

Equality Policy

Review Date: December 2024

Review by: Pastoral, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee

Final Approval: Pastoral, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee

Context

The Core Values of which relate specifically to this policy state that we are working together to form relationships based on

- **Faith** – everyone is invited to develop their understanding of Christian belief, worship and lifestyle.
- **Truth** - everyone is required to be honest and to communicate in a positive manner
- **Responsibility** - everyone is expected to understand the consequences of their actions
- **Justice** - everyone is entitled to be treated fairly and to promote the self-esteem of others
- **Compassion** - everyone is encouraged to be generous in their concern for others.

Data Protection

Any personal data processed in the delivery of this policy will be processed in accordance with the Academy Data Protection policy.

Policy Statement

These values contribute to our common purpose of “Striving for high quality education with a strong Christian ethos”, and as such underpin the Academy’s approach to wellbeing.

Background: The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in April 2011 as a consequence of the Equality Act (2010). It extends the previous responsibilities placed on schools to eliminate discrimination on grounds of Race, Disability and Gender to cover additional “protected characteristics”, namely Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity and Gender Reassignment. Schools and academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and the rest of the school community and foster good relations across all characteristics.

Bishop Stopford School is committed to:

- treating all individuals with equal value and worth;
- eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct which is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- fostering positive attitudes and good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (i.e. tackle prejudice and promote understanding);
- taking such steps as are reasonable to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- taking such steps as are reasonable to meet the needs of persons who have a relevant protected characteristic which are different from the needs of persons who do not have it;
- ensuring that recruitment, retention and development of staff follows equality principles;
- considering equality implications before and at the time that policies are developed as well as keeping them under review on a regular basis;
- ensuring all marketing activities and procurement processes meet equality and diversity best practice;

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This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Equality Act 2010, Academy's Behaviour Policy, Recruitment Policy and SEND Policy.

Policy

The Academy will

- ensure that no person is discriminated against because of any of protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010. This includes discrimination due to association or perception (where it is believed that an individual has a particular characteristic). The characteristics protected by the Act are:
 - Age (as an employer but not applicable to students);
 - Disability;
 - Ethnicity;
 - Gender reassignment;
 - Marriage and civil partnership;
 - Pregnancy and maternity;
 - Religion and belief;
 - Sex;
 - Sexual orientation;
- Not discriminate against employees because they belong to a trade union and undertake associated activities in relation to that membership.
- not discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:
 - in relation to admissions;
 - in the way it provides education for students;
 - in the way it provides students access to benefits, facilities or services.
- ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, and given necessary training and support in matters relating to equality;
- foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in policies, procedures and activities;
- observe good practice for equalities in employees recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic, and will full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity;
- consider any continuing barriers, and reduce or remove those barriers wherever this is possible;
- ensure employees promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the Academy by:
 - challenging inappropriate language and behaviour;
 - responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment;
 - showing appropriate support for students with additional needs;
 - maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equality.

Responsibilities

Governors/Trustees will:

- ensure that they and the Academy comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations;
- effectively communicate and adopt this policy throughout the Academy;
- meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED);
- ensure equal opportunities in its employee recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in governance membership;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Equality Policy;
- monitor educational outcomes, incidents of harassment and discrimination and referrals by a range of criteria including protected characteristics.

The Headteacher will:

- lead on the operational implementation of this policy and associated procedures;

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- ensure that employees work to the Academy's Core Values and thereby ensure the importance of equality;
- make the policy accessible for all parents and visitors;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice;
- address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.

Employees will:

- report incidents of harassment or bullying by students in relation to protected characteristics through MyConcern;
- Incidents involving other employees must be reported to HR
- promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way;
- monitor students' progress to ensure the appropriate support is in place;
- keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by undertaking appropriate training

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Appendix 1 – Objectives

The Academy is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all members of its community. To achieve this, the Academy has established the following objectives. The Academy will:

- Monitor the curriculum and make changes where need is identified to ensure good outcomes for students in all vulnerable groups;
- Implement effective strategies to support students in all vulnerable groups;
- Continue to explore the use of new technologies to support students in all vulnerable groups in accessing their learning.

In order to meet our objectives, the Academy has identified the following priorities:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure that students are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and educational visits, and the Academy will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic;
- Students are educated about prejudice and learn that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with the Behaviour Policy (Sanctions and Rewards);
- Teaching and learning will be structured in such a way as to meet the needs of all students
- Ensure continued allocation of specific roles where this is appropriate to support fair access (e.g. a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator)
- Ensure there is adequate access to the physical environment of the Academy;
- Seek the views of its own community and para-professionals on matters relating to equality.

Appendix 2 - Addressing prejudice-related incidents

The Academy is opposed to all forms of prejudice and understands that those who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.

The Academy acknowledges that students are in a critical learning and developmental stage of life and there will, from time to time, be incidents of unwelcome prejudicial behaviour. Leaders will ensure that students and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice, and will sanction and provide appropriate learning opportunities for those who act prejudicially.

Appendix 3 - Curriculum

All students will be entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need.

When planning and delivering the curriculum, the Academy will take every opportunity to uphold and advance equality.

The Academy will develop appropriate curriculums for students in vulnerable groups. The Academy will ensure the Wider Curriculum (eg PSHE, assemblies, tutorials) is designed for students to develop their knowledge of the world and the importance of equality. These will enable students to engage with British Values as embraced by the Core Values of the Academy.

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Appendix 4 - Employment Provisions

The Academy is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. All staff appointments and promotions will be determined on the basis of merit, ability and in compliance with the law

Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are followed.

As an employer, the Academy strives to ensure that discrimination and harassment is eliminated in employment practice, actively promoting equality across all groups within the workforce.

The Academy will not discriminate against a potential employee in relation to protected characteristics.

With regards to existing employees, the Academy will not discriminate against an individual in respect of the benefits, facilities and services it offers including training opportunities, promotion or dismissal (including discipline and suspension).

The Academy will make reasonable adjustments in relation to disability for employees or potential employees, and will ensure that staff with disabilities have access to support (physical, structural or other adaptations) where these are reasonable adjustments and to alleviate disadvantage.

Appendix 5 - Collecting and using information

The Academy will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in teaching methods;
- Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally;
- Taking action, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of an employee with a protected characteristic.

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