



# TRUE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

<b>EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) POLICY</b>	
<b>Policy Ref Number: TLP80</b>	<b>Reviewed by: HR and People Committee</b>
<b>Policy Date: November 2023</b>	<b>Review Date: November 2026</b> Unless there are operational or legislative changes that require an earlier review.

## 1. Introduction

The True Learning Partnership (the “Trust”) is made up of diverse individuals. We are all unique, whether in terms of our background, personal characteristics, experience, skills or beliefs and we value the differences and diversity you bring to the Trust.

By respecting differences we can advance equality and diversity through our Trust vision and values and foster an inclusive culture that helps our colleagues and pupils benefit from a wider range of perspectives and experiences.

We aim to create a working and learning environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all colleagues are recognised and valued.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we reserve the right to amend it at any time.

## 2. Scope

This policy is inclusive of our Trust wide community, including pupils, colleagues, parents/carers. You are classed as a “colleague” if you are an employee, agency worker, casual worker, trustee, governor or self-employed contractor working for us.

## 3. Legislation

We recognise and comply with the Education Act 2002 and our obligations under the Prevent Duty 2015.

We recognise that under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are known as protected characteristics.

The Equality Act 2010 requires schools to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

These are known as the three equality aims in the general equality duty. Having due regard means that we should all consciously think about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of our day to day decision making processes and involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

As a Trust we aim to ensure that we do not discriminate when we are dealing with matters relating to:

- pay and benefits
- terms and conditions of employment
- grievances and complaints
- disciplinary and dismissal
- redundancy
- family friendly leave
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

As a colleague of the Trust you should also remember that you can personally be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of your employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

#### 4. Understanding what is meant by discrimination, victimisation and harassment

With so much terminology, it is important that we understand the following definitions:

- **Direct discrimination** is when you treat someone less favourably than another person because they either have a protected characteristic, you think they have that protected characteristic, or they are connected to someone with that protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** happens when there is a policy or practice that applies in the same way for everyone but disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic. If this happens, the Trust should evidence that there is a good reason for the policy.
- **Victimisation** is when you treat someone badly because they have done a 'protected act' or you believe they have done a 'protected act'. A protected act means:
  - making a claim of discrimination
  - providing evidence or information to someone else to make a claim
  - making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Equality Act
  - doing anything else for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act
- **Harassment** occurs when you engage in unwanted (meaning unwelcome or uninvited) behaviour which is related to a protected characteristic, and which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment.

#### 5. Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice including:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia

There is guidance in our school handbooks on how race-related and homophobic incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. This guidance will be extended to include all prejudice-related incidents.

We take seriously our legal obligation to report regularly to the Trust Board about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our schools and how they were dealt with.

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

Our senior leadership team are role models and therefore play an important part in ensuring that our schools/the Trust operate without discrimination. All our leaders must abide by our standards of expected behaviour, lead by example and are held accountable for the culture and practices undertaken within schools/the Trust.

Senior leadership teams should make certain that they create a culture where discrimination of any form is not tolerated, and where people feel that they are able to challenge it.

All colleagues are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support students in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Below is an indication of responsibilities by role:

