

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

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Statutory

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Trust Board

Signed by Trust/Committee Chair

Emma Hawker

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• EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS •



1. Introduction

SECAT is committed to promoting equality, diversity, equity and inclusion across all aspects of employment, leadership and education. We aim to ensure that no employee, pupil, parent/carer, trustee, governor or visitor receives less favourable treatment based on a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

We recognise that equality, diversity, inclusion and equity are distinct but interlinked concepts that sit at the heart of SECAT's culture:

- **Equality:** ensuring all individuals have equal access to opportunities.
- **Diversity:** valuing and celebrating individual differences within our workforce and school communities.
- **Inclusion:** creating environments where everyone feels respected, represented and able to belong.
- **Equity:** acknowledging that some groups experience disadvantage and removing barriers so that outcomes and opportunities are fair.

This policy covers all employees (permanent, fixed term, and casual), officers, trainees, volunteers, agency staff and contractors across the Trust.

Breaches of this policy will be managed in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure. Serious incidents may constitute gross misconduct. Concerns relating to discrimination, harassment, or victimisation may be raised through the Trust's Grievance or Dignity at Work policies.

2. Aims

SECAT meets its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct under the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics by promoting understanding, respect and positive interaction.

Protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Our commitment to equality is aligned with SECAT's core values: **Inclusive, Aspirational, Collaborative, Nurturing, Respectful**

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of:

- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- DfE guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools
- EHRC Technical Guidance for Schools
- SECAT's funding agreement and articles of association

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 SECAT Board of Trustees

The Board will:

- Ensure equality information and published objectives meet statutory requirements and are publicly available.

- Ensure information is updated annually and equality objectives reviewed at least every four years.
- Monitor compliance and delegate day-to-day implementation to the CEO and headteachers.

4.2 CEO

The CEO will:

- Ensure all schools implement this policy consistently.
- Report to Trustees on progress towards equality objectives.
- Ensure central HR and governance systems support compliance.

4.3 Headteachers

Headteachers in every SECAT school will:

- Promote the equality objectives across their school community.
- Monitor progress and report to the CEO and Trustees.
- Ensure staff have due regard for equality duties in their decision-making.

4.4 Designated Equality Lead (in each school)

The designated lead will:

- Liaise with the headteacher, CEO and link trustee to monitor equality issues.
- Support staff training and awareness.
- Ensure equality impact assessments (EIAs) are completed where required.

4.5 All SECAT Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Follow this policy and uphold the Trust's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Attend relevant training and apply it in their practice.
- Report any concerns relating to discrimination, harassment or inequity.

5. Eliminating Discrimination

SECAT ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010 by:

- Embedding equality requirements across all Trust and school policies.
- Providing induction and annual refresher training on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Maintaining processes for reporting, recording and responding to discrimination, bullying or harassment (including racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic incidents).
- Regularly reviewing practices such as recruitment, promotion, CPD and pay to prevent discrimination.

Each school has a designated Equality Lead who liaises regularly with a link trustee or senior leader.

6. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

SECAT advances equality by:

- Identifying and reducing disadvantages experienced by specific groups (e.g. pupils with disabilities, staff from under-represented backgrounds).

- Making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff and pupils.
- Supporting participation so that all pupils and staff can access activities, leadership opportunities and enrichment.
- Publishing pupil attainment data annually for each school to highlight trends across protected groups.
- Using staff data to understand workforce composition and any structural inequities.

Where the Trust holds more than 250 employees, we will also publish:

- Gender pay gap information.
- Workforce diversity data, including recruitment, progression and retention trends.

7. Fostering Good Relations

SECAT fosters good relations by:

- Delivering curricula that reflect diverse identities, cultures and histories.
- Promoting tolerance, respect and friendship through assemblies, PSHE, RE and wider enrichment.
- Addressing prejudice and tackling discrimination proactively.
- Engaging with local communities, including faith groups, cultural organisations and specialist services.
- Encouraging pupil voice (e.g. school councils) to reflect a range of backgrounds and perspectives.

8. Equality Considerations in Decision-Making

SECAT ensures equality considerations are embedded in all significant decisions. Leaders will:

- Undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) where policies, staffing changes, pupil provision decisions or curriculum choices may affect protected groups.
- Consider the impact of decisions on accessibility, participation and inclusivity.
- Ensure adjustments are planned into activities, trips and processes.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

- Equality information will be updated annually.
- Equality objectives will be reviewed every four years.
- The Audit, Risk & Resources Committee will monitor implementation and impact.
- This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Board of Trustees.

10. Links with Other Policies

- Accessibility Plans
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Complaints and Whistleblowing Policies