Equality & Diversity Policy

The Talentum Learning Trust is committed to equality and valuing diversity and actively supports practices that promote genuine equality of opportunity for all staff and young people.

1. Introduction

The Trust is committed to promoting a positive and diverse culture in which all staff and young people are valued and supported to fulfil their potential irrespective of their age, disability, race, religion, belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We recognise our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to promoting the equality and diversity of all those we work with especially our employees, pupils, young people and visitors. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Act and its subsequent provisions.
We aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with special emphasis on promoting equality and diversity, and eradicating prejudicial incidents for pupils and staff. Our Trust is committed to not only eliminating discrimination, but also increasing understanding and appreciation for diversity.

The following groups have been identified as key recipients in terms of the provision of this statement:

- Are being looked after or on the edge of Care
- Have Special Educational Needs / Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
- Are excluded or at risk of exclusion from school
- Are from an ethnic group, including those from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller background
- Have English as an additional language
- Are missing in education
- Have Ill health, including hospitalisation, affecting attendance at school
- Are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Have drug or alcohol abuse
- Are school age / teenage parents
- Are young carers
- Are offending or at risk of offending
- Have mental health issues

- Are in receipt of free school meals (FSM)
- Live in areas of deprivation
- Gifted and talented
- Are gender questioning or going through transition
- Are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Pansexual

This policy and all associated procedures apply to all staff (including volunteers and students on placement), young people and visitors and should be read in conjunction with the following policies in our schools:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Responding to prejudice related incidents
- Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policies
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Policy
- Children in Care Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy

Failure to comply with these policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action. Discriminatory treatment, bullying or harassment of staff or young people by visitors will also not be tolerated.

2. Compliance

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is the responsibility of all members of staff. The Trust does not condone any act of direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Any breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

3. Definitions

The Equality Act covers nine protected characteristics upon which discrimination is unlawful:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

For further information on types of unlawful discrimination see Appendix 1.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all equality and diversity matters at the Trust is the Chief Executive Officer. In our schools, it is the responsibility of the respective Headteachers. For further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Persons see Appendix 2. It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Treat colleagues, young people and visitors with dignity and respect;
- Avoid behaving in any manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality and diversity;
- Adopting an inclusive attitude and ensuring that the whole school community understands what inclusive behaviour looks like in the school and how this aligns with the school's values.
- Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities;
- Report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy.

It is important to appreciate that an employee is personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment, whether or not the employer is also liable. Any attempt to instruct, cause or induce another person to discriminate, harass or victimise a third person will also amount to unlawful discrimination and any employee doing so will be subject to disciplinary action.

5. Duty to make reasonable adjustments

We will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments, where there is a need to ensure that a disabled person has the same access to everything as a non-disabled person, as far as is reasonable. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by a disabled individual, as far as is reasonable.

For further information, visit the Equality and Human Rights Commission website at: www.equalityhumanrights.com

6. Admissions policy

Our admissions criteria are defined under the individual schools' admissions policies and are applied consistently to every young person, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

7. Curriculum delivery

The curriculum is crucial to tackling inequalities for pupils including gender stereotyping, preventing bullying and raising attainment for certain groups. The principles of equality and diversity are embedded in our schools' academic and social curriculum.

Positive and proactive steps will be taken to prevent discrimination against, or victimisation of, any young person in the provision of education or access to any benefit, facility or service including educational trips, work experience and leisure activities.

8. Exclusion policy

The decision to exclude a child for a fixed period or permanently is a last resort. Our exclusion criteria are defined under the Trust's Exclusion Policy and are applied consistently to every young person, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

9. Recruitment and selection

All employees, whether part-time, full-time, temporary or permanent will be treated fairly and equally. We will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Selections will be made on the basis of aptitude, ability and/or merit, where appropriate.

Where appropriate, the Trust will endeavour to make all reasonable and effective adjustments during the recruitment and selection process. Where recruitment and selection is carried out by a third party, on behalf of the Trust, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure they adhere to the principles of this policy.

10. Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination and harassment

All incidents of discriminatory treatment, bullying and harassment must be reported to senior staff and recorded as soon as is reasonably possible (and in any event within 24 hours of the incident). All bullying related incidents (confirmed or otherwise), will be addressed in accordance with our schools' Anti-Bullying Policies.

11. Complaints and grievances

If an individual believes that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised, they are asked to follow our complaints procedure.

12. Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review

The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the 'Equality and Diversity Policy' is the CEO and the respective Headteacher in each school.

The designated members of staff are also responsible for ensuring that all young people, staff, parents/carers and placing local authorities are aware of our policy. Additional support would also be provided to any parent or significant person, wishing to know more about the policy and procedures outlined above. A copy of this policy document is available for inspection on the premises during office hours and an electronic copy is posted on the Trust website.

This policy document will be reviewed and publicised in writing, at least annually and, if necessary, more frequently in response to any significant incidents or new developments in national, local and organisational policy, guidance and practice.

Further information about equality and diversity

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex sexual orientation).

Discrimination by association is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a condition, provision, policy or practice applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when you treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and cannot justify such treatment. Discrimination arising from disability is different from direct and indirect discrimination.

Harassment occurs when a person is subject to “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Third-party harassment occurs where, during the course of their duties, an employee is harassed by an individual or individuals who are not under the direct control of the school and the harassment relates to a protected characteristic.

Victimisation occurs when an individual is subject to a detriment because they have made an allegation of, or given evidence about, the treatment of any individual (including themselves) who has been subject to any of the above.

Any individual making allegations of a false, malicious or vexatious nature would not be protected against victimisation and will be subject to disciplinary action.

APPENDIX 2

Roles and responsibilities

The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all equality and diversity matters at The Trust is the CEO, for individual schools, it is the Headteacher.

The role of the Designated Person is to:

- Create an environment in which all members of the community are expected to treat one another with mutual respect, dignity and tolerance.
- Ensure that The Trust complies with equality legislation;
- Ensure all policies, practices and procedures, associated with equality and diversity, including admissions, curriculum, recruitment and selection are implemented;
- To make effective and reasonable adjustments where appropriate to meet the individual needs of staff, young people and others who may have business with The Trust;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and follow the Trust's policy;
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate equality and diversity training, in accordance with their roles and responsibilities;
- Take 'all reasonable steps' to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation from taking place;
- Take responsibility for recording, managing and analysing incidents of discrimination, harassment and victimisation in accordance with the Trust's policies, procedures and guidance.

It is the responsibility of all staff to:
Treat colleagues, young people and visitors with dignity and respect;

- Avoid behaving in any manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality and diversity;
- Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities;
- Report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy.

It is important to appreciate that an employee is personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment, whether or not the employer is also liable.

Any attempt to instruct, cause or induce another person to discriminate, harass or victimise a third person will also amount to unlawful discrimination and any employee caught doing so will be subject to disciplinary action.