



Equality and Diversity

Next Review: May 2018

Written by	IFT Executive Team	
Reviewed by		
Approved by		
Adopted by academies	By: BFA Crockerne HMA NSETC St Katherine's	
Next Review:	Annually	

Signed:
Chair of Trust / Local Governing Board

Date:

Prepared by: Inspirational Futures Trust, Executive Team

1 Policy statement

- 1.1 Inspirational Futures Trust is committed to creating an inclusive Trust, where people are treated with dignity and respect and where we anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential.
- 1.2 We are committed to promoting and advancing equality of opportunity, not only because it is an important part of the mission, vision and values of the Trust, but also because, by attracting and retaining the most diverse range of talented people as learners, staff and partners, we will ensure the Trust's future success.

2. Our policy aims

- To prevent discrimination
- To promote equality of opportunity
- To promote good relations between people

3 Rights and responsibilities

- 3.1 Learners, staff, governors, agency workers, visitors and contractors are required to support and uphold the principles set out in the policy. Partners and employers are expected to maintain these standards when working with Inspirational Futures Trust Learners, through their own Equality and Diversity Policies or by adhering to Inspirational Futures Trust Policies.
- 3.2 Inspirational Futures Trust is responsible for ensuring appropriate equality policies, procedures and structures are in place. The equality and diversity policy is reviewed by the Education Quality Committee and approved by the Trustees on an annual basis, or earlier where required, for example to respond to legislative changes.
- 3.3 The Inspirational Futures Trust Board, the Trust governing body, has overall responsibility for equality and diversity.
- 3.4 The commitment of all members of the Trust's community is required to make the policy a success. Failure to comply with this Policy by staff or learners will be investigated and may result in being asked to leave the Trust.
- 3.5 If you experience or witness any harassment, discrimination or bullying, please report it as soon as possible, even if it is not directed at you personally. Reporting procedures are detailed at Appendix A.
- 3.6 The policy is developed within the framework of UK and European legislation, listed at Appendix B.

4. Implementation

- 4.1 The Policy is implemented through the whole of the Trust's activities.
- 4.2 The Trust Single Equality Scheme and individual academy Action Plans detail how we are continuously improving our equality practice and how we meet our legal requirements under the general and specific equality duties.

- 4.3 We monitor and review equality impact through our Equality Risk Assessment process.
- 4.4 The Trust as part of the Weston College Group the whole community and its partners are represented through our Equality and Diversity Committee.
- 4.5 The Trust as part of the Weston College Group staff where equality groups help ensure that all groups within our community are involved in and consulted.
- 4.6 One Trustee has specific responsibilities for equality and diversity and ensures the Trust Board is fully informed of developments in this area.
- 4.7 The Weston College Group has an Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator to manage and coordinate related activities, facilitate developments and communicate responsibilities to appropriate staff within the Weston College Group.
- 4.8 We protect children and vulnerable adults through processes set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

5. Definition of terms

5.1 **Equality**

'Equality' means treating all groups of people fairly, providing equality of opportunity and removing barriers to success. It is not about treating everybody the same because different people have different needs. For example, making reasonable adjustments for disabled people (like providing additional time in exams for dyslexic learners) removes barriers to equality of opportunity and helps prevent discrimination. Increasing our understanding of the needs of different groups of people promotes good relations between people.

5.2 **Equality protected characteristics**

Equality laws exist to protect the groups of people who have traditionally faced discrimination. These groups of people share 'equality protected characteristics' such as age, disability (including physical, mental and learning impairments), race, sex, pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership status, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Everyone has several of these protected characteristics therefore everyone is protected by equality legislation from discrimination in education, at work and in other situations.

5.3 **Diversity**

Valuing diversity means we consider visible and non-visible individual differences, which include personal characteristics such as background, culture and personality in addition to the equality protected characteristics. The aim of managing diversity is to realise the potential of every individual learner and staff member.

