

HUMAN RESOURCES

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY
POLICY**

POLICY DETAILS

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| Policy title: | Equality & Diversity Policy |
| Staff name and job title: | Mary Brindle – Chief Financial Officer |
| Organisation: | Endeavour Academies Trust |
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POLICY REVISION AND APPROVAL HISTORY

| Version | Date of review | Date of next review | Comments | Approved by |
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| 1 | November 2022 | November 2023 | New policy | Trustees |
| 2 | March 2024 | March 2025 | Annual review (Equality Objectives included) | Trustees |
| 3 | March 2025 | March 2026 | Annual review | Trustees |

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Equality and Diversity policy represents Endeavour Academies Trust commitment to their mission statement of 'Inspiring every student to succeed' and particularly the British values of 'Mutual Respect' and 'Tolerance'.
- 1.2 The Trust is dedicated to implementing the policy consistently and monitoring its efficacy. The trust is firmly opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

2. AIMS

- 2.1 The aim of the policy is to:
 1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other 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 between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 4. Create an environment that embraces and learns from the diversity of the workforce and student population.
- 2.2 Endeavour Academies Trust will review the policy annually in order to gauge how well these aims are achieved with regards to the protected groups as per the Equality Act 2010. These groups are; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sex, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 Equality

Equality is defined as "the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities." It recognises that individuals have individual needs and that everyone has the right to have their needs and beliefs respected.

3.2 Diversity

Diversity is defined as "Variety" and "a range of different things". In the trust setting, this would reflect the variety of cultures, ethnicities and personalities that make up the Trust community.

3.3 Inclusion

Within the Academy setting, Inclusion reflects the environment that staff and students need in order for them to flourish. Inclusion reflects the support available to staff and students, the pleasant and respectful environment that is created by staff and students and the tolerance of others' differences.

3.4 Discrimination

Discrimination is the unequal or differential treatment of a person that results in either benefit or detriment to that person that would not have occurred had they not been part of a protected characteristic group.

A person may be treated less favourably than others because they are part of a protected characteristic group (or thought to be) or because they associate with a person with a protected characteristic. This is *Direct Discrimination* and the two sub-types within direct discrimination are *perceptive discrimination* and *associative discrimination*.

Indirect discrimination occurs when there is a policy, practice, condition or rule that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages someone with a protected characteristic.

3.5 Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under the Equality Act. Victimisation can occur if a person has even been suspected of raising a grievance or complaint.

3.6 Harassment

Harassment is defined in law as unwanted conduct relevant to a protected characteristic that has either the purpose *or* the effect of violating a person's dignity or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

3.7 Unconscious Bias

Unconscious Bias is the ingrained views that all people hold about the world around them. These biases need to be actively challenged in order to overcome them; the trust recognises that although unconscious biases are a natural part of human psychology these biases, if held against a protected characteristic, can lead to unlawful discrimination.

Types of unconscious bias are:

Affinity bias – Preference for people who we feel a connection with. This may be that there is a shared characteristic such as age, race or gender.

Halo bias – Automatically 'rating' someone more highly as a result of a single achievement or characteristic.

Horns bias – Automatically 'rating' someone less highly because of a single action or characteristic (opposite of halo bias)

4. THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY (PSED)

4.1 The PSED applies to all public bodies including academies and extends to all protected characteristics.

The duty requires Endeavour Academies Trust to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other 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 between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.2 In order to demonstrate relevant and proportionate consideration is being given to the above, Endeavour Academies Trust will ensure that:

1. Decision makers are aware, and have due regard, of the duty when making decisions or policies. They must assess the impact of the decision on any particular group.
2. Policy developers should assess the impact of the policy on any particular group before and during the decision-making process.
3. PSED is integrated into any and all decision-making processes with the serious intent to reduce negative impact on all individuals and with an open mind.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

The purpose of an EIA is to ensure that policies, procedures and practices within the Trust are fair to all people. Where any unfairness is highlighted, the EIA will help to identify where amendments could be made.

An EIA will also provide evidence that the Trust has given due regard to the PSED.

5. PURPOSE

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in the Trust – whether temporary, permanent, full time, part time, adult or student.
- Provide equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To oppose, avoid and challenge any and all forms of unlawful discrimination.

6. COMMITMENT

- Explore and challenge unconscious biases as, left unchallenged, these will inhibit decision makers and reinforce unconscious biases.
- Create an environment in the Trust that is non-hostile and is free from bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination in all its forms. There will be individual dignity afforded to all.
- Respond appropriately to allegations of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.
- Decisions concerning staff should be based on merit with the exception of any necessary and limited exceptions and exemptions as allowed under the Equality Act 2010.
- Make training, development and progress opportunities available to all staff; this will result in a highly skilled workforce that will maximise the Trust's efficacy. Training will encourage open dialogue and a space where staff and students are able to learn from each other.
- Review and amend employment policies and practices where necessary in order to ensure fairness for all. The review will also take into account changes in the law.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 All staff will demonstrate behaviour that is inclusive of diversity and be mindful of unconscious bias and how this can affect decision-making.
- 7.2 Staff will be mindful of their obligation to call out unfair policies or practices which would unfairly discriminate against a person or group falling under a protected characteristic. This can involve bullying, victimisation, direct or indirect discrimination.
- 7.3 Staff will also be aware of their rights within a 'whistleblowing' capacity and that they cannot be treated differently as a result of raising concerns.
- 7.4 All staff will understand that both they as an individual and the Trust can be held liable for acts of bullying, victimisation, direct discrimination or indirect discrimination. A continuous lack of inclusion (exclusion) can also become discrimination.
- 7.5 Staff and students are encouraged to raise concerns about any deviation from the policy as soon as possible so that the matter can be dealt with when it has arisen. If this is not possible, then staff are encouraged to speak to their line manager and students to speak to their tutor.

- 7.6 If this is not appropriate then the student or staff member should escalate to their next point of contact within the setting.
- 7.7 Staff and students will be reminded that there is not an automatic assumption of guilt and that a discussion will take place with both the accuser and accused. Regardless of whether there was malicious intent behind the situation, this will be used as a learning opportunity and a chance to review training needs and / or policies and procedures.

8. SUSPECTED BREACHES

- 8.1 Suspected breaches of the policy will be dealt with under the Trust's disciplinary processes.
- 9.2 Following an investigation, appropriate action will be taken, if necessary.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 9.1 Through monitoring and review the Trust will:
- Assess how the Equality & Diversity policy and any supporting action plans are working in practice.
 - Review the policy and plans annually; the Trust will consider and take action to address any issues this will raise.

10. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2022-26

- 10.1 We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims.

These aims are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - Foster good relations between people who have a shared characteristic and those who do not.
- 10.2 We have set the following objectives for 2022-2026:
- To ensure that staff, governors and trustees are aware of current legislation surrounding equality and diversity and understand the Trust's responsibility;

- To promote cultural understanding and awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our academy communities;
- To promote mental health awareness and develop appropriate interventions where necessary;
- Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between students for all groups of students; especially students eligible for Pupil Premium, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from minority ethnic groups;
- Continue to improve accessibility across the academy sites for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas;
- Monitor the incidence of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by students in our academies;
- To continuously review and revise the Key Stage 1-5 curriculum so that it represents a diverse culture and society and encourages tolerance and respect.

DfE require the equality objectives to be reviewed every four years.



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