

## **1. Statement of Intent**

- 1.1 Weaver Trust positively supports diversity and inclusion and aims to meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
  - 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.
- 1.2 Whilst the Trust will always uphold equality and diversity, safeguarding children will always take precedence.
- 1.3 Weaver Trust has due regard for advancing equality and knows that this can be achieved by:
- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
  - taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
  - encouraging people from protected groups to participate where their participation is disproportionately low.

## **2. Legislative framework**

- 2.1 This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:
- Equality Act 2010
  - The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
  - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014
  - Education and Inspections Act 2006
- 2.2 Weaver Trust fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. A protected characteristic, under the Act, is as follows:
- Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief
  - Sex

- Sexual orientation

2.3 The Act makes it unlawful for the Trust to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for pupils.
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.

### **3. Principles and Aims**

- 3.1 We see all our community including: pupils and potential pupils, and their parents and carers, staff and potential staff and trustees as of equal value.
- 3.2 Our policies, procedures and activities do not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantages which people may face in relation to their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.
- 3.3 Weaver Trust will positively promote race equality and have due regard to eliminating any potential unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different racial groups.
- 3.4 Weaver Trust will positively promote disability equality throughout the Trust, ensuring the equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination, eliminating disability related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- 3.5 Weaver Trust will positively promote gender equality by eliminating any discrimination and harassment, and will positively promote the equality of opportunity between men and women, girls and boys.
- 3.6 Transgender people are explicitly covered by the gender equality duty. For the purposes of this policy, the term ‘transgender’ refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Weaver Trust will respect the confidentiality of those with gender re-assignment and will provide a supportive environment within the social community.
- 3.7 Weaver Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fare less well in the education system.
- 3.8 Weaver Trust will ensure that all staff are fully aware of their obligations to comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- 3.19 Weaver Trust’s Admissions Policy will not discriminate in any way.
- 3.10 The Trust will:
- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given necessary training and support, and report any concerns to the Trust Board.
  - Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised and any issues escalated accordingly.
  - Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
  - Observe and utilise good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and will

ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees.

- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone.
- Ensure staff actively promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the Trust, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to potential incidents of discrimination and harassment, and showing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equalities.

#### **4. Objectives**

4.1 Whilst continuously aiming to improve the implementation of equality related policies and procedures, Weaver Trust has established the requirement for all schools to create, set and monitor equality objectives within their strategic school development plans that foster greater equality amongst its pupils and staff, including the following:

- Monitor, assess and track all pupils, identifying underachievement and implementing appropriate strategies.
- Implement effective strategies to support pupils in all vulnerable or other defined groups.
- Improve the quality of support for pupils in all vulnerable or other defined groups.
- Ensure all pupils are able to access a full range of extra-curricular activities.
- Continually review the Trust’s Behaviour policy and how it is used to ensure it creates the correct environment to best protect and support pupils in all vulnerable groups in the Trust so that pupils respect one another, feel safe, valued and all are aware that any behaviour away from the expected is challenged.
- Promote equality amongst all of its staff. Individual schools within the Trust will set and measure other specific objectives and targets as appropriate within the SSDPs.

#### **5. Promoting Equality Priorities**

5.1 In order to meet our objectives, the Trust has identified the following priorities:

- We will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children’s educational needs as a reasonable adjustment so they can integrate wholly in all parts of Trust life.
- Staff will ensure that all pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities and residential visits, and the Trust will monitor uptake of these visits to ensure no one is disadvantaged on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- We will ensure that all forms of prejudice-based incidents and bullying are taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.
- There will be differential schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all pupils.
- There is a clearly defined behaviour policy, which will be consistently enforced.
- The Trust will take appropriate steps to meet each pupils’ needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, enabling our pupils to take as full a part as possible in the activities of the Trust.
- The Trust will improve the delivery of written information to disabled children and young people.

- The Trust will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local Trusts.
- The Trust will consult with stakeholders, i.e. pupils, parents/carers, staff and relevant community groups, to establish equality objectives and draw up a plan based on information collected on protected groups and accessibility planning. These equality objectives will be reviewed and reported on annually to the Board.
- Bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with promptly and accordingly. Regular training will be given to both existing and new staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up any incident of what may be regarded as prejudice-related bullying.

## **6. Gender Reassignment**

- 6.1 The Act ensures legal protection against discrimination (direct or indirect) for everyone under the nine protected characteristics mentioned previously, including gender reassignment.
- 6.2 A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if that person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of gender.
- 6.3 All members of staff and pupils have a right to privacy, which includes the right to keep one's transgender status confidential. Trust staff will not disclose information that may reveal a child or other staff member's transgender status.
- 6.4 The Trust will appoint a staff member in whom any transgender child can confide and who can deal with any issues that may arise, for instance bullying or harassment.
- 6.5 A glossary of terminology related to the transgender field can be found on the Gender Identity Research and Education Society Website.

