



Equality and Diversity Policy

Adopted July 2012 (reviewed February 2015)



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Prospect Education (Technology) Trust (The Trust) through Ashcroft Technology Academy (The Academy) recognises the diversity of the community it serves and the responsibilities it has in meeting the educational and social needs of the staff, student and parental profile that reflect this diversity. It is committed to equal opportunities for all members of the Academy community and recognises its duty to promote equality of opportunity and to promote positive relations between those of different gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality, ability, disability, special educational needs and nationalities. In support of that commitment, the Academy has specific policies to prevent unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment and to meet its statutory obligations. It has adopted a race equality policy, a disability equality scheme, a gender equality scheme and an equal opportunities in employment policy. These all form part of this Equality and Diversity Policy.

The principle of non-discrimination will inform all aspects of the Academy in all of its dealings with students, prospective students, staff, prospective staff, parents and others involved with the Academy including members of the wider community who utilise the Academy facilities.

Where appropriate, this Policy will be drawn to the attention of outside contractors, agencies, and other third parties who use the Academy and who will be expected to abide by it.

The Academy will not discriminate unlawfully in respect of:-

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

or any other ground that cannot be shown to be justified.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010. It brought together several key pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, yet strengthens and harmonises existing legislation to provide a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more harmonious and equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that merged are shown below:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The Academy has systems in place to monitor the impact of its anti-discrimination policies and to report appropriately on that impact.

Specifically this means that the Academy will:

- treat all members of the Academy community with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a learning environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation
- not tolerate any form of harassment or discriminatory behaviour against members of the Academy community
- promote personalised learning which takes all students' aspirations, experience and needs into account
- ensure that students acquire the skills which enable them to be proactive in their learning and to become responsible citizens
- create an environment which is accessible, stimulating, encouraging and supportive of working, learning and achieving
- ensure all students have their achievements recognised and, where relevant, accredited
- provide or work with others to ensure that the appropriate support is available for each student
- work to create a safe learning environment
- promote the equal opportunities policy both internally and in contact with external organisations
- implement reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access for all members of our learning community
- adopt and apply policies and practices in relation to the recruitment and retention of staff that do not discriminate unless there is a genuine occupational reason or objective justification for doing so.

IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

(a) Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for implementing the policy rests with the Principal. All Academy employees (which includes those working for the Academy but not employed directly by the Trust) are expected to pay due regard to the provisions of this policy and are responsible for ensuring compliance with it when working at or representing the Academy.

All Academy employees have a responsibility to:

- act in line with the policy and its related procedures;
- promote equal opportunities;
- treat colleagues and Academy users with dignity and respect;
- not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate;
- not harass or victimise others;
- challenge discrimination or inappropriate behaviour;

Acts of unlawful discrimination on any of the prohibited grounds will result in disciplinary action. Failure to comply with this policy will be treated in a similar fashion. The policy applies to all who are employed in the Academy.

(b) Complaints of discrimination

The Academy will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any of the prohibited grounds made by employees, students or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Academy's grievance; harassment; bullying or customer complaints policies, as appropriate, and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

The Academy will also monitor the number and outcome of complaints of discrimination made by staff, students, and other third parties.

(c) Monitoring

The Academy will store equal opportunities data as confidential personal data and restrict access to this information. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and has no bearing on access to opportunities or benefits.

The Academy will have due regard to the statutory Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

RACE EQUALITY POLICY

Why does the Academy have this policy?

Public authorities have a statutory general duty to promote race equality. The aim of the general duty is to make promoting race equality central to the way public authorities work; and this includes schools.

The general duty says that the body must have 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups

There is a duty for the Academy to:

- have a written race equality policy which should identify the action to be taken to tackle and eliminate racial discrimination and to promote racial equality and good race relations across all areas of Academy activity
- assess the impact of policies on ethnic minority students, staff and parents to identify whether such policies help to achieve racial equality
- monitor the implementation of the race equality policy and its impact on students, staff and parents and monitor the levels of student attainment by ethnicity

The Academy's Aims, Values and Commitment to Racial Equality

Race equality is important to the ethos and core values of the Academy. To establish and maintain this, the Academy is fully committed to:

- ensuring that all students have equality of opportunity to achieve according to their full capabilities, regardless of their ethnic background
- valuing equally all members of the Academy community
- promoting positive attitudes towards life in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-faith society and celebrating cultural diversity
- combating racial harassment and racial discrimination and challenging racism in all its forms
- equipping students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to recognise and challenge examples of racism that they meet in their lives
- establishing a close partnership with parents and the local community, with sensitivity and openness to the experiences, aspirations and perspectives of those of ethnic minority background.

