



Equality and Diversity Policy 2019

The Richard Huish Trust

Trust Executive



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1. Introduction

Richard Huish Trust (the Trust) provides governance and oversight to those Academies which are part of the Trust namely: The Taunton Academy, West Buckland Primary, North Curry CofE Primary, Nerrols Primary and Nursery, North Town Primary and Lyngford Park.

This policy applies to each of the Academies listed above.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous policies pertaining to equality: e.g. Racial Equality, Disability & Race Equality Schemes. The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law covering all types of discrimination that are unlawful.

The Trust's vision, ethos and values promotes respect for difference and diversity and the policy applies equally, where applicable, to all adults and children of The Richard Huish Trust.

The Trust will seek to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

The Richard Huish Trust is committed to the development of every pupil within a supportive, secure and safe environment providing equal opportunities for all. The underlying principle of this policy is to eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and instil that prejudice and discrimination is wholly unacceptable at any of the academies within the Trust. This includes prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of disability, gender, race or religion.

Personal comments about an individual's physical characteristics, beliefs, ability, social position or family connections should not be made or tolerated. This includes judgements made about a pupil based on experience of a brother or sister or expectations based on a particular address.

2. Definitions

The Trust recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination in relation to the nine characteristics protected in law:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships

The geographical situation of the academies within the Trust means that many of its pupils grow up in an environment where there are few representatives of ethnic or other minorities. For this reason, the academies should make a positive effort to give them experience of other cultures. This includes visits, for example to a mosque, to cities and abroad. Visitors representing minority groups should also be encouraged to come into the academies. The academies should also encourage people from different racial groups to be involved, for example as members of staff, Trustees or members of the Local Governing Body.

Racial bullying or the use of racist language will always be strongly challenged. The academy's disciplinary procedures will be applied according to the seriousness of the incident.

Economic disadvantage is also covered in this policy, recognising that this has one of the most significant impacts on the achievement of children and young people. Every academy within the Trust is fully inclusive.

We will also respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. In addition to this, we will consult and engage with pupils, parents and the community in developing the policy.

3. Curriculum and Organisation

What is taught and how it is organised must not prevent any pupils from achieving their full potential.

At The Taunton Academy, students are placed in sets in some subjects on the basis of their academic ability in order that they receive appropriate teaching. Any form of denigration of the less able is wholly unacceptable, including references to particular sets. Those who work hard and wish to do well in their academy work should be able to do so without harassment. The Richard Huish Trust has a good record in the equal provision of resources to all students, regardless of their abilities. All staff are encouraged to teach across the full range of ability.

While recognising that there should be opportunities for students to follow subjects they choose and that match their aptitudes and abilities, the arrangement of the curriculum should not limit the choice of particular ability groups.

Each academy within the Trust has a Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy which sets out how those with specific needs will be supported:

- within the classroom, positive discrimination may be needed to ensure that machinery, apparatus and computers are used by all.
- all teaching materials must be selected to avoid bias, overtly or by implication. It may be necessary to draw attention to the achievements of both genders and minority groups.
- comments or behaviour which show prejudice of any type are always challenged; to ignore it is to accept it. Incidents of prejudice will always be recorded.
- the same standards and patterns of behaviour are expected from all pupils in response to the same circumstances.

We also act to ensure that each and every member of the academy community:

- experiences equality of opportunity
- feels a full and respected member of the academy community
- has high expectations of themselves, their peers, staff, and others with regard to fair treatment
- pupils may be encouraged to choose subjects according to their aptitudes and interests, rather than by stereotypical views of male and female careers and lifestyles
- develops an understanding of race, ethnicity and multiculturalism alongside an appreciation of their importance in Britain today
- develops an understanding and appreciation of disability and the contribution of disabled people in the community and UK
- develops an awareness of conscious and unwitting racism alongside the skills and confidence to challenge instances of racist behaviour, language and attitudes
- all pupils have equal access to the facilities of the academy: no work or play areas may be monopolised by any group of pupils
- develops an awareness that disability can be both seen or unseen and that people with learning and other disabilities have the same rights to reasonable and appropriate adjustments as those with more obvious needs

