

## Policy Document

Equality and Diversity PolicyIntroduction

This policy sets out Stanchester Academy's approach to promoting equality, as defined within the Equality Act (2010). It covers the following protected characteristics:

- age\*
- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- undergoing or who have undergone gender reassignment
- The schools approach to community cohesion

\*Paragraph 1.15 of the Equality Act 2010 notes that in schools age is only a protected characteristic in relation to employment and the provision of goods and services. Age as a protected characteristic does not apply to pupils (even those who are over 19).

The Public Sector Equality Duty.

The single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into effect in April 2011 as a result of the Equality Act 2010 and replaces three separate duties that public bodies were previously bound by, with one single duty covering all the protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

Public Bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

For schools, this means:

- Decision makers must be aware of the duty to have due regard when making a decision or taking an action, and must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics
- Schools should consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep them under review on a continuing basis

The PSED has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions, and the analysis necessary to comply with the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind

#### Reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.

Under the Equality Act, schools have a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for people with disabilities. In paragraph 4.13 of the departmental advice document about the Act, the DfE summarises the duty as follows:

- Where something a school does places a student with a disability at a disadvantage compared to other students, then the school must take reasonable steps to try to avoid that disadvantage
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a student with a disability when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student faces in comparison to students without disabilities

#### Health related questions for job applicants are prohibited

Section 60 of the Equality Act prohibits employers from asking health-related questions of applicants before a job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work (*See Appendix A for further information on the schools policy*).

However, paragraphs 8.5-8.7 of the DfE advice document clarify that schools may decide to ask necessary health questions after a job offer has been made, in order to ascertain whether a person's health or disability would prevent him/her from doing the job. Questions must be targeted and relevant to the job applied for as referenced in the Recruitment & Selection policy.

The Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 provide the procedures by which an employer may conclude that a person no longer has the health or physical capacity to carry out a relevant activity.

#### Specific duties under the PSED

The PSED introduces secondary legislation in the form of specific duties. Paragraph 5.11 of the DfE's advice document, linked to above, explains that the specific duties require schools to:

1. Publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the PSED. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic
2. Prepare and publish equality objectives

Stanchester Academy published its initial information and first set of objectives in January 2012. The school updates this published information annually and the objectives are published at least once every four years.

### **Aims and Objectives.**

Stanchester Academy is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where acceptance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

At Stanchester Academy we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

### **1 - What Stanchester Academy does to promote equality**

- We involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- Publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community;
- We use student related data to plan the curriculum and other services, to make sure no student is disadvantaged. Data is held on,
  - Students, broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender, and by proficiency in English
  - Students, broken down by types of impairment and Special Educational Need and follow DfE guidance on recording disability in addition to Special Educational Need
  - Inequalities of outcome and participation connected with aspects of disadvantage, ethnicity, gender, disability, and with proficiency in English. Stanchester also uses data and other evidence available nationally, to help identify inequalities and the needs of particular groups
- Use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to students' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- Ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
- Have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others.
- There are objectives that relate to elements of the Equality Act in various documents, for example, the School Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation papers, the prospectus, and where appropriate routine bulletins and newsletters

- There are references to the Academy's responsibilities under the Equality Act in the minutes of Governors' meetings, staff meetings and Senior Leadership Team meetings, and in the minutes of the School Council.
- Before introducing important new policies or measures that may have an impact on equality, we carefully assess their potential, positive or negative
- Existing policies are regularly reviewed and updated in the light of the ongoing duty under the Equality Act
- Senior members of staff, have special responsibilities for equalities matters.
- A member of the Governing Body has a watching brief for equalities matters ( J Watson).
- The Equality Duty is considered within the options process as well as aspects of the curriculum design and on-going strategic development plans to support it
- There is good equal opportunities practice, incorporating national guidance, in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.
- Other policies, including our pay policy, uphold good equalities practice.
- The Equality Duty is regularly referenced in staff meetings, to ensure consistency, with the next update planned for Spring 2019
- There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents.
- Within the curriculum there is focus on the needs of specific groups of students (for example those who have Special Educational Needs, Travellers, underachieving boys or those who are or have been eligible for the Pupil Premium). There is extra or special provision for certain groups, as appropriate
- There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding.
- There are activities across the curriculum that promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- In curriculum materials in all subjects there are positive images to support the promotion of equality.
- There are procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations. There is regard in these for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act
- There are procedures – notably the School Council, which meets regularly - for finding out how students think and feel about the school. There is regard in these for the concerns of the Equality Act.

