Title	Learner Equality & Diversity Policy
Year	2026/2027
Author	Brown Jacobson LLP
Staff Link	Rishna Shah, Assistant Principal
Trust Link	Chair of Trustees
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1 Introduction

1.1 Wootton Park Academy Trust ("the Trust") is committed to equality, valuing diversity and actively supporting practices that promote genuine equality of opportunity for all learners.

1.2 The Trust is committed to promoting a positive and diverse culture in which all learners are valued and supported to fulfil their potential irrespective of any protected characteristic

1.3 The Trust recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to promoting the equality and diversity of all those we work with especially our employees, learners and visitors. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will make every effort to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and its subsequent provisions.

1.4 The following groups have been identified as key recipients in terms of the implementation of this policy:

- Looked After Children or Children in Need
- SEND
- Children at risk of exclusion
- Children from an ethnic group, including those from Gypsy, Roma, Traveller background
- Children missing in education
- Children with medical conditions affecting attendance at school
- Are school age / teenage parents
- Are young carers
- Children within, or at risk of joining, the criminal justice system
- Children with mental health issues
- Children in receipt of free school meals
- Children living in areas of deprivation
- Gifted and talented
- Are gender questioning or going through transition
- Children who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual

This policy and all associated procedures apply to all staff (including volunteers and students on placement), young people and visitors and should be read in conjunction with the relevant associated school polices for example: SEND, admissions, behaviour, uniform, exclusions, complaints, employment and staff policies, accessibility plan (this list is not exhaustive).

1.5 Failure to comply with School policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action. Discriminatory treatment, bullying or harassment of staff or students by visitors will also not be tolerated.

2 Compliance

2.1 This policy has been developed in response to the Equality Act 2010 and replaces previous policies relating to race, gender and disability equality. It has been designed to help the Trust meet the duty to:

2.1.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct.

2.1.2 Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2.1.3 Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, promoting community cohesion (Education and Inspections Act 2006)

2.2 The Equality Act 2010 defines nine protected characteristics, of which the following are potentially applicable to the Trust community (learners, staff and governors) are:

- Age (as an employer but not applicable to learners)
- Disability
- Sex or sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Any combination of those listed above

2.3 Staff and Trustees and local governors will:

- Actively promote equality of opportunity in all areas of school life and across the Trust.
- Ensure that members of the Trust community know their rights, and respect the rights of others.
- Aim to ensure that prejudice or discrimination in all its forms is actively rejected.
- Raise awareness of equity and equality issues for all members of the Trust community, and through our links with the local community.
- Establish strategies to ensure equal access to the curriculum and enable each individual to fulfil his/her potential regardless of ability, gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation

2.4 Equality and diversity principles based on the above aims will be embedded in our daily practices, policies and the processes of decision-making, including:

- Admissions, induction and attendance.
- Students' progress and achievement.
- Students' personal development and wellbeing, particularly in relation to safeguarding.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the wider community.
- Behaviour management.
- Staff recruitment and professional development.
- Curriculum access and participation.
- Teaching styles and strategies.

3 Publication of Information and Equality Objectives

3.1 The Trust acknowledges its legal duties to publish information on compliance with the three strands of the public sector equality duty and, in addition, to publish specific and measureable equality objectives.

3.2 The Trust will work across the School communities to analyse data and existing practices to set out the actions taken in compliance of the equality duty and to inform the setting of relevant equality objectives to support the development of the Trust and its community.

3.3 The information on the equality duty will be updated annually and the objectives every 4 years. Publication of our Equality Action Plan takes place on each School's website.

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all equality and diversity matters at Wootton Park Academy Trust is the CEO.

4.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Treat colleagues, young people and visitors with dignity and respect; and avoid behaving in any manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality and diversity;
- Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities;

- Report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy.

5 Duty to make reasonable adjustments

5.1 The Trust will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments, where there is a need to ensure that a disabled person has the same access to everything as a non-disabled person, as far as is reasonable. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by a disabled individual, as far as is reasonable.

