



Thomas Hepburn
Community Academy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Approved by Governors: July 2017

Chair of Governors signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "C. Hepburn".

Introduction

The One Academy Rule.

“All students and adults are expected to behave in a responsible manner, both to themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect at all times.”

Our one academy rule applies to all staff and students in a Northern Education Trust Academy. The welfare of others is our first concern. Such a guiding principle requires all those skills and attitudes that encompass such words as tolerance, flexibility, sensitivity, compassion and respect. Trustees endorse the strength of each of these words and to expect that each of them be associated with the single most important principle of a comprehensive education. That is:

The education of every child is held to be of equal value in the academy

Aims

Thomas Hepburn Community Academy believes that all children and adults should be treated equally and fairly irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, cultural background, sex, sexuality, disability, domestic circumstances, age, illness, employment status, membership of trade unions or political beliefs.

Our School is committed to the philosophy and practice of equality of opportunity and to combating discrimination, direct or indirect, through our policies and procedures. We are committed to taking positive steps to help redress the effects of discrimination and disadvantage, ensuring that equality of opportunity is integral to all our activities.

Equality and the law

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and academies, and which extends to all protected characteristics – race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. This combined equality duty came into effect in April, 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out its functions, Thomas Hepburn Academy will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- 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.

(Where schools are concerned, age will be a relevant characteristic in considering their duties in their role as an employer but not in relation to pupils).

Scope

This policy encompasses the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

Values, principles and standards

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- Equality and social justice
- Acknowledging and valuing diversity
- Respect for others
- Compliance with equality legislation
- Elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination
- Active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory
- Behaviour
- Commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all students to
- Develop their full potential
- Commitment to the positive development of all staff and governors

- Commitment to fair and open recruitment processes
- Accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of our Academy, our Academy communities and others engaged in our Academy activities.

Objectives

The objectives of this Equality and Diversity Policy are to:

1. Develop an ethos which respects and values all people
2. Actively advance equality of opportunity
3. Prepare students for life in a diverse society
4. Promote good relations amongst people within the Academies community and the wider communities within which we work
5. Eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other oppressive behaviour
6. Deliver equality and diversity through our Academies policies, procedures and practice
7. Make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to Academy provision and activities
8. Take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural expectations
9. Monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within the Academies
10. Ensure that recruitment and selection procedures and practices within the Academy are open and transparent and ensure that a fair and equal selection criterion is applied.

Communication of Equality and Diversity Policy

We will take active steps to communicate this Equality and Diversity Policy to all students, parents/carers/associated persons, staff, governors, partners, stakeholders, contractors and visitors to the Academies.

Responsibilities and accountabilities

The Academy Board of Governors is responsible for:

- Making sure the Academies follow all of its equality and diversity policies and codes, and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality.

The Executive Principal and Head of the Academy are responsible for:

- Giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality and diversity
- Advancing equality and diversity inside and outside the Academy
- Ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation
- Ensuring that the Academy implement its equality and diversity policies and codes of practice.

Academy leaders (for example senior, subject and pastoral leaders) are responsible for:

- putting the Academy equality and diversity policies and codes into practice
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) are responsible for:

- promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination
- actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination, related to protected characteristics perpetrated by students, other staff or visitors
- keeping up-to-date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training

Students are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions
- obeying all of the Academy equality and diversity policies and codes

Breaches of the Policy

This policy states Thomas Hepburn Community Academy's objectives and expectations on equalities and diversity.

The Policy will be actively promoted and supported by every available means, in particular through training, consultation, and the mainstreaming of equalities and diversity into all aspects of the academy's activities. The Academy will take disciplinary action within agreed procedures where the Policy is being abused, ignored or breached.

It will be a condition of service that employees adhere to the Equalities & Diversity Policy and failure to do so will be grounds for disciplinary measures to be taken.

The Academy has procedures, which enable service users, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they believe they have been unfairly treated. Employees will also be entitled to expect that unacceptable behaviour by others will also be dealt with promptly.

Complaints and Comments

Anyone who has a complaint or wishes to comment on this policy is requested to write to:

The Executive Principal,
Thomas Hepburn Community Academy,
Swards Road
Felling
NE10 9UZ