



Equality Statement 2020/21

Document Management

Date Approved:	14 July 2020
Next review date:	July 2021
Approved by:	HR & Remuneration Committee
Responsible for:	Chief Operating Officer

1. Scope

This Equality Statement was adopted by the Board of Directors and applies to all schools and the central team within Swale Academies Trust. This statement sets out Swale Academies Trust (SAT) commitment to Equality, Diversity and Human Rights as well as explaining the key principles, drivers and duties that inform this responsibility. It also explains what SAT will do to make sure that we fulfil these responsibilities. Each school within the Trust will produce an individual set of equality objectives to be approved by their Local Governing Body/Challenge committee.

2. Introduction

We recognise the diverse needs of our community and are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in employment and service delivery. We value diversity and believe it is essential to provide services which work well for all children, parents/carers and staff. We will treat people with dignity and respect and help people to be safe and socially included.

We will challenge discrimination and encourage respect, understanding and dignity for everyone. As a public sector organisation we follow the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010, to protect individuals from discrimination against people on the basis of their protected characteristics. The characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

We are required to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Stop unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equal opportunities
- Foster good relationships - we will foster an equality culture of continuous improvement and innovation in order to have outcomes that make a difference for all our children and staff regardless of their protected characteristics.

3. Implementation of the policy

3.1 Equality:

1. The Trust will aim to provide a working environment in which people feel comfortable and confident that they will be treated with respect and dignity.
2. It is the Trust's policy to treat all workers and job applicants equally and fairly irrespective of their sex, marital status, civil partnership status, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, national origin, culture, religion, age, or disability .
3. Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics. Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
4. Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited.
5. Victimisation is prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint.
6. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity applies to the way in which staff treat visitors, students, parents and former staff members.
7. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this statement, to treat colleagues with dignity at all times and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.
8. The Trust is committed to ensuring that no policy, procedure, provision, rule, requirement, condition or criterion will be imposed on any worker or job applicant without justification if it would be likely to put that person at a disadvantage on any of the above grounds.

3.2 Driving Diversity

1. By accessing, recruiting and developing talent from the widest possible talent pool, we believe that we can build a stronger workforce that demonstrates to our students the importance of equality and diversity.
2. We will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed.
3. Our aim is that the diversity of the communities we serve is reflected at all levels within our workforce.
4. To drive diversity, the Trust will:
 - i. challenge gender stereotypes wherever they occur;
 - ii. support employees in balancing their life at work and at home;
 - iii. support employees who become pregnant and take active steps to facilitate their return to work after maternity leave;
 - iv. take positive steps to support trans-gender individuals and to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect throughout their employment;
 - v. challenge racial stereotypes where they occur;
 - vi. understand, respect and value different racial and cultural backgrounds and perspectives;
 - vii. focus on what people can do, rather than on what they cannot because of their disability;
 - viii. challenge stereotypes about people with disabilities;
 - ix. make appropriate adjustments in the workplace to help people with disabilities achieve their full career potential;
 - x. challenge age stereotyping and recognise the benefits of a mixed-age workforce;
 - xi. treat people fairly in the workplace, irrespective of their religious beliefs and practices or political opinions, by recognising individuals' freedom of belief and right to protection from intolerance and persecution;
 - xii. treat people fairly in the workplace, irrespective of their sexuality, and challenge negative stereotypical views.

4. To ensure our Public Sector Equality duties are met

4.1 Procurement and contracts:

We will use equality analysis when procuring and commissioning to ensure that services meet the needs of those who use the services. We expect all organisations that we commission or have a contract to deliver services with, to have policies and practices that are compatible with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.2 We will continue to be an inclusive employer.

As a Trust, we are committed to creating a dynamic workforce that is diverse and responsive to its customers and communities. Through progressive employment practices we will strive to meet the needs of all our staff, to listen to their views and to respond to what they say.