



DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Version	Date	Comments	Author
19.1	April 2018		Ros Farrell

Educate Together Academy Trust Equality Policy

Purpose:

Educate Together Academy Trust is committed to creating an environment free from any form of discrimination and harassment. We believe that our Equal Opportunities Policy helps us to strengthen our reputation as a good school. The Academy believes that everyone has the right to seek, obtain and hold employment without discrimination or harassment. No employee (or potential employee), pupil or visitor shall receive less favourable treatment or be disadvantaged due to their social class or wealth, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, trade union activities, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability or age. The Academy will not tolerate offensive remarks or jokes or the publication/duplication of material or images which may cause offence. All employees must ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is followed and that they themselves do not discriminate in any way against all including pupils, parents, families, carers, visitors, fellow employees or job applicants.

Educate Together:

As an Educate Together Academy we recognise that all people have the same rights regardless of social class, wealth, gender, marital status, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation etc.

Scope:

- This policy applies to all employees, full and part-time, permanent and temporary and all potential employees
- The Policy applies equally to our treatment of visitors, supply staff, volunteers and contractors and the treatment of our pupils and staff by these third parties
- All staff are required to comply with the principles set out in this policy and to ensure their effective implementation
- The Academy will monitor and review this policy to ensure that it is effective

Legal Background:

There are two main bodies which enforce equality legislation:-

- The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)
- The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)

The key Act that provides the framework for equal opportunities is the Equality Act 2010.

These Acts are also included:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 contains the definition of a “spent” conviction. A sentence of more than 2.5 years can never become spent and should always be declared. The law states that certain posts are closed to ex-offenders; this includes roles involving access to children.

Forms of Discrimination:

Discrimination can occur against existing and potential employees as well as visitors to the academy.

Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person on the grounds of sex, race, age etc. For example, a man is not given a job, despite having the appropriate qualifications and experience, because he is black or refusing to employ a woman because she was pregnant.

Indirect Discrimination

This occurs when a condition or requirement, which cannot be shown to be justifiable, is applied to all groups, but which has a disproportionate effect on certain groups who cannot comply with that condition. For example, a rule about clothing (where such a rule cannot be justified) could impact disproportionately on another group(s) i.e. not allowing women to wear trousers to work, which specifically affects Asian women.

Victimisation

Discrimination also includes victimisation. This is when a person is treated less favourably than others because it is known that they are taking action to assert legal rights against discrimination or assisting a colleague in that regard e.g. a woman makes a complaint under the Sex Discrimination Act and experiences harassment and/or bullying as a result.

Discrimination can occur:-

- when deciding which staff have access to promotion, training facilities, allowances or services

- between colleagues and harassment can often take place leading to behaviour which is unwanted and offensive
- by abusing procedures, e.g. Disciplinary Procedure and inconsistently applying it

Circumstances When Discrimination Can Legally Take Place:

In Recruitment, the following principal areas are lawful:

- Special provisions e.g. ministers of religion, prison officers, armed forces
- When there is a genuine occupational need e.g. for reasons of decency and privacy
- Welfare provision and single sex establishments

Training Courses and events can be run for specific groups because it can be shown that that group is currently under-represented at certain areas and levels within the workforce. This is called positive action and should not be confused with positive discrimination, which is illegal.

Promotion of Equal Opportunities

The Academy will pursue the promotion of Equal Opportunities through the application of employment policies that value diversity and ensure that its employees and potential employees receive treatment that is fair and equitable.

The areas that specifically address this are:

Recruitment

Recruitment procedures will be designed to encourage applications from suitable individuals and ensure that the selection process is based on the skills, ability and experience of the applicant to perform the role. To remove any potential for discrimination from the recruitment and selection process through the use of good practices.

- All literature should describe jobs without any form of bias with all applications being processed in the same way, regardless of sex or marital status, ethnic or cultural
- Questions will be based on pre-determined and job related objective criteria and competencies that will be made available to applicants. Questions at interview cannot legally be directed at childcare or family provision unless all candidates

are asked this in line with a specific requirement of the job. All questions must be directly suited to the purpose of the interview

- There should always be at least two people interviewing
- Interviewers should be aware of possible misunderstandings that can occur between persons of different cultural backgrounds and decisions should not be based on generalised assumptions or prejudices. Selection criteria must be related to job requirements.
- Individuals should not be rejected if they have completed an application form with assistance, unless the job requirement is that of a specific level in the standard of English. If there is any doubt about qualifications gained overseas, the HR Officer should be consulted.
- It is important that Equal Opportunities extend beyond initial appointment into induction and covers continuing career progression.
- Special arrangements might be needed at interview to meet the needs of disabled applicants. An invitation to interview should ask if anything is required e.g. ensuring that the place of interview is accessible.

Training and Development

The Academy will encourage training and development of all its employees and any consideration given to career development or training should be based upon the individual's capabilities, performance and potential.

Assisting Employees who become Disabled:

If an employee becomes disabled during their service with the Academy as a result of an accident or illness they are encouraged to discuss this with the Academy. This is to enable us to support them as much as possible. Every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of the individual and reasonable adjustments made in line with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Complaints of Discrimination:

Formal complaints of discrimination should be raised through the Academy's grievance procedure.

Any failure to comply with this policy will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedures

Flexibility in Working Arrangements:

The Academy recognises that the flexible working arrangements which are facilitated by job sharing, part-time working etc. can be as advantageous to men as they are to women. Additional information and details of local procedures etc. are included in this Handbook.

Redundancy/Redeployment:

Selection criteria for redundancy and the operation of the redeployment procedures will be free from discrimination.