

THE HEATH ACADEMY TRUST

Public Sector Equality Duty

inspire transform together



Category:	Personnel
Authorised	Autumn 2022 By school leaders
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Heath Academy Trust

Public Sector Equality Duty

Public bodies, including schools, have a duty, under the 2010 Equality Act, to ensure that they promote equality within their organisation and this statement sets out how we try to achieve this at the Heath Academy Trust schools. We fundamentally believe that it is the right of every person to be treated with equal dignity and respect which is integral to our school ethos and underpins all that we do.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it explicit that we have a responsibility to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- 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

A protected characteristic could be one of a multitude of factors that are shared by particular groups of people, but will include characteristics such as sex, age, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. Central to a commitment to fulfil our responsibility is a recognition that all groups with protected characteristics fall within the human race as a whole and therefore have equal status and equal rights in light of this. As a result, we believe that success can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. As far as we possibly can, we ensure that we have a prejudice-free environment where no one will discriminate against, harass or victimise any member of our community or the wider human race for any reason linked to their individual characteristics, circumstances or beliefs.

Our trustees and LSCs, in their work to uphold their responsibility will:

- Ensure that equality information and objectives are explicit in our policies and procedures and that these are communicated clearly with all members of the school community and beyond
- Monitor, review and evaluate the effect and impact of these regularly and often (at a minimum, every four years)

- Seek ways to address physical or environmental barriers that get in the way of equality and inclusion
- Work closely with the headteacher delegating responsibility to her for the day to day implementation of policies and procedures and for monitoring their effectiveness

Our headteachers will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of equality amongst staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum in promoting equality and tackling inequality in order to encourage and develop learners who are understanding, accepting, tolerant, respectful and inclusive of others
- Ensure good support systems, including staffing, are in place for cohorts, groups or individuals in order to ensure that everyone has the potential to achieve highly
- Put in place and monitor support mechanisms to tackle inequalities that may impact on the education and life chances of our pupils for whole cohorts, groups and individuals

Our classroom staff will:

- Teach a balanced and fair curriculum that challenges knowledge and promotes understanding
- Support every individual to achieve highly and progress well from their individual starting points
- Promote a culture of mutual trust and support where everyone feels valued, comfortable and listened to in all aspects of school life, including when sharing concerns or worries, no matter how small
- Work effectively with a range of people who support our children, such as parents, medical colleagues and education support staff, to maximise potential and to overcome barriers to progress

Our whole staff group will:

- Promote equality and inclusivity
- Lead by example

Our pupils will:

- Be encouraged, taught and supported to understand one another and to accept respect and celebrate individual difference
- Be encouraged and supported to include everyone
- Be reminded of what to do if someone is unkind to another person in order to effectively support one another

Heath Academy Trust ensures inclusion and equal opportunity is important, indeed central to our work with every individual. Evidence of our impact can be seen in our monitoring and assessment outcomes, including statutory assessment outcomes at the end of Key Stages, Ofsted reports, local authority visits outcomes and pupil, staff and parent questionnaires.

Examples of our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty can be seen in, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Policies that deal with equality issues e.g., Accessibility Plan, Equality Policy; SEND policy, Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, curriculum documents
- Promotion of understanding, respect, individual liberty and tolerance in assemblies, religious education lessons and through our curriculum
- Strong and consistent Code of Conduct
- Equal access to the curriculum including through the use of online teaching if needed
- Monitoring and evaluating the attainment and progress of cohorts, groups and individuals and support mechanisms and strategies to address underperformance or vulnerability
- Effective working with outside agencies such as counselling services, medical professionals and education support services
- Equal access to wider school activities such as clubs, visits and residential trips
- Charitable support and fundraising

For 2022-23 our overriding aim is to address any inequalities that have become apparent for cohorts, groups or individuals as a result of the pandemic and periods of school closure or absence.