Trust Community	Responsibility
<b>Trust Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ oversee the local governing bodies and senior leaders to ensure schools within the Trust recognise their duties and responsibilities as detailed in this policy.</li> <li>▪ ensure that our schools meet their legal responsibilities with respect to equality</li> <li>▪ ensure our policies and procedures are implemented effectively, are fair and help to advance opportunity for all colleagues</li> <li>▪ oversee and support local governing bodies and senior leadership teams to understand their responsibilities in regard to equality in their schools</li> </ul>
<b>Local Governing Bodies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to involve and engage the whole school community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these</li> <li>▪ ensure that each school complies with equality legislation</li> <li>▪ ensure that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are effectively implemented</li> </ul>
<b>Head Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ implement this policy</li> <li>▪ ensure that their teams and colleagues are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010</li> <li>▪ ensure that appropriate and regular equality training is undertaken as required by the Trust</li> <li>▪ taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promote key messages to colleagues, parents and students about equality and what is expected of them and what can be expected from the school in carrying out its day to day duties</li> <li>▪ ensure that colleagues have appropriate skills to deliver equality, including student awareness</li> <li>▪ ensure that all colleagues are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice related incidents.</li> <li>▪ keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Leadership Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ co-ordinating implementation of the policy in their areas of responsibility</li> <li>▪ to support the Head Teacher as above</li> <li>▪ ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities</li> <li>▪ ensure that all colleagues are aware of their responsibility to report prejudice related incidents</li> <li>▪ keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos within their classrooms</li> <li>▪ help in delivering the right outcomes for pupils</li> <li>▪ uphold the commitment made to pupils and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated</li> <li>▪ design and deliver an inclusive curriculum</li> <li>▪ record and report prejudice related incidents</li> <li>▪ promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom</li> <li>▪ deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur</li> <li>▪ identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum</li> <li>▪ support students in their class for whom English is an additional language</li> <li>▪ keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work</li> </ul>
<b>Support Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ support the school and the Local Governing Bodies in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders</li> <li>▪ uphold the commitment made by the Head Teacher on how pupils and parents/carers can be expected to be treated</li> <li>▪ support colleagues within the school and Trust community</li> <li>▪ report prejudice related incidents</li> <li>▪ keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and inform the Local Governing Bodies of actions that can be taken to eradicate these</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ take an active role in supporting and challenging the schools to achieve the commitment made to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ support their school to achieve the commitments made to tackling inequality</li> <li>▪ uphold the commitment made by the Head Teacher on how pupils, parents/carers, colleagues and the wider school community can be expected to be treated</li> </ul>
<b>Local Community Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and inform the Local Governing Bodies of actions that can be taken to eradicate these</li> <li>▪ take an active role in supporting and challenging the schools to achieve the commitment made to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</li> </ul>

## 7. Covering equality in our curriculums

As part of our routine curriculum reviews we seek to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles of equality and diversity and that pupils have equal access to a broadly balanced curriculum which does not stereotype and values diversity.

We believe that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of our pupils is at the heart of what we do as a Trust. We want to help pupils develop a range of personal and social skills that will enable them to become well-rounded, responsible, and engaged members of society who value equality and diversity.

## 8. Training and development of colleagues

New starters to the Trust are advised to undertake the approved equality and diversity training as part of their induction and onboarding process. Once an established colleague of the Trust, we recommend that colleagues repeat the equality training every 3 years.

Where there are any concerns about your behaviour or conduct related to equality, part of the remedy may be that you undertake equality and diversity refresher training.

Our aim is to ensure our managers and colleagues understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy. There is also a responsibility that you conduct yourself in a way that supports equal opportunities in employment and prevents bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the workplace.

## 9. Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all colleagues and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents by making it available in a range of formats if required.

All colleagues have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail. We will also ensure there are information and resources available internally for all colleagues to refresh their knowledge on EDI.

## **10. Religious observance**

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of colleagues, pupils and parents. We will, where possible, assist with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. We will, where possible, provide a prayer room or quiet space for religious observance.

## **11. Reasonable adjustments**

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace for disabled people. To do this we will consider advice provided by the individual, their medical practitioner and occupational health if appropriate. As a Trust we aim to think in advance about what disabled people with a range of impairments might need. This includes people with both physical and mental health conditions.

The aim of reasonable adjustments is to make sure that disabled people are able to work for our schools/the Trust, or use our services as far as is reasonably practicable, to the same standard offered to non-disabled people.

## **12. Equality impact assessment**

Where new policies, procedures and processes are developed or existing ones renewed we shall aim to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. An assessment form is available from HR.

## **13. How we review and evaluate progress**

As a Trust we will publish equality objectives every 4 years and equality information annually to comply with public sector equality duty (PSED).

It is our aspiration that our workforce reflects the communities we serve and we will monitor progress towards this by gathering data such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability.

Monitoring will also include assessing how this policy is working in practice and taking action to address any issues.

## **14. Breach of policy**

We will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by colleagues, pupils, parents, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of activities undertaken by the school/Trust.

Such acts will be investigated as misconduct under our 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.

In addition, sexual harassment allegations 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.

## **15. Publishing Information**

We publish information on how we are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty on the Equality pages of our school websites, and on our Trust website.

## **16. Associated Trust policies**

Other associated policies that should be read alongside this policy are:

- Dignity at work policy
- Grievance policy
- Complaints policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Menopause policy
- Social media policy
- SEN policy
- Behaviour polies
- School improvement plans