5.2 The duty to make reasonable adjustments covers all aspects of academy life, including the curriculum, classroom organisation andtimetabling, access to facilities, clubs and visits, sports and policies.

5.3 In making reasonable adjustments, the Trust is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled students. Staff will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

5.4 The Trust will monitor the physical features of the academies' premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the Trust will take steps to improve access fordisabled users of the premises. Please see the Accessibility Plan for further information, which can be found on the respective academy's website.

5.5 Parents should notify the Principal in writing if they are aware or suspect thattheir child has a disability and provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information about their child's disability upon request. Providing such information will enable the academy to support the learner as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. Every academy will have due regard to any request made by a parent or student (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

6 Gender Identity

6.1 The Trust is mindful of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 towards students identifying as transgender and non-binary. Some of our academies have gender neutral facilities for all learners who wish to use them. In respect of learners identifying as trans-gender or non-binary, the Trust will be sensitive to their individual needs whilst also recognising the needs and sensitivities of other learners. Learners who have confirmed that they have commenced the process of transitioning, and therefore fall under the protected characteristic of gender-reassignment will be provided with appropriate pastoral care and support.

7 Uniform policy

7.1 Each academy's uniform policy is consistent with this policy. The same uniform policy applies equally to all students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, all academies will consider reasonable requests to alter the uniform, for example for genuine religious requirements and in making reasonable adjustments for disabled children to avoid substantial disadvantage.

7.2 Certain items of religious jewellery, such as the Kara bangle, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by learners when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred to the Principal whose decision will be final, subject to the complaints procedure.

8 Admissions policy

Our admissions criteria are defined under the admissions policy and are applied consistently to every young person, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

9 Religious Beliefs

The Trust respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, learners and parents, and each academy will comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice wherever possible. An example where a request may be refused is if the religious observance takes place during lesson time. Whilst the Academy will explore other ways to accommodate the request, such as amended timetabling, this may not be possible.

10 Curriculum delivery

10.1 The curriculum is crucial to tackling inequalities for learners including gender stereotyping, preventing bullying and raising attainment for certain groups. The principles of equality and diversity are embedded in our academic and social curriculum. Positive and proactive steps will be taken to prevent discrimination against, or victimisation of, any learner in the provision of education or access to any benefit, facility or service including educational trips, work experience and leisure activities.

10.2 The Trust recognises and promotes awareness of the possibility of bias (for example gender or racial), and work to eliminate such bias in both teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum to avoid stereotypes and bias.

10.3 The Trust may take positive action to give learners of a particular racial group, or learners with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the needs of the learners in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

10.4 All learners are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other learners, irrespective of any protected characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the Trust, and learners are encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

11 Exclusion policy

The decision to exclude a child for a fixed period or permanently is a last resort and will be made in accordance with the suspension / exclusion policy. That applies to all learners and any exclusions decision will take into account our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

12 Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination and harassment

All incidents of discriminatory treatment, bullying and harassment must be reported to senior staff and recorded as soon as is reasonably possible (and in any event within 24 hours of the incident). All bullying-related incidents (confirmed or otherwise), will be addressed in accordance with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

13 Complaints and grievances

If an individual believes that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised, they are asked to follow our complaints or grievance procedure (as appropriate).

14 Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review

14.1 The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the 'Equality and Diversity Policy' is the CEO.

14.2 Additional support would also be provided to any parent or significant person, wishing to know more about the policy and procedures outlined above. A copy of this policy document is available for inspection on the premises during office hours and an electronic copy is posted on our website.

14.3 The Equality Policy will be reviewed on a yearly cycle by a representative working party consisting of the following stakeholders:

- Students
- Parents
- Staff
- Governors
- Community representatives

14.4 The effectiveness of this policy will be assessed using a self-evaluation framework and an assessment of progress against targets identified in the action plan together with stakeholder views. Following this evaluation, recommendations will be made for changes to the policy and action planning for the future to continue to improve the culture of equality for all within the Trust.