



# Cheviot

## Learning Trust

<b>Name of Policy</b>	Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion
<b>Responsible Body</b>	Trust
<b>Responsible Person</b>	CFOO
<b>Review Committee</b>	Workforce and Wellbeing Committee
<b>Last review date</b>	Autumn 25
<b>Next review date</b>	Autumn 26

## **Introduction**

This document outlines our commitment to integrate equality and diversity into all that we do. It incorporates the statutory duties that we must meet as a Trust, an employer and service provider.

The policy details our vision to create an environment where all people who are part of our organisation and the community it serves feel comfortable and safe, and where the needs of the community are well understood and provided for.

We believe that this policy will help us to meet our legislative responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity, and will strive to make improvements where these are identified; these are set out in our action [plan](#).

We acknowledge that it is very important for us all to work together in achieving our aim of being fully inclusive and accessible and ultimately in providing a quality learning experience for all our children.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

## **THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY (PSED)**

Cheviot Learning Trust recognises its duties under the PSED and will have due regard to responsibilities under this legislation as reflected in this document.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates existing law into a single legal framework. It updates, simplifies and strengthens the previous legislation and provides a modern, accessible framework of discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

### **The Equality Duty**

As part of the Equality Act 2010, a new general public sector equality duty came into force in April 2011. This duty states that public bodies (which includes schools and academies), must have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The equality duty replaces the race, disability and gender equality duties and covers age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and civil partnership and marriage.

## **Who is protected under the Act**

Academies have obligations under the Act as:-

- Employers
- Bodies which carry out public functions, and
- Service providers

Therefore, Cheviot Learning Trust needs to make provision for the following groups of people:

- Employees
- Prospective pupils (in relation to admissions arrangements)
- Pupils at the school (including those absent or temporarily excluded) or former pupils
- Families and groups who might use the school for community use

## **Protected characteristics**

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against people on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. The relevant characteristics are:-

- Age (i.e. as an employer)
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Civil partnership & marital status

## **Unlawful discrimination is defined in the Act as:-**

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on perception or association): this is treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination: this is a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified.
- Discrimination arising from disability: this means treating someone unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of their disability, where the Trust cannot show that the treatment is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people): a failure to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person, such as adjustments to

premises, working arrangements or a lack of auxiliary aid which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to others.

### **The Equality Act 2010 also protects people from:-**

- Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- Victimisation: this is retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

### **A protected act is:-**

- Making a claim or complaint of discrimination under the Act
- Helping someone else make a claim by giving evidence or information
- Making an allegation that the school or someone else has breached the Act
- Doing anything else in connection with the Act

Staff and pupils must not be victimised because their parent, sibling or friend has carried out a protected act. Schools must also not victimise parents who make complaints.

### **Positive action**

The Act contains provisions which enable schools to take 'positive action', i.e. provide additional benefits to staff or pupils with protected characteristics, to address any disadvantage they may face. Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination, which would be providing preferential treatment for a particular disadvantaged group, which exceeds the positive action conditions.

### **What does this mean for our schools and the Trust?**

Within Cheviot Learning Trust, we are committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity exists for all pupils and staff, particularly in relation to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, and sexuality. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all people feel able to participate fully in school life. The achievement of pupils will be monitored on the basis of disability/special need, gender and race, and we will use this data to raise standards and to ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible to everyone.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the means to fulfil their potential. As an employer and service provider, we seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against all pupils and staff by adhering to our duties, particularly as they apply to age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, and sexuality.

Staff must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, pupils, parents, job applicants, suppliers and visitors. This applies when working in the Trust premises, outside the Trust (when dealing with parents, pupils, the public, suppliers or other work-related contacts), and on Trust-related trips or events including staff social events.

If a staff member is disabled or becomes disabled, we encourage them to tell us about their condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

## **General And Specific Duties**

### **Age**

The duties apply to workers of all ages. It is therefore unlawful to discriminate against young workers as well as older workers.

Duties:

- To avoid all forms of discrimination, direct and indirect, in employment on the basis of age
- To avoid all forms of harassment on the basis of age
- To avoid all forms of victimisation because someone has made or intends to make a complaint relating to age discrimination.

### **Disability**

General Duties:

- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Acts
- To eliminate harassment on the basis of disability
- To promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- To encourage participation in public life by disabled people
- To take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even where this involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

Specific Duties

- To make reasonable adjustments to resources and activities to avoid substantial disadvantage for disabled pupils and staff
- To make improvements to the physical environment to increase access to education and associated services
- To increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils

- To make written information accessible in a range of different ways for disabled staff and pupils, where it is provided for staff and pupils who are not disabled
- To provide auxiliary aids or services, such as equipment or personal support, for pupils with SEN.

## **Gender**

### General Duties:

When carrying out its functions, the Trust and its schools will have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between females and males as well as non binary and gender non conforming people
- In terms of unlawful discrimination and harassment in employment and vocational training, the general duty also applies to people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

### Specific Duties

To support progress in delivering the general duty, we accept specific duties which include the following activities:-

- In formulating our overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Gathering and using information on how the school's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services, in particular education functions
- Listening to feedback from stakeholders (i.e. pupils, parents, employees, other service users or potential service users, including trade unions) and taking account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives
- Assessing the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality
- Implementing actions to address issues identified in its gender equality analysis unless it is unreasonable or impractical to do so
- Reporting any gender equality issues and progress in implementing actions and reviewing the policy at least every three years

## **Race**

Cheviot Learning Trust is opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example Islamophobia, and against Travellers, refugees and asylum-seekers.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## General Duties

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

## Specific Duties

- To make arrangements to fulfil the policy through an action plan
- To monitor the impact of our policy on pupils, staff and parents of different racial groups, particularly the impact on pupil's attainment levels

The school requires the highest standards of behaviour from all its staff and pupils, and will exercise its disciplinary procedures fairly and without prejudice. Racism and racial harassment are not tolerated, and the whole school community, including where possible any visitors, will be made aware of this. Any alleged racial incident will be promptly, fully and sensitively investigated and, where pupils are involved either as perpetrators or victims, their parents will be kept fully informed.