The Academy admits inner city children of all abilities to enable them to succeed regardless of their academic, social, economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds. The Academy population is such that half of all students come from ethnic minority backgrounds and therefore race equality is fundamental to the success of the students and the Academy.

In particular, the Academy will:

- ensure those from ethnic minorities are neither victims of racism nor experience any form of isolation and/or marginalization and that they feel safe within the Academy
- recognise the particular need to train all members of the school community to avoid negative and stereotypical assumptions about those from ethnic minority backgrounds
- understand the importance of recognising the significance of and responding to cultural, linguistic and "racial" differences in striving to achieve equality of opportunity for all.

Dealing with Racist Incidents

The Academy adopts the definition of a Racist Incident recommended by the report of the Inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence (the Macpherson Report), which quite simply is:

“any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”.

However, the Academy does not subscribe to the view that an incident is necessarily to be treated as a racist incident solely because the complainant claims that there is a racial element, though all such claims will be investigated fully in order to determine whether or not the incident in question does have a racial element to it. The Academy will maintain records of all such claims and will monitor the extent to which such claims prove to be justified.

- The Academy will fulfil its statutory obligation to keep a formal record of all racist incidents and to report on the nature and frequency of any racist incidents annually to the Executive Board, including reporting when no such incidents have been recorded during the year.
- The Academy will take every possible step to support the victims of racial harassment.
- All racist incidents will be regarded as a serious matter. Sanctions for students will be set out in the Academy’s Behaviour Policy and include the possibility of student exclusion. Any example of racism perpetrated by a member of staff will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and will be investigated as such in line with the Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure for Staff Policy.
- The Academy will take all possible steps to establish a climate in which all members of the Academy community have the confidence to report racist incidents and will ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in defining and responding to racist incidents.

Other Actions to ensure Race Equality

To promote the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes necessary for racial equality and the elimination of racism, the Academy will:

- use opportunities within the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and assemblies to promote positive attitudes towards cultural and ethnic diversity and differences
- provide opportunities within the curriculum, appropriate to students’ ages and attainment, for students to understand and recognise racism and to challenge the myths and negative stereotypes that underpin racism and racist attitudes
- ensure that learning resources are not used which reproduce and reinforce negative stereotypes of people of ethnic minority backgrounds or of communities in the “Third World”
- make use of the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, learning resources and assemblies to positively affirm the cultural and religious identities of all students, including those from minority ethnic and faith communities
- regularly monitor the curriculum to ensure that these learning opportunities are in place

To ensure that all students achieve their best, according to capabilities and regardless of ethnicity, the Academy will:

- monitor the achievement of students of ethnic minority background to ensure that they are achieving according to their full capabilities, taking appropriate action where underachievement is identified
- ensure that assessment activities and tasks are not culturally biased so as to discriminate against any student or group of students
- ensure that teachers’ expectations and teaching styles and strategies provide equal opportunities for all students to achieve according to their full capabilities
- ensure that all students have equality of access to the curriculum, including those for whom English is an Additional Language

- maintain and develop a positive valuing of linguistic diversity, celebrating the achievements of pupils who are multi-lingual; the Academy will ensure that any student for whom English is an Additional Language, and who has not yet achieved a functional level of English, is appropriately supported to gain access to the curriculum rather than treated as having a learning difficulty
- monitor the impact of the Academy's behaviour policy and system of rewards and sanctions on students according to ethnicity (where appropriate, according to the composition of the student population)
- record and monitor all student exclusions by ethnicity
- listen to the views and experiences of ethnic minority students as part of the monitoring of this policy
- monitor student grouping, including setting arrangements, to ensure that they do not disadvantage students of ethnic minority background
- ensure that religious and cultural differences are fully recognised in meeting the needs of all students

The Academy will have due regard to the statutory Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission

Monitoring Impact

The Academy will monitor results and outcomes to ensure that all students achieve their potential. It will pay due attention to local and national information gathering to ensure that policies are implemented successfully. The Academy Leadership Group will monitor the impact of policies, curriculum delivery and other services on the diverse groups that make up the learning community and integrate identified actions into the Academy's Strategic Plan. The Academy will be proactive in building support structures that are intended to have a positive impact on achievement for identified groups.

