



## Equality Policy

Reviewed by Trustees: December 2019

Next Full Review Due: December 2022

Reviewer: Emily Beach, SCITT Director

South Pennine Academies actively promotes equality in an inclusive culture. As a Partnership it is our intention to provide education for all students, which acknowledges that the society within which we live is enriched by diversity. We will strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the Trust reflects the diversity of **ALL** members of the Partnership's communities, where everyone is equally valued and where we all treat one another with respect and fairness. Students are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

As a Trust we will not tolerate harassment of any kind. We expect all involved in the Trust to be committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion and belief.

The Trust aims to prepare all students for a future world and adult life in a multi-racial, interdependent world. We will seek to ensure that we:

- promote equality of all groups, for example assessing the impact of our policies on different groups;
- promote community cohesion by encouraging the development of mutual respect and good relationships between persons of different racial groups and genders;
- challenge and seek to eradicate discrimination on any grounds, including ethnicity, age, gender or gender identity, disability, religion or religious affiliation. This will include, for example, acting quickly to deal with all bullying, including that which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, such as racist bullying;
- give a high profile to rights and responsibilities by promoting human rights, justice and fairness throughout the curriculum and wider academy community
- develop a strategy that includes all equality strands and links targets and actions with our Academy Development Plans;
- ensure that all students have a right to equality of access to what is best in educational provision;
- ensure that there is no restricted access given to some students because of stereotyped views of ability

South Pennine Academies welcomes its duties under the Equality Act (2010).

The Equality Act establishes 9 protected characteristics which apply to academies:

- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Age

## **Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)**

This policy sets out how South Pennine Academies has paid due regard to the need:

- **to eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- **to advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- **to foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

### **Specific Duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty**

- To publish information which demonstrates our compliance with the need to have due regard for the three aims of the General Duty
- To prepare and publish specific and measurable objectives which we will pursue over the coming years to achieve the three aims

This policy sets out the steps the Trust will take that will result in improved outcomes for all members of the academies communities in all aspects of academy life, taking positive action to promote equality.

### **Definition of 'due regard' and how we aim to comply with the principles of the general duty**

1. While making a decision that might affect an equality group, the decision-maker must have regard to the three aims of the Act at the time. This cannot be done in retrospect, nor can it be delegated
2. The duty will be exercised with rigour and with attention to relevant evidence, including that derived from consultation with staff and the wider community
3. The duty is continuing, so we will revisit it and bear it in mind constantly
4. We will keep records to show that the equality duties have been considered on each occasion

### **Trust Ethos, Vision and Values**

The role of South Pennine Academies is to achieve excellence for each individual in learning and personal development. In order to realise this, our primary aim is to provide a safe, exciting and active environment for learning that:

- encourages the development of self awareness and confidence whilst at the same time promoting sensitivity, support, appreciation and respect for others;
- provides the learning opportunities that lead to continuous improvement in achievement;
- recognises and rewards all achievement;
- allows all students to share positive experiences, to feel valued and to enjoy their life in our Academies;
- assists individuals to develop the skills and knowledge needed for their current and future roles within society;
- encourages parental and community involvement in all aspects of the life of our Academies..

At South Pennine Academies we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff, parents and carers, with a particular focus on those who share a protected characteristic. We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We aim to include a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the Trust feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in academy life.

## **What we already do**

In order to comply with the public duty we have the following procedures in place to ensure that we consider the needs of all of our students and employees in everything we do.

### **1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act**

- Principals have responsibility for monitoring policies and practices associated with equal opportunities and community cohesion and the collection of information on the outcomes of policy with regard to different groups of students and their achievements.
- The Trust HR manager has responsibility for monitoring policies and practices associated with disability and equal opportunities with regard to recruitment, retention and development of disabled employees.
- Any discrimination will be dealt with under existing Trust discipline procedures.
- The Trust deals with admissions in a non selective way, taking in mixed, multi ethnic students of all abilities and serving the local community first.

### **2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it**

- Students throughout the Trust have a right to expect a variety of teaching and learning styles designed to develop independent learning and the acquisition of a body of knowledge, skills and attitudes which will prepare them for their next stage. Teachers recognise the importance of a range of learning activities and good classroom organisation in promoting achievement by all students.
- Achievement: Teaching and learning styles can have a differential impact on student achievement. The Trust holds data on standards and progress achieved by all students and analyses this to monitor the performance of those with particular characteristics, where these are known. The relevant characteristics include: gender; ethnicity; first language; special educational need and eligibility for free school meals. External data, for example that made available by DfE, the local authority and Ofsted, also shows attainment and progress measures categorised by different characteristics.
- Students with identified special educational needs are catered for within the classroom environment by differentiation and support
- Students taking public examinations have fair access to assessment by allowing candidates suitable access arrangements which allow learners to show what they know without changing the demands of the assessment.
- Social activities are flexible enough to allow all students to participate.

