

North Halifax Grammar School

Equal Opportunities Policy



Approved by:	Principal
Date approved:	May 2017
Next review:	Spring Term 2020
Policy owner:	Personnel Officer

1. Introduction/Equalities Statement

North Halifax Grammar School Academy Trust is committed to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice.

We aim to equip students with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference.

Every member of the North Halifax Grammar School Academy Trust is regarded as of equal worth and importance, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation ("Protected Characteristics").

Every aspect of the Academy Trust's activity has an equal opportunities dimension. This may be expressed explicitly in teaching materials and display, implicitly in classroom practice, or as part of the social interaction amongst and between staff and students.

The school's learning environment influences the developing attitudes of the students within it and can be a powerful vehicle for the promotion of understanding and practice of equal opportunities.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

Links with other policies or legislation

This statement applies to every policy, procedure and guidance document that is produced in relation to students, staff, parents and Governors.

This statement is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010.

Other policies which link to this statement are:

- SEND policy
- Admissions policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Recruitment and Selection policy
- Access plan
- Behaviour policy
- Employee related policies such as Flexible Working, Maternity policies.

As an employer we are committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment.

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination in our support of students and our employment of staff. It applies to all students and staff and to the whole school life, including conduct towards others in school and, for staff, to all aspects of employment with the Academy Trust.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal will monitor, evaluate and review this policy in line with statutory and best practice guidelines.

The Governing Body will nominate a SEND Governor with responsibility for monitoring the quality of the Academy Trust's SEND provision.

The role of the Principal is to ensure that the policy is applied fairly and consistently across the Academy Trust.

The Vice Principal with responsibility for Curriculum will be responsible for ensuring that the Academy Trust offers an inclusive curriculum, which promotes equal opportunity and good relations across all groups of students.

The Vice Principal with responsibility for Behaviour, Safety and Inclusion, will be responsible for ensuring that the Academy Trust has in place a SEND policy and appropriate pastoral procedures to ensure that all of equal opportunity and good relations are promoted across all groups of students.

The Vice Principal with responsibility for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for ensuring that the Academy Trust develops teaching and learning strategies that ensure all staff are able to deliver inclusive learning.

The Personnel Officer is responsible for all employment policies and ensuring the principles of this policy are reflected in all our employment practices. If a grievance is raised by a member of staff their Line Manager will deal with the issue, in the first instance, with support and guidance from the Personnel Office.

The Academy Finance Director will monitor contractor and service provider compliance and deal, in the first instance, with complaints in relation to them.

The SENDCo is responsible for the day to day management and co-ordination of education to students with special, or disability related, needs.

It is recognised that all staff are responsible for ensuring that all pupils, members of the school community and staff are treated with respect and given equal access to all parts of school life. This could involve e.g. ensuring that the curriculum is differentiated suitably; that the individual needs of pupils are identified and respected and that planning of extra-curricular activities are underpinned by the principles of equality.

3. The Law and Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment as well as in other fields such as the provision of goods and services and the provision of education and opportunities to students.

3.1 Sex and Sexual Orientation Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 applies to both males and females and makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of his or her sex, sexual orientation or marital status.

3.2 Racial Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 defines racial discrimination as discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins and makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on any of these grounds.

3.3 Disability Discrimination

Under the Equality Act 2010 disabled people have a right not to be discriminated against in employment or access to goods or services, education or other opportunities. A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

3.4 Age Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination on the basis of a person's age. In some cases, there will be other legal obligations that may stipulate a necessary difference in treatment between different age groups. Where this is the case, such discrimination will be justified in accordance with the law.

3.5 Religion or belief

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion or belief. The religion and beliefs of all members of the North Halifax Grammar School community will be respected. There may be occasions where students are required to study other religions or beliefs contrary to their own in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum. North Halifax Grammar School will respect religion and belief to the extent that it is compatible with other legal requirements.

4. Aims

To ensure that students and staff recognise that discrimination on the basis age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is not acceptable.

To provide an environment in which all students and staff feel safe enough to express and question views.

Ensure the principles and practice of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community: students; staff; parents; governors and visitors.

Equal Opportunities practices should be evident in all aspects of school life – in lessons, extra-curricular activities and in the school's ethos.

To educate, develop and prepare all students in the school for life whatever their age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation colour, origin, culture or ability.

Students and teachers contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

Students are seen as individuals and each student's education and care is to be developed in direct relation to their needs and abilities. This eclectic approach is to be based upon sound knowledge and awareness of an appropriate range of teaching and learning styles, teaching interventions, behavioural methods, medical and diagnostic issues.

