



Equality Objectives Statement

Connect Academy Trust welcomes our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Trust aims to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit in our schools.

The general duties, with regards to equality, are:

- Eliminating discrimination.
- Fostering good relationships.
- Advancing equality of opportunity.

The Trust will not discriminate against, harass or victimise any member of the Trust community, or visitor because of their:

- Gender
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Age

Connect Academy Trust seeks to foster welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully, and work and learn free from harassment and violence. Everyone within the Trust is expected to support and implement the Equality Policy and ensure that their behaviour and/or actions do not amount to discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any way. Promoting and maintaining equal opportunities is the responsibility of everyone.

All schools within the Trust are expected to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, with special emphasis on promoting equality, diversity and eradicating prejudicial incidents for pupils and staff. Our schools are committed to not only eliminating discrimination, but also increasing understanding and appreciation for diversity.

Eliminating discrimination

A greater level of success from pupils and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. Creating a prejudice-free environment where individuals feel confident and at ease is a commitment of the academies within the Trust. This environment will be achieved by:

- Being respectful
- Always treating all members of the Trust community fairly
- Developing an understanding of diversity and the benefits it can have
- Adopting an inclusive attitude
- Adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all
- Encouraging compassion and open-mindedness

We are committed to having a balanced, fair and exciting curriculum. Schools will regularly reflect upon the ways in which the taught and wider curricula will help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals and develop the skills of participation and responsible action. The ways in which teaching and the curriculum provision can support high standards of attainment, promote common values, and help students understand and value the diversity that surrounds them. Challenging prejudice and stereotyping will also be considered regularly.

The Trust expects that pupils should be exposed to ideas and concepts that may challenge their understanding to help ensure that pupils learn to become more accepting and inclusive of others. Challenging and controversial concepts will be delivered in a way that prevents discrimination, and instead promotes inclusive attitudes.

The Trust will also respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from learning which poses conflicts to their own beliefs.

The Trust works within LA Admissions Schemes. We welcome applications from pupils with disabilities and schools will strive to meet their needs wherever possible. For disabled pupils, auxiliary aids or services will be provided whenever it is reasonable to do so, if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

Where practicable, appropriate facilities will be provided to meet the religious and cultural needs of pupils.

The Trust will take account of the needs of individual members of staff and, wherever practicable and in line with business needs, the Trust will consider part time and/or job shares to assist with issues such as disabilities or caring for dependants. The Trust will make reasonable changes to an individual's working environment to enable a disabled employee to carry out their job. Where practicable, appropriate facilities will be provided to meet the religious and cultural needs of staff.

All staff will have equal opportunities to access training and development which would assist them to perform their jobs more effectively.

Fostering good relationships and dealing with prejudice

Connect Academy Trust does not tolerate any form of prejudice-related incident. Whether direct or indirect, we treat discrimination against all members of our Trust with the utmost severity. When an incident is reported, through a thorough reporting procedure, our schools are committed to ensuring appropriate action is taken and a resolution is put into place which is both fair and firm.

Pupils are taught to be:

- Understanding of others.
- Celebratory of cultural diversity.
- Eager to reach their full potential.
- Inclusive.
- Aware of what constitutes discriminatory behaviour.

The Trust's employees will :

- Promote diversity equality and not discriminate against anyone.
- Encourage and adopt an inclusive attitude treating members of the Trust or visitors fairly.
- Ensure they lead by example

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

Connect Multi Academy Trust does not discriminate against pupils, staff, parents or volunteers with regards to their:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marital or civil partner status.
- Pregnancy or maternity.
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.

- Religion or belief.
- Sex or sexual orientation.

Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination extends to the treatment of all members of the community. All staff members are obliged to act in accordance with the Trust's various policies relating to equality.

Where appropriate, schools will take positive action to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics.

Schools will monitor the progress and achievement of pupils by the relevant and appropriate protected characteristics. This information will help the Trust to ensure that individual pupils are achieving their potential, schools are being inclusive in practice, and trends are identified which can inform the setting of academy equality objectives.

We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

All applicants and staff will be given equal consideration for recruitment, selection, promotion, terms and conditions, pay, training and dismissal (including retirement). Selection criteria for all posts will be clearly defined, non-discriminatory and reflected in the job description/person specification/role profile. Job advertisements, short listing and interviewing processes will be thorough, carried out objectively and will avoid bias. Where applicants declare that they have a disability, appropriate arrangements will be made, wherever possible, to enable them to compete on an equal basis.

Who is Responsible?

The Local Governing Body are responsible for:

- making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation;
- making sure the Trust Equality Scheme and its expectations are followed.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- making sure the Trust Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed;
- making sure the equality plans are readily available and that the Governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about them;
- producing regular information for staff and Governors about the plans and how they are working;
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying and bullying related to gender or disability; and for recording incidents.

All staff are responsible for:

- dealing with racist, homophobic and other hate-incidents;
- being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- promoting equal opportunities and good race relations;
- avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnicity, disability or gender
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination; and
- taking up training and learning opportunities.

The Headteacher is responsible overall for:

- dealing with reports of hate-incidents, or other concerns which may invoke the Prevent Strategies.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- knowing and following the Trust Equality Scheme.

Relevant School Policies:-

This scheme should be read in conjunction with the following school documents

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEN Policy
- Equality Action Plan
- Safeguarding Policy