Further details on the above are available via the Stanchester office. Please be aware that some details are not publicly available since it is not good practice to distribute information which, due to small numbers, could allow individuals to be identified.

---

## **2 - Equality Objectives**

Stanchester's equality objectives from April 2012 (interim reviewed October 2015 and January 2017) are detailed below. They will be reviewed annually by the Principal and Governing Body and adjusted if necessary. The next full review of objectives will take place in January 2019

1. To raise the academic achievement of boys so that it is at least in line with that of girls.

**Measurable success outcome:** Analysis of academic data shows that the objective was achieved at the last point of review but since this time an attainment gap has again developed and therefore the objective will remain until the gap is consistently and sustainably narrowed.

Progress against objective:

Overall improvements in academic outcomes and focus on relative performance have demonstrated a high degree of success in this respect. For example, the relative performance gap between boys and girls was closed to a very small margin in the 2015 GCSE results but in 2016 and 2017 this gap has widened

2. To reduce the extent to which parents perceive there is bullying in the school to match the progress that has been made in the significant reduction of bullying logged, including those targeted at more vulnerable students, ethnic or minority groups, or bullying of a homophobic nature.

**Measurable success outcome:** The bullying log shows a significant reduction in repeated offences but that parents often have a different perception of the term bullying and the question remains one which scores a lower level on parent view questionnaires.

Progress against objective:

Records prove that instances are extremely rare and have been very successfully reduced over time by careful intervention and on-going focus through assemblies, behaviour policies and the wider curriculum

The level achieved in 2015-16 has been maintained/ enhanced by the introduction of a new Ethics and Values implementation plan in 2015-2016 and a review of the assembly themes and improved focus of guidance time.

3. To raise the academic outcomes of disadvantaged students so that the gap in progress when compared to the outcomes of other students is reduced over time.

**Measurable success outcome:** Analysis of academic data shows that the progress gap is reducing over time, as measured through the relative performance of students in both English and maths

Progress against objective:

The gap in 2016 widened significantly with an attainment gap in the key measure of over 27%. This reduced to 13% in 2017 but the gap for Progress 8 (now embedded as the

new performance measure) was significant though caused by more than 50% of students not having the subjects to 'count' under progress 8. The options process has been improved significantly and this barrier to achieving a narrow gap has now been removed enabling the school to accurately measure any difference in progress. Data from all year groups identifies disadvantage as a key priority indicator and the awareness of this group of students has increased significantly with the cohort in years 9 and 10 achieving higher progress 8 in year scores than 'other' students.

### **Breaches of the Policy**

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body as required.

**DATE APPROVED: 13 January 2012**

**DATE OF LAST INTERIM REVIEW: January 2018, June 2018**

**FOR FULL REVIEW December 2020**

---

**Appendix A****1. Principles**

The academy is committed to being a workplace where all job applicants and all employees are treated as individuals with dignity and respect and where positive challenge to violation of human rights, harassment, victimisation and discriminatory behaviour is part of daily working practice. The school encourages good communication between all employees in order to understand the underlying reasons for, and thereby avoid, potential conflicts.

**2. Policies**

- 2.1 School policies and procedures provide all job applicants and all employees with equal opportunity without harassment, victimisation and direct or indirect discrimination, because of legally protected characteristics (either by association or perception).
- 2.2 The school will prevent detriment arising from disability and comply with its duty to make reasonable adjustments for the benefit of applicants and employees who have declared a disability.

**3. Work Place Practices**

- 3.1 The school will not condone behaviour at work, near the workplace and at work-related social functions, which discriminates, harasses or victimises job applicants or individual employees because of legally protected characteristics. The legally protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This also applies where:

- an employee is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic even if they do not have that protected characteristic; or
- an employee is treated less favourably because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic even if they themselves do not have that protected characteristic.

