



Annual Equalities Statement: Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty in 2019-20

Eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equalities Act 2010

Promoting equality has always been at the heart of the Trust's mission. Our focus is on delivering educational excellence to young people - particularly those who are suffering from disadvantage in whatever form – to maximise their potential, regardless of their starting point. A commitment to equality of opportunity for both students and staff is at the core of everything we do. Through the positive promotion of equality, and also by challenging any form of bullying and harassment and creating an environment which champions respect for all, we aim to eliminate discrimination and fulfil our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.

This starts right at the top. In our governance and accountability framework, the duty to ensure the Trust and its schools comply with equalities legislation and fulfil both the general and specific duties is reserved to the Board of Trustees. The Board's specific terms of reference include responsibility for safeguarding, SEND and inclusion. The Academic Board has responsibility for more detailed oversight of the Trust's approach to vulnerable pupils.

Trustees have approved the Trust's main Equalities Policy and the complementary Equal Opportunities Policy for staff. Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) consider the policies and oversee implementation in their respective schools, working with the schools to promote equality and comply with equalities legislation. Governors meet with senior leaders once a term to discuss how their school is meeting the Equality Objectives agreed by the Trust. Governors receive equalities training.

Standard templates are used for reports to the Board and its committees (including the LGBs). These templates include a specific requirement to consider whether an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is required and a requirement to complete the Trust's standard template when one is needed.

Equality considerations are built into our admissions policies, which are fair and transparent and do not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics. We ensure that children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) have priority.

Students are treated as an individual throughout their school career with Star Academies. At the point of induction, parents are free to discuss any specific requirements their child may have with regard to any of the relevant protected characteristics and support plans are put in place. Bespoke attainment targets are set for every student that recognise their starting point and help stretch them to maximise their potential. Every student's performance is reviewed regularly as part of the Trust's rigorous approach to monitoring and school Senior Leadership Teams keep an overview of performance to ensure that every child's progress is maintained. The Head of Data at the Trust is able to monitor the attainment and progress of all students sharing protected characteristics, which is compared with the progress of those students who do not have any protected characteristics.

Similarly, the Trust builds equalities considerations into its staffing policies and practices from the outset. All recruitment advertisements refer to our commitment to equal opportunities. Equal opportunities monitoring information that is voluntarily provided at application stage is anonymised and used by the Trust to measure diversity within the applicant pool and workforce to ensure that we are meeting our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010. Training for staff with recruitment and selection responsibilities includes equalities considerations.

The Trust's HR policies and procedures are designed to ensure equality of treatment for all staff, including ensuring equality of access to continuing development and other training opportunities. We offer flexible and "family friendly" working opportunities.



Responding to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way in which the Trust and its schools operate. In order to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils, the Trust regularly updates its suite of risk assessments to support the maintenance of a safe working environment. The hierarchy of protective measures developed by government and Public Health England have been implemented across all Trust estates. The Trust's practice has closely followed national guidance to protect people who are clinically extremely vulnerable, clinically vulnerable and from groups that have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, including workers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. Generic risk assessments are complemented by individual risk assessments as necessary.

The incidence of positive cases has been closely monitored across the Trust. Lateral flow testing has been adopted to further depress the risk of transmission.

The Trust is very aware that COVID-19, and the resulting disruption to schooling, has had a disproportionate impact on children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Trust has taken positive action to mitigate the risk of pupils falling further behind and attainment gaps widening. This has included the provision of a high-quality remote learning offer for all pupils, and a concerted effort to provide pupils in need with suitable learning devices and internet connectivity. The Trust ensures that its schools make appropriate use of catch-up funding and has engaged with the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) to provide tailored provision for pupils most at risk of falling behind.



Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not have it

The Trust and its schools have a range of policies and procedures in place to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. As outlined above, these include our governance and accountability framework, our equalities and related policies, target setting and attainment tracking for students and training for staff and governors.