5.4 Harassment

Harassment is defined as “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.” Harassment may include unwanted behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable, even if it was not intended to do so, and even if it was not directed at you personally. For example, a member of staff makes comments on a learner’s sexuality in a way that makes the learner feel uncomfortable.

5.5 Discrimination

There are different types of discrimination:

- 5.5.1 **Direct discrimination** is treating a person worse than another because of an equality protected characteristic. For example, a school only shortlists male applicants for interview because they assume women will not fit in. A person can experience direct discrimination because of a protected characteristic, even if the person does not have the characteristic himself or herself.

Discrimination based on ‘perception’ occurs when someone is treated worse because they are thought to have a protected characteristic, whether correctly or incorrectly. For example, a school decides not to promote a female employee because senior staff believe her to be pregnant, irrespective of whether she is pregnant or not.

Discrimination because of ‘association’ with someone who has a protected characteristic occurs when, for example, an employee is overlooked for promotion because their partner has undergone gender reassignment.

- 5.5.2 **Indirect discrimination** is when the same rule is applied to everyone but it has a worse impact on people with a particular protected characteristic and cannot be justified. For example, an employer who requires staff to commit to working from 8pm to 11pm every evening indirectly discriminates against women, who are more likely to be primary carers of children.

- 5.6 **Disability-related discrimination** or ‘discrimination arising from disability’ and failure to make reasonable adjustments are forms of discrimination unique to disability, that involve treating a disabled person in a particular way that, because of their disability, amounts to treating them unfavourably. For example, a learner with diabetes, carrying medication related to their condition, is refused entry by the school to an event with a no drugs policy.

- 5.7 **Victimisation** means treating someone worse than another because s/he has asserted their legal rights in line with equality legislation or helped someone else to do so. For example, a learner alleges that they have encountered racism from a tutor, and as a result they are ignored by other staff members.

- 5.8 **Bullying** is a form of abuse involving persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable,. Bullying may be emotional, verbal or physical and it is not always obvious or apparent to others. It can be between two individuals or it may involve groups of people.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination can occur in any media, not just face to- face actions. For example, it may take the form of written communications, by phone, email, social networking sites, by SMS (texting), screen-savers or posters.

- 5.9 **Safeguarding** is about the protection of children and vulnerable adults and our approach is detailed in our Safeguarding Policy.

Policy Review

Reviewed by Education Quality Committee on 24 April 2017 and approved by Inspirational Futures Trust Board on 18 May 2017

Appendix A:

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying

If you experience or witness harassment, discrimination or bullying, it is important that you report the incident as soon as possible. Where possible and appropriate, incidents will be resolved informally, as this approach has proven to be the most effective at achieving swift resolution.

Staff

Staff are trained to report incidents to their Line Manager, a member of the IFT Executive Management Team, a member of the Human Resources team or a Union Representative.

Formal cases will be dealt with through the Weston College Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy, the Grievance Policy and/or the Disciplinary Policy as appropriate to each individual case.

Learners

Learners are taught to report incidents to a trusted adult.

Reporting Hate Incidents

A hate incident is any type of incident perceived to be racist, homophobic or driven by other prejudice by the victim or any other person. If you experience or witness a hate incident, please report it to Student Services. Weston College is a member of the 'Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset' project run by North Somerset Council. The project aims to make it easier for people to report hate incidents. For more information, please contact Student Services.

Appendix B:

Legal Framework

This Policy reflects, but is not limited to, legislation from the following Acts:

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- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended 2003, 2005
- Employment Act 2002
- Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- Employment Equality Age Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality Regulations (Religion or Belief) 2003
- Employment Equality Regulations (Sexual Orientation) 2006
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equal Pay Act 1970 as amended 1983, 2003, 2004
- Equality Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1999
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Race Relation Act 1976, as amended 2000, 2003
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986, as amended 2003, 2008
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

If you would like a copy of this policy (or any of our policies) in a different format, please contact us on:

Tel: 01934 421262

Email: tracy.dews@iftrust.co.uk

Address: Weston College, Knightstone Campus, Weston-Super-Mare, BS23