**4. Duties and Responsibilities**

- 4.1 All employees have a role to play in treating each other as individuals with respect and dignity at all times, taking responsibility for ensuring their own behaviour and actions comply with and support the Policy.
- 4.2 All employees and Managers must aim to avoid potential conflict by identifying problems at an early stage and attempting to deal with them by, for example, talking to the people involved in a non-confrontational way.

**5. Equalities Learning**

- 5.1 All Managers / Leaders / Governors have responsibility for ensuring that their employees understand this policy through induction, probation and further learning and are helped to put that learning into practice.
- 5.2 All Managers / Leaders / Governors will receive opportunities to learn about their duties and responsibilities through management induction, probation and further learning.

**6. Unwanted Conduct**

- 6.1 Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual constitutes harassment. Any employee who is found to have committed an act of harassment, victimisation or discrimination to the detriment of job applicants, other employees, volunteers, staff of suppliers, service users, or members of the public because of protected characteristics, will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 6.2 An employee who feels they have suffered a detriment as a result of harassment, victimisation or discrimination directed at them because of a protected characteristic, or who has witnessed behaviour directed at others that has led to such a detriment, will be supported in seeking a resolution.
- 6.3 Managers need to seek a resolution promptly and appropriately where they are made aware of behaviour or actions, which the school has designated as unacceptable; and ensure support is provided for all those involved.
- 6.4 The school has adopted a [Dignity at Work Code of Practice](#). The [Grievance Procedure](#) provides a framework for dealing with complaints about bullying and harassment and we have a Behaviour of Visitors Policy that we refer to.

**7. Third Parties**

- 7.1 The school will take such steps as reasonably practicable to prevent harassment by a third party related to a protected characteristic, where the school knows, or ought reasonably to know, that an employee is at real risk of being harassed by a third party. The school will take seriously allegations from staff of deliberate discrimination by volunteers or staff employed by suppliers and will do all within its powers to ensure the allegations are investigated and appropriate action is taken.

**8. Terms and Conditions of Employment**

- 8.1 The school will comply with its legal duty to provide equal pay for work of equal value and provide benefits and facilities equally and proportionately to all employees.
- 8.2 The school will follow flexible employment policies, which recognise the skills and expertise of employees and the need to retain them.



8.3 The impact of employment policies and practices will be assessed to identify potential detriment to those with protected characteristics based on perceptions which are irrelevant, or on assumptions unjustifiable in terms of an individual's ability to do a job.

8.4 Managers / Leaders and Governors will aim to ensure informal working practices do not directly or indirectly disadvantage any employee from accessing career opportunities.

## 9. **Recruitment, Selection and Promotion**

9.1 The school aims to eliminate bias and discrimination in recruitment, selection and promotion practice.

9.2 When vacancies occur, Managers / Leaders / Governors are expected to consider the possibilities of job sharing, part-time working or other flexible working arrangements.

9.3 Employees / Governors who are selecting candidates will undertake relevant and required recruitment and selection training.

9.4 The school will not ask job candidates about their health at an early stage in the recruitment process, unless such questions are necessary for:

- establishing whether a candidate is able to comply with a requirement to undergo an assessment for the job and whether reasonable adjustments are needed in respect of this assessment;
- establishing whether a candidate is able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned;
- monitoring diversity;
- establishing any gaps in employment;
- taking Positive Action;
- establishing whether a candidate has a particular disability which is an occupational requirement.

## 10. **Employee Development**

10.1 Managers / Leaders / Governors are expected to take account of equality policy and practice when appraising employees and offering development opportunities in the workplace

10.2 Managers / Leaders / Governors are expected to ensure opportunities for formal and informal professional development, in-service training and qualifications are open to all and selection is based on open and objective criteria.

## 11. **Positive Action**

11.1 Positive Action may include proactive advertising, job design, support networks, help-lines, mentoring, coaching or training. The school will adopt Positive Action to encourage recruitment and improve access amongst those under-represented at all levels in its workforce if it reasonably thinks that: people who share a protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to the characteristic, or have needs

that are different from the needs of those who do not share that characteristic; or participation in an activity by persons who share a protected characteristic is disproportionately low.

11.2 Proportionate steps may be taken to meet their needs or enable or encourage them to overcome or minimise the disadvantage or participate in the relevant activity.

12. **Breaches of the Policy**

Any employee found to have breached policy will be subject to disciplinary action.