The Academy will work towards specific outcomes on an annual basis so as to ensure that measures are effective and sustainable and provide solid foundations for further measures where an identified need is apparent.

The Academy will explore ways in which the views of members of the learning community can be taken into account so as to:

- raise awareness of policy and procedures
- ensure everyone understands the importance of accurate reporting
- ensure everybody understands the importance of high levels of satisfaction in handling of incidents
- reduce the number of incidents
- measure how race equality is addressed within the curriculum

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

Legal Requirements

This Scheme incorporates the Academy's duties under the Equalities Act 2006 relating to gender equality. These duties fall into two parts, a general duty and a specific duty. The general duty applies equally to all schools and other organisations that provide employment, services and goods. The specific duty requires the Academy to show how it promotes gender equality within its day to day operations in order to meet its general duty.

The general duty with regard to gender equality requires the Academy to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote the equality of opportunity between men and women.

The specific duty requires the Academy to publish a Gender Equality Scheme which includes:

- Steps to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Collect and use information on gender equality in the Academy
- Consult with stakeholders on priorities for gender equality
- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments
- Identify priority areas for gender equality
- Publish a three year action plan and report on it yearly

The Gender Equality Duty promotes equality for men, women and transgender people. The Academy will have due regard to the statutory Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission

What is Gender?

Gender refers to the social construction of female and male identity, rather than biological differences between men and women. It includes the ways in which those differences, whether real or perceived, have been valued and used to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them. Gender identity is not always fixed and the Gender Equality Duty urges the Academy to have due regard to the needs of transgender people.

The Academy will continuously strive to ensure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Each person at the Academy will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality, ability, disability or special educational needs.

The Academy will work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education based on equality.

This will be achieved by:

- treating all those within the Academy community as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experience
- creating and maintaining an Academy ethos which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices
- encouraging everyone in the Academy community to gain a positive self image and high self esteem
- having high expectations of everyone involved within the whole Academy community
- promoting mutual respect and valuing each other's similarities and differences and facing equality issues openly and honestly
- identifying, challenging and removing all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory and replacing them with practices that are fair to all
- monitoring, evaluating and reviewing all the above to secure continuous improvement in all that the Academy does.

Monitoring Impact

The Academy will focus on results and outcomes to ensure that all students achieve their potential. It will pay due attention to local and national information gathering to ensure that policies are implemented successfully. The Academy Leadership Group will monitor the impact of policies, curriculum delivery and other services on the gender groups that make up the learning community and integrate actions into the Academy's Strategic Plan. The Academy will be proactive in building support structures that are intended to have a positive impact on achievement for identified groups.

The Academy will work towards specific outcomes on an annual basis so as to ensure that measures are effective and sustainable and provide solid foundations for further measures. The Academy will explore ways in which the views of members of the learning community can be taken into account so as to:

- raise awareness of policy and procedures
- ensure everyone understands the importance of accurate reporting
- ensure everybody understands the importance of high levels of satisfaction in the handling of incidents
- reduce the number of incidents
- measure how gender equality is addressed within the curriculum

