



Single Equalities Policy

Trust Wide Policy

Date of Board Approval:

24 July 2019

The vision of South Manchester Learning Trust is to create a world class education to enable every young person to reach their full potential, both in terms of academic excellence and personal growth.

Schools within South Manchester Learning Trust (SMLT) are welcoming schools where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, cooperation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all pupils to maximise their potential regardless of age, gender, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, carers, governors and members of the wider community.

At SMLT we and aim to promote equality, tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

This single policy replaces separate policies on race, disability and gender to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It details South Manchester Learning Trusts (SMLT) policy on the day-to-day practices and interactions with the whole school community.

Purpose

The over-arching purpose of this Policy is to:

- Adopt a proactive approach to equality.
- Set out the Trust's aims to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
- Take positive and proactive steps to identify areas of potential inequality before they have the chance to make an impact.
- Make changes to ensure that any areas of potential inequality are eliminated.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 has a single equality duty of positively combating inequality. The Act imposes equality duties in respect of equality strands (referred to as protected characteristics), they are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Re-assignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The General Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010 requires schools, in the exercise of their functions and decisions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The specific duties of the PSED states that academies are required to:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the PSED at least annually.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

Who is the Policy for?

The policy applies to all staff employed by the educational establishments which form part of SMLT, as well as members of the Local Governing Bodies of those establishments, Trust staff, Members and Directors and any consultants undertaking work on behalf of the Trust.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trust are responsible for:

- Ensuring every school within the Trust complies with equality-related legislation.
- Ensuring the policy and its procedures are implemented.
- Ensuring all other school policies promote equality.
- Giving due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions.

The Headteacher of each establishment is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy and its related procedures.
- Making all staff aware of their responsibilities and providing training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy.
- Taking appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination.
- Ensuring that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff.
- Ensure that all staff and students are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.

All staff are responsible for:

- Enacting this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy.
- Dealing with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and knowing how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality and good relations and not discriminating on any grounds.

- Attending such training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation.
- To be models of equal opportunities through their words and actions.

All students are responsible for refraining from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.

All visitors and contractors must be aware of, and comply with; the school's Single Equality Policy and refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour when on school premises.

Ethos and Atmosphere

- There is an openness of atmosphere within SMLT schools which welcomes everyone.
- All members of SMLT school communities will challenge any type of discriminatory and/or bullying behaviour, e.g. through unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) and unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions.
- All students are encouraged to greet visitors with friendliness and respect.
- Displays are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity.

Policy Standards

All schools within SMLT welcome and promote an inclusive working and learning environment based on the principles of equality, dignity and respect. Individuals are taught, trained, assessed, appraised, promoted and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant merits and ability, thereby being afforded equality of opportunity both in their working /educational life and access to services available from or through SMLT. Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated. All schools will support staff and students in challenging and removing all forms of prejudice and discrimination from the workplace. This means that all schools within SMLT will:

- Take reasonable and necessary steps to meet students' needs by using a variety of approaches and reasonable adjustments for disabled students, to enable them to fully participate in school life.
- Be committed to ensuring staff with a disability have equality of opportunity.
- Expect positive attitudes towards students and staff and everyone to treat others with dignity and respect.
- Regularly consider the ways in which the teaching and the curriculum provision will support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them, and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Monitor the progress and achievement of students by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics.

- Collect and analyse information about protected characteristics in relation to staff recruitment, retention, training opportunities and promotions to ensure all staff have equality of opportunity.
- Ensure the curriculum is accessible to all students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or those for whom English is not their first language.
- Ensure equality of opportunity in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the school(s) will monitor the uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- Expect that all staff will be role-models for equal opportunities, deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents and be able to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.