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity
- economic or social disadvantage

The Trust will ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status

4. Equality Objective 2017-2021 Equality Objectives 2021-2025

On 6 July 2021, the RHT Board agreed to adopt the following objectives:

- ▽ To ensure all learners, regardless of their protected characteristics, are equal
- ▽ To eliminate discrimination by recognising and respecting difference
- ▽ To promote positive attitudes and relationships
- ▽ To foster a shared sense of community and belonging
- ▽ To observe good equalities practices in recruitment, retention and development

Academies will provide an annual equality information and objectives statement showing the specific action plans and measurable outcomes for agreed objectives.

5. Monitoring

Academies have a wealth of data. Information from it is used to evaluate policies. Examples of this are monitoring differences between the achievements of boys and girls. The achievements of different ethnic groups are also analysed, while recognising that samples may be too small to draw conclusions but may point to changes. The Equality Policy provides for monitoring as well and disciplinary policies also include analysis of exclusions.

Equality information will be published annually and used for academy planning, target-setting and decision-making.

6. Complaints

Staff and parents may bring complaints in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy or through the pastoral staff. Staff should discuss matters with the Headteacher, especially if there is an employment issue. All parties have the right of referring a matter which they feel has been inadequately concluded to the Directors of the Trust which will then refer to the formal Trust Grievance Procedure.

All who work in the academy must have the opportunity to put matters right if they feel they have been treated unfairly. Neither pupils nor staff should remain silent if faced with any form of discrimination.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Directors/Trustees of the Trust

Whilst the Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy and ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities through appropriate training and support, the Directors of the Trust are responsible for ensuring that the academy complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The Directors will also ensure that academies within the Trust comply with the public sector equality duty. The Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement must be published annually. Equality objectives must be published and updated at least once every four years.

In addition to this, there will be equal opportunities to all in staff recruitment and professional development (including Trustees and the Local Governing Body).

Headteacher

The Headteacher will have overall responsibility for:

- implementing the policy and its procedures
- ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training
- actively challenging and taking action in any cases of discriminatory practice
- dealing with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with guidance
- producing a report on progress for the Directors and the Local Governing Body annually
- ensuring Heads of Department, Line Managers and staff are complying with their day to day responsibilities with regard to the policy.

Staff

Heads of Faculty and Line Managers have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy but all staff have their own individual responsibility for adhering to the policy.

Staff will:

- deal with and/or report incidents that are prejudice-related, relate to racism or harassment in detail to their Line Manager or Headteacher
- monitor the progress of minority group children, including those on free school meals and from less economically affluent families
- allocate resources fairly and equitably, including recognising that some children may require more than others for an equal and fair chance to enjoy and achieve
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age or sexual orientation
- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos inside and outside of the classroom
- support students in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Visitors and Contractors are expected to be aware of, and comply with, the academy's equality policy.

8. Additional Information and Reporting Prejudice Related Incidents

The Richard Huish Trust will ensure that this policy is disseminated to all staff, Directors of the Trust, Local Governing Bodies and, if appropriate, to all students and their parents and carers. Appropriate training will be given.

If incidents continue to occur, the academy will address them immediately and report them to the LA.

It is the regular practice of Departments and of Year Leads to review the application of its policies within the areas for which they are responsible. Any suggested changes to policy are welcomed.

The Trust will provide information in appropriate, accessible formats.

9. Breaches of Policy

All breaches of policy should be reported using the appropriate procedures. In the first instance, breaches should be reported to Line Managers or the Headteacher. The Headteacher will report any serious breach of policy to the Directors of the Trust and/or the Local Authority.

10. Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed every four years. Equality information and objectives (public sector equality duty) statement must be published annually.

11. Related Policies and Documents

This policy also links to:

- Academy Development Plan
- Academy Student Behaviour and Exclusion Policy
- Academy Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Academy Anti-Bullying Policy
- RHT Complaints Policy and Procedure
- RHT Recruitment and Selection Procedure