



Lingfield Education Trust

Equality & Diversity Policy and Equality Objectives

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1. Introduction

As a public body, our Trust must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. This means we must publish:

- details of how our Trust (and schools) comply with the public sector equality duty
- our Trust-wide equality objectives

This policy aims to satisfy this expectation, whilst going beyond this to set the standard for all connected to our inclusive Trust.

Lingfield Education Trust Equality and Diversity Policy brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within the Trust's community. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

The Trust is committed to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and our PSED, specifically the principle of equal opportunities for all students, staff and members of each school's community (including parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies). The Trust is committed to the development of cohesive communities both within each school's physical boundaries and within local, national and global environments. The Trust embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Equality and Diversity Policy is underpinned by:

- The Trust's Equality Objectives (included at the end of this policy)
- Each school's own Equality Objectives and associated action plan
- Each school's Accessibility Plan

The protected characteristics, which we must ensure are at the forefront of our inclusive practice are:

- Disability
- Gender identity
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age (not applicable to pupils)
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships (not applicable pupils)

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out how practice and policies within the Trust have due regard to public sector equality duty and the need to:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within each school and its community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

3. Overall Guiding Principles of Our Practice

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

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.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- 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, homophobic and transphobic harassment.
- positive attitudes and understanding of those women pregnant or during maternity.

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.

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.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve all sectors of the school community.

Principle 7: 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.

Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality.

Principle 9: Objectives

Every four years we formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

We also ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality and Diversity Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes.

4. Code of Practice

The Trust and each school will publicise the following guidelines for staff and pupils to promote the Equality and Diversity Policy:

- Staff and pupils are expected to respect all persons as individuals and to honour their rights;
- Staff and pupils should behave in such a way as will promote a safe and secure environment free from unfair discrimination or harassment;
- Staff and pupils should not be prepared to tolerate unfair discrimination or harassment of others.

5. Approach

We will have **due regard** to advancing equality of opportunity including making serious consideration of the need to

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share protected characteristics that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

We will take into account the six Brown principles of 'due regard'

- awareness – all staff know and understand what the law requires
- timeliness – implications considered before they are implemented
- rigour – open-minded and rigorous analysis, including parent/pupil voice
- non-delegation – the PSED cannot be delegated
- continuous – ongoing all academic year
- record-keeping – keep notes and records of decisions & meetings

5.1 Pupils

- Each school is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all pupils.
- No pupil will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexuality, disability, trade union activity, political or religious beliefs
- In particular, the school will ensure equal treatment for pupils in these areas:
 - Admission
 - Attainment, progress and assessment

- Reporting
- Curriculum, teaching and Learning
- Personal Development
- Achievement
- Discipline

5.2 Staff

- The Trust is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all Staff.
- We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the nine guiding principles.
- No job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexuality, disability, trade union activity, political or religious beliefs nor be disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements of employment that cannot be justified.
- In particular, the Trust and each school will ensure equal treatment for Staff in the following areas:
 - Recruitment and Selection
 - Training
 - Promotion
 - Appraisal
- The Trust is committed to supporting staff with protected characteristics and make adjustments where reasonable and appropriate.

5.3 Community

- Each school is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all members of its community, including parents/carers.
- No community member will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexuality, disability, trade union activity, political or religious beliefs
 - In particular, the school will ensure equal treatment for community members in the following areas:
 - Membership of the local governing body;
 - Involving parents and carers and the local community in the school;
 - Selection of suppliers of goods and services.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Trust and its schools meet the commitments in this policy - complying with the public sector equality duty as part of the 2010 Equality Act.

6.2 CEO/Deputy CEO/ DofE/ EHD/Executive Head Teacher/ Head Teacher/Head of School

Each leader will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils/students and visitors and contractors are aware of this policy and understand their responsibilities;
- oversee the effective implementation of the policy;
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the policy;
- ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

6.3 Local Governing Body

Each school's Local Governing Body will:

- ensure that this policy and its commitments are implemented within the school;
- support the Executive Head Teacher/Head Teacher/Head of School in implementing any actions necessary;
- evaluate and review the school approach and school level equality objectives on a regular basis (at least annually).

6.4 Senior Leadership Team

Each school's Leadership Team will:

- support other staff in implementing this Policy;
- with the Executive Head Teacher/Head Teacher/Head of School, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues;
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy.
- evaluate and review the school approach and school level equality objectives on a regular basis (at least annually).

6.5 Pupils

Pupils will

- act in accordance with the policy;
- be encouraged to actively support the policy.

6.6 Staff

Staff will:

- be fully aware of the and how it relates to them;
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the policy;
- promote the equality and diversity messages articulated throughout this policy, and the school's related curricula;
- make known any queries or training requirements.

6.7 Community members

Members of the community, including parents/carers will:

- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child.
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy.

7. Grievance

7.1 Staff

Any employee who considers that they are suffering from unequal treatment may raise a complaint through the agreed procedure for dealing with grievances included in the Trust Grievance Policy.

7.2 Community members

Any parent or carer who considers that they are suffering from unequal treatment may raise a complaint through the Trust Complaints Policy.

8. Prejudice-based incidents

All prejudice-based incidents should be reported using the school's normal incident report system. In addition, the staff member responsible for resolving the incident must complete the school's Incident Report Form and pass it to the CEO/Deputy CEO/Executive Head Teacher/Head Teacher/Head of School (as appropriate).

9. Our Equality Objectives

Objective 1: Ensure consistency of expectation for all children with SEND across our Trust	
Protected Characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability	Guiding Principle Links: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognise and respect difference• Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development• Aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
Key Actions to achieve our objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All staff, in every school know and understand the Trust SEND Mission and guiding principles• All schools are implementing the SEND Strategy, as evidenced by the SEND Culture reviews• The Trust has a clear offer of support to schools to develop SEMH provision for those with the highest needs• Staff 'professional growth' approaches are valued and carefully aligned with ensuring that all teachers can teach all children	

Objective 2: Ensure that all schools embrace, promote and implement the Trust anti-racism charter (ARC)	
Protected Characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Race• Religion and belief	Guiding Principle Links: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognise and respect difference• Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development• Aim to reduce and remove any inequalities and barriers that already exist
Key Actions to achieve our objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All staff aware of Trust ARS• Induction includes ARS expectations• The Trust ARS charters are displayed and discussed in all Trust schools• School leaders are reflective of the ARC demands and can talk about adaptations which they have made to school curriculum, procedures, approaches as a result of this reflective practice• A consistent approach to anti-racism training is in place across all schools	

Objective 3:

Ensure that our Trust governance gives a fair representation of the views of all stakeholders and this impacts on teaching and learning across trust schools.

<p>Protected Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability• Race• Religion and Belief	<p>Guiding Principle Links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognise and respect difference• Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development• Aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist• Society as a whole should benefit• We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
<p>Key Actions to achieve our objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure a fair representation of views of all stakeholder groups at Trustee and Local Governance level.• Review recruitment processes to promote wider disability representation at interview stage to improve staff recruitment.• Ensure that the curriculum, experiences and materials which children are exposed to promotes disability equality and aspiration	