Meeting the Duties

Under equality legislation, SMLT and its schools has the following specific equality duties, which this policy will meet:

- Produce a written equality policy identifying action to be taken to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups across school activity.
- Consult stakeholders (students, parents /carers /guardians and staff) on their perceptions of equality within the school and build the results of consultation into the equality policy.
- Set specific, measurable equality objectives and to publish information about their performance on equality, so that the public can hold them to account.
- Assess and analyse the impact of equality policies on students, staff, and parents / carers /guardians, in particular monitor student admissions, attainment levels and exclusions by disability, sex, religion and different racial groups. Take such steps as are reasonably practical to improve any adverse outcomes for any group.
- Record all hate incidents and report them to the Local Governing Body on a regular basis
- Audit and monitor curriculum teaching and learning methods to ensure they are inclusive in the language and representation used, promote inclusion and physical activity for disabled students, and challenge stereotypes to promote community cohesion and a positive image of a diverse community.
- Take reasonable steps to avoid substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.
- Not treat disabled students less favourably than non-disabled students, and to make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage Schools must also prepare an accessibility plan to increase accessibility for disabled students This plan must cover: the physical environment; the curriculum; and written communication.

- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires schools to set measurable equality objectives and to publish information about their performance on equality, so that the public can hold them to account.

Equality Objectives /Action Plans

Each individual school within SMLT is responsible for producing, implementing and monitoring an Action Plan. Action Plans are a fundamental part of the Policy. Although an integral part of the Policy, the Action Plans are standalone documents and will change regularly as progress is made on the identified actions and new actions are identified.

Action Plans will link with school improvement, curriculum reviews and annual self-assessment. Whilst the Policy sets out the vision, the Action Plans translate that vision into actions targeted to achieve equality outcomes. The Action Plans detail the actions which will be taken to make the commitments in the Policy a reality.

The Action Plans are also the means by which students can be encouraged to participate and by which students, staff, parents, carers and guardians can be empowered to address equality issues. Action Plans are:

- Based on objective evidence.
- Focused on the desired outcomes.
- Specifically related to the Policy.

The Action Plans act as tools for reviewing and monitoring the progress made by the Trust and its schools towards achieving the vision set out in the Policy; they are dynamic documents, constantly evolving as outcomes are met and new actions identified.

Principles of Action Planning:

1. Each action within the Action Plan will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time limited.
2. Measurement of progress towards desired outcomes is essential.

SMLT is mindful of laws relating to confidentiality when devising this Policy. Although there is a statutory duty to share information about each school's Action Plan, the schools recognise that care must be taken when sharing or publishing statistics, data or information to ensure that this cannot be used to identify individuals.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIAs)

SMLT will develop an Equality Impact Assessment process that will incorporate each area of equality duty. The Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out on all of our policies at least once every three years. We will ensure that the Equality Impact Assessment process is updated in line with new legislation. The Equality Impact Assessment template will be based upon

the relevant equality duties. For each of the school's functions the Equality Impact Assessment process will cover the following areas:

- The advancement of equality of opportunity.
- The elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Fostering of good relations between different groups of our community.
- The promotion of positive attitudes to disability.
- The participation by disabled people in public life.
- Meeting the needs of disabled people, even when that means treating them more favourably than non-disabled people.

The outcome of equality impact assessments will be reported to the Local Governing Bodies. Any identified improvements will be included in the Academy Improvement Plan

Commissioning and Procurement

SMLT schools, as required by law, will ensure that when they buy services from another organisation to help provide services, the organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process.

Policy Development

This policy applies to the whole SMLT community. Existing policies have been used to inform the Single Equality Policy, including the following:

- Accessibility Policy and Plan
- Behaviour / Anti-Bullying Policy
- Academy Improvement Plan
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND)
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Further Information For information relating to PSED guidance for schools, please see: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-schools-england>

For technical guidance, please see:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/technical-guidancepublic-sector-equality-duty-england>

Comprehensive general information about each protected characteristic in relation to the Act is available in the Equality and Human Rights Commissions codes of practice, available at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/legislation/equality-act2010/equality-act-guidance-codes-practice-and-technical-guidance>