Whilst effective policies, procedures and monitoring arrangements are essential, what matters more is what happens within our schools. Specific examples of good practice are set out below:

Pupil Support
Accessibility and suitability of school estates to ensure pupils with mobility needs or other physical needs (such as visual or hearing impairments) are fully supported
Additional time and/or support with writing for pupils sitting exams (in partnership with exam boards)
Admissions Policies fully compliant with the Equalities Act 2010
Alternative Curriculum pathway offered for SEND and EAL pupils
Careers Advisor provides guidance to SEND and EAL pupils
Classroom layout organised to ensure accessibility and participation by all
Classroom support for children with additional needs in place to ensure they access the curriculum fully
Disability related assemblies delivered aimed at raising awareness of equal rights
ECM Group – supporting young people who are vulnerable including those who may have suffered a family bereavement, those who self-harm and those at risk of bullying
Hardship fund to provide assistance with uniform, stationery and food packages
Improved access to sports for pupils with disabilities
Individual Education Plans or Health Care Plans created for pupils who have a specific need
Lunchtime adjustments for pupils with specific needs (allergies/disabilities)
Monitoring of rewards and sanctions given to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils
New RHE & RSHE policies and schemes of work introduced
Non-gender specific toilet facilities for those pupils who are experiencing gender identity issues
Parental App which provides a translation service covering 42 languages where necessary. Language bridge also provides support to pupils with EAL, new to English and new to the UK
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans created, practiced and activated for pupils with disabilities
Pupil Leadership positions in schools monitored to ensure they are accessible to pupils of all backgrounds, including SEND, EAL and all ethnicities
Regular contact with pupils and parents/carers during Covid-19 pandemic who were not in school to check on mental wellbeing
SEND Code of Practice
SENDCO monitors SEND pupils equal opportunities across schools and hold regular CPD sessions with staff to raise awareness
Specialised equipment to support pupils who have a physical, auditory or visual impairment
Strategies in place and regularly reviewed for pupils who have speech and/or language issues
Termly parent/carers meetings for those children with a disability
The Reading Recovery scheme supports pupils with reading ages significantly below cognitive age by providing reading mentors from older pupils and staff to support them (known as 'leaders for readers')
Transition meetings held between nursery/primary, primary/secondary and secondary/further education establishments to ensure information is shared relating to pupils with any additional needs



Staff Support
All vacancies advertised promote a commitment to eliminating discrimination and encourage diversity and equality
Changes to working conditions for staff following long-term absence and recommendations from Occupational health/Access to Work
Exit interviews are monitored to ensure that any equal opportunities issues are addressed
Maternity, Paternity and Adoption arrangements in place
Monitoring of staff disciplinary, grievance, competency and promotion procedure to ensure an equal process for all
Risk assessments carried out for staff with disabilities of medical conditions
Time off for religious observance and study

Governance, planning and reporting
Annual Operating Statements for both Trust and Schools include a section on equality
Community Cohesion and Equality Audit completed annually
Completion of an Equality Impact Statement on key decisions which are discussed in LGB meetings
Equality objectives and action plans by the Senior Leadership Team
Governor and Trustee visits to schools
Monitor attendance data to ensure that trends do not indicate any group is attending less than others
Monitor rewards and sanctions to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils
Regular analysis and comparison of progress of SEND pupils with non-SEND cohort
Sharply focused and regularly reviewed pupil premium strategy (associated link governor meeting)
Termly report to Governors linked equality and discrimination

Training
Annual training for safeguarding and Keeping Children Safe in Education provision
Faith, values and ethos training
Induction training includes definitions, eliminating discrimination and promoting good practice
PREVENT training for lead governor responsible for safeguarding
Pupil medical needs training for staff which includes Autism, Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy, Mental Health, use of AAls and EVAC chairs
Pupil Premium training to ensure it is being managed effectively
Safer recruitment training provided to staff who undertake recruitment
Specific and specialist training for staff relating to PREVENT, WRAP, Female Genital Mutilation, anti-bullying (inc. cyber, LGBTQ+), Child Sexual Exploitation, domestic violence and forced marriage
Staff training relating to assessing the suitability of trips for pupils with additional needs to ensure they are accessible for all
Training on use of ICT systems, particularly for remote learning
Use of PPE and government guidelines for teaching in schools during the Covid-19 pandemic



Fostering good relations across characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The Trust has always been committed to fostering good relations amongst different groups. We believe that humanity has more in common that unites rather than divides. Schools prioritise activities that promote an inclusive ethos. These activities have included the following:

Activity
Displays around schools reflect British Values, STAR Values, Mental Health, SEND, world religions, tolerance and more
External speakers programme with guests from all faiths, genders, ages and ethnicities speaking about a wide range of topics to broaden the knowledge and understanding of pupils
Festive Winter Gift Programme undertaken across all Trust schools and head office
Initiatives aimed at gender equality, focused particularly on female leadership in STEM careers
Interfaith events – pupils visiting places of worship such as Churches, Synagogues and Gurdwaras
Over £149,392.23 raised in 2019-20 for local, national and international charities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Heart Foundation • Care Homes, foodbanks and Hospices across the five geographic areas Star Academies works within • Macmillan Cancer Support • Meals for NHS • Ramadhan charity appeals to support multiple causes • Shine Charity appeals to support multiple causes
Random acts of kindness are embedded within school ethos
Recognition of commemorative events such at the Holocaust, World Wars and Armistice, the Queen’s Coronation, World Mental Days, International Day of Charity, International Day of Peace, Anti-Slavery Day, World Science Day, Road Safety Week and many more
School assemblies, the PSHE curriculum and SMSC schemes, STAR Values and the Trusts’ Behaviour Policies all promote tolerance and acceptance of those with protected characteristics
Sports events with other schools/links with professional clubs
Staff, Pupil and Parent/Carer Shura meetings that enable open discussions to be had and recommendations to be made/considered/implemented
Star Readers programme exposes pupils to a variety of themes which develop social awareness and understanding of different lives, backgrounds and cultures
Subject areas promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development as relevant in the context of the lesson
Support for foodbanks within schools and within the wider community

Glossary of Terms:

LGBT+ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans

SENCo – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability

WRAP – Workshop Raising Awareness of Prevent



Staff profile

	2019/2020		2018/2019		Year on Year change	
	Headcount	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	Headcount	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	Headcount	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
Trust Total	2378	1496	1980	1,364	398	132
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Age						
16-24	161	7%	133	7%	28	0%
25-34	757	32%	662	33%	65	-1%
35-44	674	28%	550	28%	124	0%
45-54*	536	23%	435	22%	101	1%
55-64	224	9%	181	9%	43	0%
65+	26	1%	19	1%	7	0%
Disability						
Yes	6	0.2%	3	0.2%	3	0%
No	93	4%	59	3%	34	1%
Not known	2279	95.8%	1918	96.8%	361	-1%
Ethnicity and Race[^]						
White	87	4%	55	3%	32	1%
BME	60	3%	32	2%	28	1%
Prefer not to say	2231	94%	1893	95%	338	-1%
Religion and Beliefs						
Buddhism	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP
Christianity	51	2%	30	2%	21	0%
Islam	62	3%	33	2%	28	1%
Other religion	8	0.3%	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP
No religion or belief	27	1%	20	1%	7	0%
Prefer not to say	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP	SUPP
Not known	2226	94%	1892	96%	334	-2%
Gender						
Male	586	25%	500	25%	86	0%
Female	1792	75%	1480	75%	312	0%

Note: SUPP: the numbers are under 5, therefore we are unable to disclose this data.

Staff data covering schools within Star Academies is published as part of the DfE's School Workforce Census statistics series and can be accessed in raw form here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-workforce>

Please note that DfE suppression rules in source data remove context groups where between one and two people populate a group. We estimate this causes a variance of approximately 1% to 5% of the Trust headcount within each of the context groups.

[^] In 2018/19 a new HR system was introduced which is a self-service system. As a result, it is optional for staff to provide their ethnicity and religious beliefs. This has resulted in a significant number of 'not known and prefer not to say' which will unfortunately not represent the true make up of staff within the Trust.



Staff: Gender Pay Gap

In line with statutory requirements the Trust has reported the following on the Government’s designated reporting website: www.gov.uk/genderpaygap. The figures have been compiled in line with Government Guidance and are based on a 31st March 2020 snapshot date

Women’s Hourly Rate is 16.1% lower (Mean) and 22.5% lower (Median) than Men’s.

Percentage of Male and Females in each pay Quartile		
	Male	Female
Upper Quartile	34.2	65.8
Upper Middle Quartile	25.0	75.0
Lower Middle Quartile	25.0	75.0
Lower Quartile	12.8	87.2

The Trust does not pay bonuses.

We wish to highlight that a gender pay gap should not be confused with ‘equal pay’ – as a gender pay gap does not necessarily mean that there is inequality in the way our staff are rewarded for the work that they do. We understand that the gender pay gap affects employers worldwide and reflects many factors including those that are external to the workplace including career stereotyping and the cultural use of part-time working.

The Trust is committed to reward our staff fairly for the work they do, regardless of their gender or other protected characteristic. The Trust will incorporate the consideration of our current gender gap as we develop our policies, particularly with regard to recruitment, retention and workforce development policies. Through these we will seek to actively reduce the gap in areas that we believe we can have influence as a responsible employer.