Race will not be a determinant in admission criteria or a factor in transfer procedure. Where an existing procedure is found to be unintentionally discriminatory in practice, an attempt will be made to remove the disadvantage. All reasonable attempts will be made to ensure that the governing body matches the ethnic composition of the area the school serves.

Cheviot Learning Trust believes:

- That all its members should respect each other whatever their religion or racial background
- That racist behaviour and racial discrimination are not to be tolerated
- That knowledge and awareness of a variety of cultures is a useful preparation for life in contemporary society
- That cultural diversity should be celebrated.

## **Religion and Belief**

The regulations relating to religion and belief apply to any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief, but do not include political beliefs.

### Duties

- To avoid all forms of discrimination, direct and indirect, in employment on the basis of religion or belief
- To avoid all forms of discrimination in service provision including arrangements for admissions, teaching and learning and in the content of the curriculum
- To avoid all forms of harassment on the basis of religion or belief
- To avoid all forms of victimisation because someone has made, or intends to make, a complaint relating to religion or belief

## **Sexuality**

The regulations relate to lesbians and gay men, heterosexuals and bisexuals.

Duties

- To avoid all forms of discrimination, direct and indirect, in employment on the basis of sexual orientation
- To avoid all forms of discrimination in service provision including arrangements for admissions, teaching and learning and the content of the curriculum
- To avoid all forms of harassment on the basis of sexual orientation including homophobic or transphobic bullying or harassment and use of language.
- To avoid all forms of victimisation because someone has made, or intends to make, a complaint relating to sexuality.

Instances of homophobic or transphobic language in school should be recorded and addressed with the person responsible. Bullying and safeguarding policies and equality objectives should include addressing gender identity and sexuality.

Sex and relationships education and other aspects of PSHE, will include age-appropriate advice and guidance on LGBT issues. Support will be offered to LGBT families (including carers) through the Child & Family Liaison Officers or other staff.

## **Promoting British Values**

Pupils will be encouraged to respect specified fundamental British values. Cheviot Learning Trust will not promote extremist views, or partisan political views, through their curriculum and/or teaching, and will offer pupils a balanced presentation of views when political issues are brought to their attention.

## **Responsibility for ensuring that the school does not breach the Equality Act**

The Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Equality Act is not breached. It must take all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation from taking place.

## **Equality Objectives**

The leadership teams within Cheviot Learning Trust will work together to create a culture of fairness and inclusion across the trust through the actions below.

- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to access the curriculum with a high standard of learning experience to actively close gaps in attainment and achievement, especially students eligible for Pupil Premium, students with

- special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from minority ethnic groups
- To educate all pupils whatever their belief of race or religion and prepare them for life in a diverse society and to treat everyone with respect
- To develop the natural curiosity that children exhibit about themselves and their world and use their curiosity to foster positive attitudes to diversity
- To increase staff and pupils' knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity issues.
- To promote mental health awareness with staff and develop appropriate interventions where necessary
- Continue to improve accessibility across the school sites for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas

The Trustees of Cheviot Learning Trust will:-

- Adopt and review policies periodically
- Receive reports on the effectiveness of policy implementation and feedback from stakeholders
- Monitor changes in legislation to ensure that the policies and procedures in place remain fit for purpose
- Hold the CEO and senior leaders to account for academies' compliance with equalities legislation
- Strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for staff, parents, carers and pupils
- Ensure that the admissions process is fair and equitable, whatever a child's socioeconomic background, race, gender or disability
- Ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:-

- Ensuring the school complies with all relevant equality legislation
- Ensuring that the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy and its procedures are followed
- Hold the Headteacher to account for how the school meets its statutory duty to prevent all forms of prejudice-based bullying, including race, disability, homophobia/transphobia etc
- Review the school's procedures for dealing with hate incidents and how incidents are followed up
- Demonstrating commitment to ensuring that the school is fully inclusive to staff, pupils and other users, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability and sexuality
- Ensuring that no child, employee or other user is discriminated against whilst in the school.

Each Headteacher is responsible for:-

- Making sure that the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy and its procedures are followed
- Making sure that the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy clearly outlines how it will deal with issues faced by the identified 'protected groups'
- Producing regular information for all staff and governors about the policy and how it is working
- Making sure that all staff understand their responsibilities under the policy and arranging any training and support needed
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including racist bullying, and bullying related to gender (including homophobic/transphobic) or disability.
- Promoting the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promoting respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

All staff are responsible for:-

- Dealing with racist, homophobic/transphobic and other hate incidents
- Being able to recognise 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 laws on discrimination
- Taking up training and learning opportunities.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for dealing with bullying, hate-incidents or discrimination at an individual school level.

The CEO has overall responsibility for ensuring that all settings are compliant with Trust policies and will hold Headteachers to account for how equalities issues are dealt with at individual school level.

The CEO and Headteachers and other staff are responsible for ensuring that visitors and contractors are aware of and adhere to the Trust's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

## **Monitoring and Reporting**

It is important to monitor the impact of the actions taken to ensure that progress is being made towards meeting our obligations in relation to the various equality duties, and to ensure that no adverse impact is occurring as a result of the actions.

Reports will be produced from time to time which outline progress.

## **Breaches of this policy**

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy by staff, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in summary dismissal.

No-one should be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, where a staff member has made a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith, this will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

#### **Document Record**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Reason for Amendments/Update/Review</b>
1.0	