Actions to Support Gender Equality within the Academy

- Students will be listed alphabetically in registers; registers will not separate boys from girls
- Boys and girls will wear the same colours for their uniforms, and girls may wear skirts if they so wish
- Boys and girls will have equal access to all lessons and all sporting activities
- Boys and girls will be encouraged to line up together
- The Academy expects boys and girls to do equally well at everything the Academy provides
- The Academy expects boys and girls to behave equally well in all circumstances
- The Academy expects boys and girls to be equally respectful to each other and to Academy staff
- The Academy expects boys and girls to perform equally well in all subjects
- Boys and girls will be encouraged to make equal use of all the resources and facilities in the Academy
- Every effort will be made to ensure that neither girls nor boys should dominate the attention of staff to the detriment of the opposite sex
- Resources will show girls, boys, women and men engaged in non-stereotypical roles and activities
- Students will be given classroom activities which encourage competitive and collaborative skills in more or less equal measure
- Boys and girls will be expected to complete exactly the same extra-curricular jobs around the Academy such as carrying books and light furniture and tidying and washing up
- Boys and girls will be expected to work together in a constructive and positive manner
- New resources will be vetted to ensure that they show girls, boys, men and women involved in a diverse range of activities thereby challenging stereotyped ideas about what males and females can and should do
- Across the curriculum, staff will use whatever opportunities arise to explore how boys, girls, men and women have challenged, or can challenge, ideas about gender stereotypes
- Students will be discouraged from using sexist language and sanctioned if found to have done so. Students will similarly be praised when they challenge and report such language to staff

- Students, parents, primary carers and staff will be reminded of the negative effects of sexist attitudes and language
- The Academy expects exactly the same standards of tidiness and politeness from boys as from girls
- Newsletters, Parents Meetings and Executive Board Meetings will be used to describe ways in which the Academy has contributed to gender equality
- All staff will be eligible for job-sharing where such opportunities present themselves and to either maternity or paternity leave when and as applicable
- All staff are expected to have the same standard of dress code with new appointments required to wear a business suit to the Academy each day
- The Academy's Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy is also in place to ensure that gender discrimination does not apply in relation to all aspects of staff appointment and working at the Academy
- The Academy will seek to embrace legislative changes in employment practices that impact upon gender equality

DISABILITY AND EQUALITY SCHEME

SUMMARY

Legal Context

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, placed a Disability Equality Duty (DED) on all public authorities including schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and to review this scheme on a three yearly basis. The DED also requires that disabled people are actively involved (not solely consulted) from the outset in producing the DES and associated action plan. These Acts have now been superseded by the Equality Act 2010.

The Act still requires the Academy in its general duty to carry out its functions having due regard to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

For members of our learning community which includes prospective and existing students, their parents/carers, volunteers and staff of the Academy, this will mean:

- All disabled members of the learning community will feel equal and accommodated
- An inclusive learning environment that meets the needs of all disabled students
- An inclusive working environment that meets the needs of all disabled staff and volunteers
- Consultation with disabled people so as to integrate their needs into planning processes

THE POLICY

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as having a disability if:

That person has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

This definition of a disability now also includes those who have a progressive illness such as multiple sclerosis, cancer or HIV.

It is the policy of the Academy to provide an inclusive learning and working environment and to aim to make the most of every student's learning opportunities and every member of staff's work potential. All disabled staff and students should feel welcome and able to achieve their full potential while working and studying at the Academy. The Academy recognises the Social Model of disability, namely that it is often the social barriers within society that disable people, not their impairments

The barriers can be:

- prejudicial and stereotypical attitudes
- lack of consideration in organisation and implementation
- inadequate access to information and facilities

It is the policy of the Academy to work to avoid those barriers operating against its students and staff, by making it an organisation that is disability aware. Whilst the Academy must meet legal requirements, it is committed to go beyond that, developing its policies and culture according to models of best practice.

THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

The Disability Equality Scheme demonstrates how the Academy intends to fulfil its general and specific duties and involve disabled people in the development of the scheme. The main purpose is to identify and address any issues identified for disabled staff and students while at work or study. The Academy will establish a Disability Forum which will include representatives of the Academy's community so as to ensure effective and continuous input into all aspects of Academy life.

In developing policy and implementation plans, the Academy Disability Equality Scheme uses the principle of the social model of disability.

In the United Kingdom the DDA uses the medical model (i.e. people with disabilities are defined as individuals with certain conditions and limitations) to define disability. However, the requirement to make reasonable adjustments to policies, practices or physical access follows the social model. By making such adjustments society is removing the disabling barriers. It is for this reason that the Academy recognises the social model of disability.

