



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Recommended by: Head of HR

Ratified by: HR Committee

Signed:



Position on the Board: Chair of the HR Committee

Ratification Date: May 2024

Next Review: Spring Term 2027

Policy Tier (Central/school) Central

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Central Region Schools Trust (CRST) is committed to developing, maintaining, and supporting an inclusive culture and environment for the benefit of its employees and the communities served by the Trust.
- 1.2 The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of school life, and CRST expects all employees, pupils, parents/carers and members of the wider school community to be treated equitably and with respect.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The key aim of this policy is to ensure fair and lawful practices and procedures at all times throughout recruitment and employment of our employees and the education and services we provide to our pupils and communities.
- 2.2 This policy is closely linked to all policies and ensures that the Trust and its schools fulfil their obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy and procedure apply to all:
 - Employees and prospective employees (job applicants and prospective job applicants) of CRST.
 - Former employees with regards to the provision of an employment reference.
 - All workers, contractors, and sub-contractors; consultants; agency workers; employees seconded from other organisations; governors and volunteers.
 - Pupils and their parents/carers.
 - Other members of the community which CRST serves.
- 3.2 All of these groups are expected to adhere to the principles set out in this policy.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The Principal (in this document, the term “Principal” refers to Principals of secondary schools and Headteachers of primary schools) is responsible for:
 - Ensuring that all employees, pupils and parents/carers are aware of this policy, of its expectations and the reason why this policy is in place.
 - Overseeing the preparation and publication of one or more equality

objectives that the school believes it needs to achieve to further the general equality duty. These objectives will be reviewed and updated at least every four years and published on the school's website.

- Sharing the equality objectives with the Academy Council or Rapid Improvement Board and where appropriate including these in the school development plan.
- Producing an annual report on workforce equality diversity and Inclusion for the trust.
- Actually, as a role model for the school community.
- Ensuring that all employees have access to appropriate training with regards to equality and diversity.

4.2 All managers within the Trust are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all employees that they line manage have had access to this policy.
- Co-operating with any measures introduced by the school or Trust in relation to equal opportunities and diversity.
- Managing their employees in a way which is consistent with this policy.
- Setting a good example and ensuring all employees understand the standards expected of them.
- Following agreed procedures in relation to equality diversity and inclusion
- Ensuring that they have undertaken relevant equality diversity and inclusion training.
- Ensuring that members of their staff have undertaken relevant equality and diversity training.

4.3 All employees are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy and associated policies (such as the Code of Conduct), at all times when dealing with each other, managing other employees, and in their relationships with children, parents, carers, governors and other stakeholders.
- Treating colleagues, governors, pupils, volunteers, visitors, and members of the public with dignity and respect.
- Embracing a culture that provides supportive and positive working relationships and behaviour, which underpins the trust's vision and values.
- Being alert to discrimination and taking action to avoid becoming involved in any form of discrimination.
- Making colleagues aware if their conduct or behaviour is inappropriate and/or reporting this to the Principal, or, if the inappropriate behaviour comes from the Principal, to the Chief Executive of CRST.
- Providing support to employees who are subject to inappropriate conduct or behaviour.
- Acting as positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- Promoting good community and workplace relations to foster and encourage an atmosphere of tolerance and support so that there is no place for behaviours which would negatively impact upon the community, Trust or school.

5. Discrimination under the Equality Act 2010

5.1 The Equality Act 2010 brings together previous legislation to protect people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The act covers nine 'protected characteristics' which qualify for protection from discrimination under the act. These are as follows:

- Age¹
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership²
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

5.2 Under the Act, there are four main types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination (including direct discrimination by association and direct discrimination by perception)
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation

¹ Age is not a protected characteristic in relation to education or the provision of services, it is included however in relation to staff.

² Marriage and civil partnership are only protected characteristics in relation to employment

6. The General Equality Duty

6.1 The Equality Act 2010 also created a general equality duty. This means that when making decisions and developing policies public bodies are required to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation 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, which means:
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages
 - Taking steps to meet different needs.
 - Encouraging participation when it is disproportionately low.
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics (i.e. between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it).

6.2 To help meet the general equality duty, schools in England have two specific duties. These are:

- To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives

6.3 Further information on discrimination may be found at [ACAS 'The Equality Act 2010 – Guidance for Employers'](#)³ and on the [DfE Equality Act 2010 Advice for Schools](#)⁴. Equality is also an important aspect of the Ofsted inspection framework, see the [Ofsted School Inspection Handbook](#)⁵ for further details.

7. School Environment

7.1 Equality and diversity principles will be embedded in school 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.

8. Equality diversity and inclusion in employment

8.1 Recruitment

8.1.1 All job descriptions and advertisements will be written to ensure that they do not discriminate or exclude any potential candidates due to any protected characteristics and that the vacancy is open to all suitable candidates that meet the criteria for the role.

8.1.2 A decision to recruit will be based solely on the merits of the individual and how they performed during the selection process.

³ www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/8/a/Equality-Act-2010-guide-for-employers.pdf

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015

- 8.1.3 Reasonable adjustments during recruitment process that have been requested by candidates who have declared that they have a disability will be considered. This is to ensure that no candidate suffers any disadvantages during the selection process.
- 8.1.4 There are limited circumstances where an employer may act in a way which is discriminatory, but where it can objectively justify discrimination as 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. This includes stating an 'occupational requirement' when applicants for a job must have a particular protected characteristic under the Equality Act and taking 'positive action' in the workplace. This is a complex area, and advice must be sought from the Director of Human Resources if a Principal determines that a specific role has an occupational requirement or that they would like to consider any forms of positive action in an employment context.

8.2 Employee Development

- 8.2.1 All staff will receive equal opportunities training.
- 8.2.2 All staff will receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

8.3 Reasonable Adjustments

- 8.3.1 Where a member of staff has declared a disability, reasonable adjustments will be considered, following advice from a medical professional and/or Occupational Health. Further details can be found in the Absence Management Policy.

8.4 Managing complaints of discrimination

- 8.4.1 The Trust takes any complaint of discrimination extremely seriously. Where an employee considers that they have been unlawfully discriminated against, or if the complaint involves alleged bullying or harassment, they may use the Grievance Policy to make a complaint.
- 8.4.2 Where employees commit an act of unjustified or unlawful discrimination, or allow discrimination to occur without taking appropriate action, then action under the terms of the Disciplinary Policy will be considered.

9. Equality information

- 9.1 As part of schools' obligations under the Equality Act 2010, each school will publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the general equality duty. This information must include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are:
- Its employees, and
 - People affected by its policies and practices.

For further information see [Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty](#)⁶

10. Monitoring

- 10.1 This policy will be monitored periodically by CRST to judge its effectiveness.
- 10.2 Information provided for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

11. Review

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years in consultation with the recognised trade unions.

⁶ https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/psed_essential_guide_-_guidance_for_english_public_bodies.doc