### **3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it**

- Teachers and Teaching Assistants should encourage positive interaction between students by seating students in mixed race/gender groups where appropriate e.g. collaborative learning activities
- It is the responsibility of all staff to respond to the moral, spiritual, cultural, and social needs of each student. Through assemblies, Religious Education and other lessons specifically, but also in other areas of the curriculum, the Trust seeks to promote a positive attitude towards differing cultures, religions and lifestyles. Prayers and stories from a variety of religions are used and places of worship are visited during lesson time..

## **Our Current Objectives**

### **Objective 1 - Equity and excellence**

The Trust will:

- Monitor and evaluate attainment and progress of all students and with specific reference to groups with different characteristics. These will include ethnicity, gender, first language, special educational needs, and Free School Meals eligibility. An annual report will be produced for the governors/Trustees.

### **Objective 2 - Participation and engagement**

The Trust will:

- Monitor participation in extra-curricular activities and report to governors.
- Consider ways to increase participation if any group is under represented as identified by monitoring.
- Monitor attendance patterns and report to governors.

### **Objective 3 - Policies**

The Trust will:

- Conduct equality impact assessments for any new or substantially amended policies.

### **Objective 4 – Human Resources**

The Trust will:

- Ensure all vacancies are filled using the principles of equal opportunities and safer recruitment, including at least one member of each panel with relevant training.
- Monitor applications and appointments, and produce an annual summary for Trustees.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

In order to ensure that our current provision and procedures comply with the requirements of the Equality Act we will carry out regular reviews of all aspects of academy life with regard to the protected characteristics by means of an Equality Impact Assessment.

All academy leaders and managers will be trained in carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment of their area of responsibility for activities both within and beyond the academy day (see appendix 1).

Any gaps in provision and practice that are identified form part of an action plan (see appendix 2).

Our future intention is to use an Equality Impact Assessment when we intend the following actions:

- to introduce new provision or practice
- to change or reduce provision or practice
- to remove provision or practice.

## **Consultation**

South Pennine Academies recognises the importance of taking account of people's differing experiences, needs and histories, and of the differing challenges and barriers which they may face. Bearing in mind the protected characteristics, consultation with those we have identified as likely to be affected forms part of every Equality Impact Assessment. We will consult with students' parents/carers, staff, employee representatives, governors and other academy users when appropriate. We will consult in the following ways:

- We will meet students to discuss their needs and progress
- We will ask for input from staff, parents/carers, the community and governors when introducing new policies, procedures and ways of working.

## **How we measure the impact of any changes**

We will monitor the ongoing impact of these changes on those who may be affected in the following ways:

- Tracking of student achievement across the Trust with an additional focus on equality groups
- Staff surveys and consultation that demonstrates emotional health and wellbeing, engagement and involvement

## **Publication and Review**

The specific duties under this Act require us to be open and transparent about all our decision-making processes, intentions and results.

We will record the results of our equality impact assessments and action taken. We will review and publish this information and its impact on our students and staff through:

- An annual report to the Governing Body
- An annual report on the Trust website



**Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Date</b>	
<b>Lead member of staff</b>	
<b>Other involved staff/role</b>	

**Proposed Plan**

Background/ how this proposal has come about

Reason for proposal – to introduce new practice/provision  
to change or reduce practice/provision  
to remove practice/provision

Main stakeholders

Any legislation or guidance that informs the proposals

**Is the proposal likely to have an adverse impact on compliance with the Equality Duty?**

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation **Y/N**

Promoting equality of opportunity **Y/N**

Fostering good relations **Y/N**

Please explain

**Consultation Process**

With whom do you plan to consult?

How?

Where is the evidence of the consultation?

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**Potential Issues**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Impact of proposal (specify if impact is to student, parent/carer, staff, governor, other)</b>	<b>Positive Negative Neutral</b>	<b>Can barrier be removed? Y/N</b>
Disability			
Race			
Sex			
Gender reassignment			
Pregnancy, maternity			
Religion/belief			
Sexual orientation			
Marriage, civil partnership			
Age			

Explain in more detail

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**Action Plan following Equality Impact Assessment**

Objective	Actions	Time scale	Person/s Responsible	Resources	Measurable Outcome