As stated in the code of Practice for the DED, it is important to ensure the DED demonstrates commitment at the very highest level. For Ashcroft Technology Academy, the Trustees, the Executive Board, Principal and other senior staff are committed to employing and educating a diverse mix of people who reflect all communities. This positive approach to valuing and promoting diversity is a key element of the Academy's strategy for success as an inclusive educational institution.

Training underpins the very essence of embedding the DED in the understanding of disabled people's needs. The Academy has delivered specific training across the Academy, most recently with particular reference to the Autistic Resource Centre for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and for those with speech and learning difficulties, but there is a continual need to make sure that all staff are disability aware and understand the duties they are working too. Specialist deliverers have been and will continue to be used.

Steps have been and will continue to be taken to promote disability equality through the Academy's marketing and communication activities, for example it has improved the accessibility of websites and will look to mainstreaming disability information into the prospectus.

The Academy has constantly sought to remove physical barriers in its built environment through upgrading its existing site. The Academy has excellent access for disabled people around its site but recognises that there is always more that can be done to enhance accessibility and that the involvement of disabled people in identifying existing barriers will benefit future development. The Academy provides full access for disabled users with lifts and ramps providing accessibility to all areas. Aside from these facilities, the Academy has EvacChairs in the stairwells, a hoist to assist students out of wheelchairs, specific washroom facilities for the disabled and designated parking spaces. The more recent building programmes undertaken as part of becoming an Academy have also provided for full disabled access. Student wheelchair users are supported in their day to day education by Teaching and Learning Assistants.

THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The Scheme will look to include a three year Accessibility Plan which will set out specific steps to be taken by the Academy in ensuring that services are accessible to all. This ensures that specific adjustments and improvements are put in place in response to improving access. It includes specific responsibilities and time frames for actions. It covers the needs of all members of the learning community and not just students.

The Accessibility Plan will include an action plan that will identify the factors that can potentially deny access to facilities and services and will seek to implement practices that correct these such as:

- Access to the curriculum and training opportunities
- Physical access to the building and equipment
- Communication and information sharing
- Participation and engagement in all aspects of Academy life including the Executive Board and any student voice opportunities.
- Employment including recruitment and training of disabled staff and future prospects for disabled staff

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Academy will monitor the implementation of the Scheme and the Accessibility Plan and every three years will publish a report summarising the steps taken in the Accessibility Plan, the results of the information gathering and the use to which it has put the information. For the purposes of cohesion both the scheme and Accessibility Plan will follow the same three year cycle of reporting and review.

Methods for impact assessment

The Academy will keep a record of the numbers of disabled persons' in its the learning community so as to monitor the effectiveness of its provision in attracting and retaining staff and students.

The Academy will also keep a record of the numbers of those parents/carers who have communicated that they have a disability related need when it comes to supporting their child or accessing extended services.

Student achievement will be monitored in accordance with Academy assessment policy which in turn will refer to the SEND Code of Practice. Student well-being will be monitored and supported through the Academy's pastoral system. Where relevant, medical provision for students will be delivered and monitored by the Welfare Officer in collaboration with the Special Needs Co-ordinator. The impact of provision will be reported to the Academy Leadership Group and the Executive Board. Individual students may request that specific issues be placed on the agenda of the Disability Forum for discussion.

Staff provision will be monitored by the Director of Resources and representation will take place through the Disability Forum. Individual staff for whom disability exists will discuss the impact of any present or future adjustments with their line manager and may request that any issues be placed on the agenda of the disability forum for discussion. The aims of which will be to assess the effect of academy policies and practices on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.

Gathering of Information

Students will arrive with a certain amount of information regarding their needs. However, the Academy will be proactive in identifying their additional needs through:

- approved disclosure by parents/carers
- on-course identification and referral by professionals
- continuous consultation through the pastoral system

Parents/carers/staff will have the opportunity to convey their needs and opinions through:

- contacting the Academy Deputy Principal with responsible for special educational needs and disability
- contacting the Special Educational Needs Coordinator:
- the stages of the recruitment process
- declaring on acceptance of a post any additional needs
- their Line Manager
- the Disability Forum

Members of the Academy's learning community will be encouraged to disclose their needs at any point in time paying due consideration to issues of confidentiality and the time constraints on providing reasonable individual adjustments. This information will be collated and updated as part of the continuous review of the Accessibility Plan.

