to ensure no staff with protected characteristics are disadvantaged;

19. Curriculum. In relation to the curriculum, the Trust will take the following measures to ensure equality:

- a. Teaching methodology and materials will conform to the policy;
- b. Learning and teaching strategies will discourage prejudice and stereotyping and will not disadvantage any student;

- c. Staff and students are encouraged to explore issues of Equal Opportunity;
- d. This policy is applied to all areas of the curriculum: academic, sporting and extra-curricular. The curriculum must offer open access and equal treatment for all members of the School;
- e. Work experience placements will reflect the principles of this policy.

20. Boarding Houses. In relation to the boarding provision, the Trust will take the following measures to ensure equality:

- a. Staff will pay due regard to the different backgrounds and diverse needs of all students and will receive regular and appropriate training on diversity issues;
- b. Where appropriate, all students will receive equal access to boarding facilities and activities;
- c. Staff will foster tolerance, understanding and respect amongst students, and identify and remove unfair practices;
- d. House staff will record any incidents of discrimination or bullying and the Heads of House will review the reports, identify trends and report any emerging issues promptly to the Senior Vice Principal.

REPORTING

21. If there are concerns over the implementation of this policy or concerns relating to equality, diversity or equal opportunities at the Trust, please report these concerns as follows:

- a. Students: Guidance on the reporting of bullying is contained in the school's Anti-Bullying policy.
- b. Trust Staff: to the Deputy CEO. Further guidance on the reporting of harassment is contained in the Dignity At Work policy.
- c. Parents and the wider Trust community: to the Deputy CEO.