5. Practice

Student matters

Admissions – The admissions arrangements for the school are designed to be lawful and fair. They will not discriminate against applicants with any of the protected characteristics discussed above.

Registration – Students and staff names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

Discrimination - All forms of discrimination by any person within the Academy Trust's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist and sexist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

Parents should be aware of the Academy Trust's commitment to equal opportunities. All cases of discrimination or prejudice should be taken seriously and dealt with, as appropriate, according to existing sanction procedures. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination by staff may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our grievance procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

Language - The Academy Trust views linguistic diversity positively. Students and staff must feel that their natural language is valued although the first language within school is English.

Culture, Class and Race – The Academy Trust acknowledges that members of its community come from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony. The Academy Trust recognises the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and are determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and performance so as to have wider choices in life.

We understand the need to be different without being excluded. We are happy for students to wear special forms of dress where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background - sikhs' turbans, Muslim girls' hijabs or headscarves etc.

We value the history, experience and contribution of our multi-cultural community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school. We try to counter negative, patronising and stereotyped views: a prime cause of prejudice is ignorance and misunderstanding. We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form.

Gender - As a school we constantly examine our curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality. We encourage students to be aware of the rigid sex stereotypes presented by, for example, the media. We are committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions. All students have equal access to the curriculum. We try to ensure:

- a) that teachers allocate their time fairly between the sexes,
- b) that all students have opportunities for working with students of both sexes,
- c) that we break down traditional sex stereotypes

Religion - We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith; others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

With regard to the teaching of RS we consider that the role of the teacher is that of educator and not that of evangelist. We do not seek to make pupils religious, but to teach them about religion.

Disability- The Vice Principal with responsibility for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for ensuring that the Academy Trust develops teaching and learning strategies that ensure all staff are able to deliver inclusive learning. The needs of individual students will be catered for and consideration will always be had to ensuring that any disadvantage that may be experienced by disabled students is removed or minimised through reasonable adjustments.

Resources – The Academy Trust's aim is to provide for all students according to their needs, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Resources are to reflect cultural and racial backgrounds of students to support positive self-imagary. We try to ensure that our resources include non-sexist books which value the achievements of women as well as men. Displays will similarly reflect a range of cultures and races. The achievements of those with disabilities will also be acknowledged and celebrated through our resources.

Relationships - Relationships between staff and students should be such that any member of the Academy Trust acting in a manner contrary to the spirit of this policy is made aware of the unacceptable nature of his/her behaviour. This should be done in a supportive manner to encourage change and reinforce the principles of this policy. In extreme circumstances formal procedures may taken in line with the Academy Trust's policies.

Staff

All staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour and lead by example and ensure that those they manage do the same, promoting at all time the aims and objectives with regard to the principles of this policy and equal opportunities.

Recruitment, selection and promotion will be conducted on the basis of merit against objective criteria that avoid discrimination or shall not be based on assumptions of appearance or apparent nationality. Shortlisting will be done by more than one person where possible. The recruitment process shall be conducted so as to treat applicants on the basis of merit and abilities and job applicants will not be asked questions about their health or disability before a job offer is made.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability and sexual orientation, religion or age as part of the recruitment procedure which is given voluntarily and is not relied on in decision making, nor shall it adversely affect the chances of recruitment. Such data is, from time to time, analysed to help us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity issues.

Training needs are identified in appraisals and access will be given based on merit.

If any staff member believes they are disabled, they are encouraged to tell the Academy (Personnel Officer and/or Principal) so that support can be given as appropriate. We monitor the physical features of the Academy premises carefully to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage and where necessary, will take steps to improve access.

6. Awareness of policy

Parents, students and staff should know that the Academy Trust has an Equal Opportunities policy and is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff.

7. Complaints

The Academy Trust will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful or potentially unlawful discrimination.

All complaints about a breach of this policy will be investigated in accordance with the Grievance Procedure, the Anti-Bullying Policy or the Complaints Policy as appropriate.

8. Monitoring and review

The Academy Trust monitors the impact of policies and procedures on different groups (by race, gender and disability) and the effectiveness of such policies are assessed through self-evaluation procedures.

Breaches of the policy by staff and conduct which is not consistent with the practice and principles promoted within it are taken seriously and treated as misconduct. If students are found to be acting contrary to the practices and principles promoted within this policy, action will be taken in accordance with the Academy Trust's behaviour policy.

The Academy Trust also recognises that it has a duty under the Equality Act 2010, to collect and publish equality information as required.