Taking Account of Disabled Persons' Disabilities

The Academy will make every effort to ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place at the earliest opportunity following disclosure and individual discussion. The Academy has responded to its anticipatory duty through ensuring that all its buildings are DDA compliant and that the needs of disabled people are fully met.

Protection on Grounds of Disability

People who currently have a disability are protected because of this characteristic against harassment and discrimination – including discrimination arising from disability and a failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments. People who have had a disability in the past are also protected against harassment and discrimination.

Non-disabled people are protected against direct disability discrimination only where they are perceived to have a disability or are associated with a disabled person. In some circumstances, a non-disabled person may be protected where they experience harassment or some other unlawful act such as victimisation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT POLICY

(a) General Statement

As an employer, the Academy Trust is committed to promoting equality of opportunity amongst its staff. The Trust values diversity; encourages fairness and strives to ensure that everyone employed or seeking employment with the Academy remains free from discrimination and victimisation. This applies equally to voluntary positions and anyone undertaking work experience with the Academy. This will include arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotion and transfers, grievance and disciplinary processes, demotions, selection for redundancies, dress code, references, bonus schemes, work allocation and any other employment related activities.

As such, employment; entry into employment and progression within employment will be determined solely by personal merit and the application of criteria that relate specifically to the duties and specification requirements of each individual post. Ability to perform the job will be of primary consideration and, subject to statutory requirements, no applicant or member of staff will be treated less favourably than any other on the grounds of gender, age, disability, race, language, physical appearance, politics, religious belief, sexual orientation, social-economic status, marital status or any other irrelevant distinction.

(b) Recruitment and Selection

The Academy recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to ensure fairness in the staff selection process such that:

- the Academy endeavours to recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates practicable;
- employment opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit;
- where appropriate, positive action measures are taken to attract applications from all sections of society and especially from those groups which are underrepresented in the workforce;
- selection criteria and processes do not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of sex (including, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity), sexual orientation, marital status (including civil partnership status), race, religion or belief, age or disability; other than in those instances where the Academy is exercising permitted positive action or a permitted exemption;
- wherever appropriate and necessary, lawful exemptions (genuine occupational requirements) will be used to recruit suitable staff to meet the special needs of particular groups;
- all recruitment agencies acting for the Academy are aware of requirements not to discriminate and to act accordingly.
- all applicants for advertised posts will either be sent a copy of this policy within the recruitment pack information to outline the Academy's commitment to equal opportunities, or be able to obtain this online as part of the recruitment information.
- information sought from applicants applying for posts shall be limited to that relevant to the post being advertised, although certain information may be requested on a confidential basis for monitoring, personnel or payroll purposes.
- staff involved in the selection, management, leadership or supervision of other staff have a duty to ensure that no discrimination occurs in the administration of any of the Academy's procedures or agreed terms of employment.

(c) Conditions of Service

The Academy will treat all employees equally and create a working environment which is free from unlawful discrimination and which respects the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of employees. Terms and conditions of service for employees will comply with anti-discrimination

legislation. The provision of benefits such as flexible working hours, maternity and other leave arrangements, performance appraisal systems, dress code, bonus schemes and any other conditions of employment will not unlawfully discriminate against any employee on any of the prohibited grounds.

Where appropriate and necessary, the Academy will endeavour to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service which take into account the specific needs of employees which arise from their ethnic or cultural background; gender; responsibilities as carers; disability; religion or belief or sexual orientation, or other justifiable criteria.

Aside from recruitment and selection referred to above, the Policy also applies to training and development, conditions of work, pay, harassment, promotion, flexible working, maternity, paternity and to every other aspect of employment where equal opportunities plays a part.

All staff are responsible for acting within the laws relating to equal opportunities and other codes of conduct and policies endorsed or adopted by the Academy which govern acceptable behaviour.