## **7. Uniform/Dress Policy**

- 7.1 The Act does not deal specifically with Trust uniform or other aspects of appearance, such as hair colour and style, the wearing of jewellery and make-up, but the general requirement not to discriminate in the treatment of pupils applies here in relation to other aspects of the Trust policy.
- 7.2 Weaver Trust will ensure that blanket uniform policies do not discriminate because of race, gender, disability, religion/belief or sexual orientation.
- 7.3 We will be sensitive to the needs of different cultures, races and religions and act reasonably in accommodating these needs, without compromising important Trust policies, such as Trust safety or discipline.

## **8. Curriculum**

- 8.1 All pupils will be entitled to access to a curriculum and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their specific needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need. When planning the curriculum, the Trust will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. The Trust will develop an appropriate 2 – 11 curriculum for all pupils in all vulnerable groups.

## **9. Background Information**

- 9.1 This policy has been reviewed by the Trustees, staff, governors and our School Council. This policy is to be read in conjunction with all other school and Trust policies as it is an integral part of our operational framework.

## **10. Review**

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed every year in line with our Policy Review Cycle.

10.2 The policy will be monitored and evaluated by the CEO, Headteachers and the Board of Trustees in the following ways:

- Individual attainment data
- Equal opportunities recruitment data
- Equality impact assessments
- Ofsted inspection judgements on equality and diversity
- Incident records related to harassment and bullying

Approved by:

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**Chair of Trust**

**CEO**

Date:

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## **APPENDIX 1 - Equality Procedure**

### **1) Roles and Responsibilities:**

#### **The Trustee Board will:**

- Ensure that Weaver Trust complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish equality objectives.
- Ensure that the Trust’s policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity data is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Ensure that the Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the Trustee Board.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

#### **The CEO will:**

- Establish the very highest of expectations with regards to treating all community members fairly and equitably
- Ensure that this policy and procedure is implemented consistently
- Ensure that Headteachers are holding staff to account, in any case of discriminatory practice
- Report findings to the Trust Board, documenting action taken to deal with discriminatory practice.

#### **Headteachers will:**

- Implement the policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their HR induction and continuous professional development.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.

#### **Employees will:**

- Be mindful of any incidence of harassment or bullying in the Trust.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying in the Trust and report any major breaches of the policy to the headteacher.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the Trust’s culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor pupils’ progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

**Pupils will:**

- Not discriminate or harass any other student or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the Trust by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the Safeguarding Officer or to another member of the Trust staff.
- Abide by all the Trust’s equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

**Addressing prejudice related incidents**

Weaver Trust is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that pupils and staff who experience any form of prejudice related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. The Trust will ensure that pupils and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents from occurring. If incidents still occur, the Trust will address them immediately via the Complaints Policy and report them to the Trustee Board.

**Appeal process**

Staff members retain the right to appeal against a decision on the acceptability of their appearance using Weaver Trust’s Grievance Procedure.

Any changes made to these procedures will be communicated to all members of staff.

**APPENDIX 2 – Definitions**

**Direct discrimination** occurs when someone is treated less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic. It also occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic of someone that they are associated with such as a family member, friend or carer. This is referred to within the legislation is discrimination by association. Direct discrimination by perception, means that an individual is assumed to have a protected characteristic, regardless of whether this perception is correct or not. For example, someone may be perceived as being a particular religion or age.

Indirect discrimination is often more difficult to identify than direct discrimination and sometimes it is not intended and comes about due to lack of understanding of the law or a genuine error of judgment about an individual.

**Indirect discrimination** involves a ‘provision, criterion or practice’ that involves all four of the following factors: It has, or will have, the effect of putting those who share the protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared to others who do not share the characteristic within the group. It puts or would put an individual at a disadvantage. The discrimination cannot be justified.

**Victimisation** takes place where one person treats another less favourably because he or she has asserted their

legal rights in line with the Act or helped someone else to do so.

**Harassment** is unwanted behaviour which you find offensive or which makes you feel intimidated or humiliated. It can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination.

Trust Objectives:	Findings: 2022 - 2023	Actions: 2023 - 2024
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.	Across the Trust there were x prejudice-based incidents and x bullying incidents.	To develop a strategic approach to visitors in school to celebrate diversity.
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	Schools across the Trust have ensured equality of access to sport for those with disabilities and those of different genders.	To include questions about protected characteristics, when undertaking pupil voice. To review the impact of the restorative justice approach.
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	Behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place in Weaver Trust schools. Adults agree to the school’s Code of Conduct and lead by example.	To undertake an annual review of the impact of the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.