

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

and

## SCHOOL EQUALITY INFORMATION OBJECTIVES

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Signed by Trust/Committee Chair:



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## Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Our commitment as an employer.....	4
3. Equal opportunity policy statements.....	4
Age .....	4
Disability .....	5
Race .....	5
Gender .....	5
Sexual orientation.....	5
Religion or belief.....	6
Pregnancy or maternity .....	6
Marriage or civil partnership .....	6
4. Part time and fixed term work.....	6
5. Equal pay.....	6
School Equality Information and Objectives .....	7
6. Aims.....	7
7. Legislation and guidance .....	7
8. Roles and responsibilities .....	7
9. Eliminating discrimination.....	7
10. Advancing equality of opportunity.....	8
11. Fostering good relations.....	8
12. Equality considerations in decision-making .....	9
13. Equality objectives .....	9
14. Monitoring arrangements .....	9
15. Links with other policies .....	9

## 1. Introduction

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

The terms equality, inclusion, diversity and equity are at the heart of this policy.

- 'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination.
- 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution.
- 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce.
- 'Equity' means recognising barriers and that some groups are more advantaged than others, and putting measures in place to eliminate these barriers, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

We will actively support diversity, equity and inclusion and ensure that our workforce is valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

SECAT HR/People Team has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality Diversity and Inclusion policy and, as part of this process, all HR policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Trust.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Trust as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific

responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of everyone to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality and equity throughout the Trust.

Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the SECAT HR/People Team.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance and Dignity at Work Policy.

## **2. Our commitment as an employer**

The Trust is committed to:

- creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued
- everyone is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff
- understanding equality and inclusion in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness and inclusion for all
- taking steps to ensure equity amongst our workforce such as ensuring that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse range of potential candidates and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our Trust, taking positive action to recruit disabled people and ensuring there are no unlawful barriers to accessing our employment opportunities, training, progression opportunities, benefits and facilities
- diversity in our workforce will be regularly monitored to ensure equal opportunities throughout the Trust. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary obstacles and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups
- monitoring and reviewing this policy annually.

## **3. Equal opportunity policy statements**

### **Age**

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that people are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

## **Disability**

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities. If we feel that a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will discuss this with you and try to find an alternative solution where possible
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate
- We will keep the physical features of our premises under review to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.
- Strive to be in line with best practice advice as part of our commitment under the Disability Confident Scheme.

## **Race**

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents
- actively promote race equality and inclusion in all schools within the Trust
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

## **Gender**

We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about gender
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transgender people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

## **Sexual orientation**

We will:

- ensure that we take account of the needs of everyone, including the LGBTQ+ communities
- promote positive images of the LGBTQ+ communities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the LGBTQ+ communities
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against everyone
- offer equal access for everyone to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same.

## **Religion or belief**

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

## **Pregnancy or maternity**

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity during pregnancy or maternity leave
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about pregnancy or maternity
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged during pregnancy or maternity leave and that we take account of the needs of our employees' during pregnancy or maternity leave.

## **Marriage or civil partnership**

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity regardless of marriage or civil partnership status
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged as a result of their marriage or civil partnership status.

## **4. Part time and fixed term work**

Part time and fixed term staff should be treated the same as comparable full time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

## **5. Equal pay**

We will ensure that all employees have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

We will publish gender pay gap data annually in accordance with our statutory duty. The gender pay gap is the difference between the average pay of men and women in an organisation.

## **School Equality Information and Objectives**

### **6. Aims**

SECAT aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- 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

### **7. Legislation and guidance**

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives
- This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.
- This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### **8. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher
- All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

### **9. Eliminating discrimination**

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

- Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings.
- Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

- New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training every year.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate

## **10. Advancing equality of opportunity**

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

## **11. Fostering good relations**

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum.
- This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures



- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

## **12. Equality considerations in decision-making**

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities.

The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

## **13. Equality objectives**

Please refer to individual school annexes to this policy.

## **14. Monitoring arrangements**

The SECAT Trust Board will update the equality information we publish, [described in sections 4-7 above], at least every year. This document will be reviewed by the SECAT Trust Board at least every 4 years.

This document will be approved by the SECAT Trust Board.

## **15. Links with other policies**

This document links to the following policies:

Accessibility plan

Risk assessment