Any member of staff may use the Grievance Procedure or Bullying Procedure, where they believe discriminatory conduct has occurred. The Academy is concerned to ensure that staff feel able to raise such grievances and that no individual shall be penalised for doing so unless it is found to not be true or is not made in good faith.

(d) Promotion and Career Development

Promotion within the Academy will be made without reference to any of the prohibited grounds and will be based solely on merit. The selection criteria and processes for promotion will be kept under review to ensure that there is no unjustifiably discriminatory impact on any particular group.

While positive action measures may be taken in accordance with relevant anti-discrimination legislation to encourage applicants from under-represented groups, appointments to all positions will be based solely on merit. All employees will have equal access to training and other career development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities. However, where appropriate the Academy will take relevant positive action measures (as permitted by the antidiscrimination legislation) to provide special training and support for groups which are under represented in the workforce and encourage them to take up training and career development opportunities.

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
- the Sex Discrimination Regulations 1999
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- the Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

ROLES OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING THE EQUALITY POLICY

The Executive Board

The Executive Board is responsible for monitoring the Equality and Diversity Policy and the specific policies linked to it, the Accessibility Plan and all reports relating to their implementation. It also has a responsibility to promote positive attitudes towards equal treatment in relation to race, gender and disability for its students, staff and the Academy's wider learning community.

Leadership

The Academy Leadership Group and middle management are responsible for creating an inclusive climate that encourages equal treatment in relation to both race and gender and for disabled staff and students to disclose that they are disabled and to request appropriate support to meet their individual requirements. This includes taking steps to eliminate harassment on any of the above grounds wherever it exists.

Those leading the writing or reviewing of policies, procedures or plans and introducing new practice are responsible for ensuring that such policies remain up to date and that the needs of people be they gender, race or disability related are taken into account.

Staff

All staff are responsible for contributing to an inclusive environment for all students, colleagues and the wider community and following Academy policies regarding race, gender and disability access in every aspect of their professional duties. This includes attending any necessary training identified by the Academy.

Students

All students have a responsibility to abide by the Academy's policies and procedures, which includes practising and promoting respect and equality for all students and staff regardless of race, gender or disability.

Parental and Community Involvement

The Academy will work with other local schools and external agencies seeking to secure that provision meets the reasonable needs and aspirations of all groups in the community. The Academy will seek to build strong relationships with parents and carers so that they are involved in supporting and contributing to their child's learning and progress from the time they join the Academy.

A diverse and representative workforce

Staff will be recruited paying due regard to the ethnic, gender and disability make up of the community and the need to provide positive role models for students although the Academy will work on the principle of employing the best person for the job irrespective of the ethnicity, gender or notified disability of the applicants.

A Fair Admissions Policy

The Academy will operate an Admissions Policy that complies with the Schools Admissions Code and which is non discriminatory in all respects. The Academy will collaborate fully with Wandsworth Borough Council in providing places for "hard to place" and in-year admissions.

ELIMINATING UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

The Academy will aim to identify areas where there is existing and potential unlawful racial, gender or disability discrimination and will take steps where such discrimination is identified to remedy the effects of such discrimination.

Eliminate Harassment

The Academy will integrate appropriate measures to combat harassment in its Anti-bullying policy and will ensure that the needs of its students and staff be they racial, gender or disability related are taken into account as part of that process.

Promote Positive Attitudes

The Academy will organise a programme of training for staff which will focus on attitudes and promoting people regardless of race, gender or disability in a positive light.

The Academy through its PHSE programme and daily pastoral support programme will educate students on positive attitudes towards all people regardless of race, gender or disability.

Encourage Participation

The Academy will ensure that clear lines of communication are kept, where necessary providing individualised systems, that provide all regardless of race, gender or disability have equal access to information and activities. Through the support of the Executive Board, Disability Forum, Student Council and extra curricular activities it is envisaged that regardless of race, gender or disability any student or member of staff will participate actively in all aspects of Academy life.

Action Plan

Aside from the Accessibility Plan, the Academy will produce a strategic plan for the three academic years from 2012-13 to 2014-15 to monitor and evaluate the impact of the actions identified in the above mentioned areas of equality that will be subject to the initial approval of the Executive Board and its subsequent review on an annual basis.