2024 - 2026

Our Community Multi Academy Trust
CEO – David Whitehead

# Equality Statement Policy

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# Equality Statement

## 1 Statement

The Our Community Multi Academy Trust is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of probity and integrity regarding its practices. Our Community Multi Academy Trust is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and for each employee and pupil to feel respected and able to give their best.

## 2 Scope

This statement applies to all Employees and pupils of The Our Community Multi Academy Trust. (This policy also applies to agency workers, volunteers, contractors and others working on Trust premises).

## 3 Adoption Arrangements and Date

This statement was reviewed and re-adopted by the Board of Directors on the Our Community Multi Academy Trust on 11 June 2021 and supersedes any previous Equality Statement.

This Statement will be reviewed by the Board of Directors every 2 years or earlier if there is a need.

## 4 COVID-19

As a Trust we have taken all reasonable steps to protect our children and staff from COVID-19 and are committed to continually reviewing our policies in response to Government guidance relating to the pandemic. Where changes to Government guidance impact on policies which require additional or changes to existing practice these have been formally communicated and enable the Trust to review any changes implemented during and after this pandemic. By implementing this process in response to Government COVID-19 guidance we are ensuring that we continue to deliver safe and effective care for all our service users and staff employed by The Trust. Changes to school practice forced by the pandemic have been risk assessed and signed off by the Trust Board. This process will continue along-side the existing process for the review of all policies.

## 5. Equality Statement

Every School within our Trust is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in line with the Equality Act 2010. We want to reduce disadvantages, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity, and promote diversity in terms of our pupils, our workforce and the community in which we work.

We will assist our pupils in achieving to their very best potential. Where pupils experience barriers to their success we will work with them to address these in a sensitive and sympathetic way. We will teach our pupils the importance of equality and what forms discrimination can take, and the impact discrimination can have. We will also encourage our pupils to make their own commitment to promoting equality.

We will not discriminate on any of the grounds listed below (known as the Protected Characteristics) save where such discrimination is permitted by law. Examples of permitted discrimination are:

- A school within our Trust may arrange pupils in classes based on age.
- A school within our Trust may take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils of one racial group if this is a proportionate means of dealing with the issue.

The Protected Characteristics that apply to our Trust and all the schools in our Trust are:

- Age (in relation to staff only).
- Disability.
- Gender re-assignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership (in relation to staff only).
- Pregnancy and Maternity.
- Race.
- Religion Faith or Belief.
- Sex; and
- Sexual orientation.

As a Multi Academy Trust and employer we will also not accept any of the following:

- Direct or Indirect Discrimination.
- Harassment; and
- Victimisation.

Our Community Trust oppose and avoid all forms for unlawful discrimination which include;

- Pay and benefits
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Dealing with grievances and discipline
- Dismissal
- Redundancy
- Leave for parents
- Requests for flrexible working
- Selection for employment, promotion, training and other developmental opportunities

6. Trust Commitments

The Trust commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense

2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

We will comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty giving due regard to that duty when making decisions, taking actions and developing policies. In line with its specific duties under the Equality Act 2010, we will publish our equality objectives and will publish information about how it is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Published Information will be updated annually, and objectives will be updated every four years. This information is available on our website.

Board of Directors, Our Community Multi Academy Trust