

Equal Opportunities Policy

Approved by Directors: March 2020

Review: March 2021

Jesus grew in wisdom and stature

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OUR TRUST PRAYER

We thank you, God of Love, for the gift of children,
Bless the work of our Trust, that in all we do
young people may grow in wisdom and stature,
and so come
to know you,
to love you
and to serve you
as Jesus did.

We make this prayer in his name who is God
with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen

The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust welcomes young people of all faiths and none and is committed to providing each of them with a high quality education and environment where Christian values and principles permeate all that we do.

The Trust will support and develop the character of Church of England and other schools as they strive for continuous improvement and educational excellence for all pupils. The Trust aims to foster social justice and enhance social mobility by delivering a high quality education which will ensure the best possible outcomes for all its pupils.

In line with the Church of England's "Vision for Education – Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good"- the Trust's vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate our vision for education: Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity.

The Vision, in line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, is for the common good of the whole human community and its environment, whether national, regional or local. It is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences, and the forming of new settlements in order to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.'

Equal Opportunities Policy

Who this policies applies to: All employees, pupils/students, Board of Directors and Local Governing Body members of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust ('the Trust')

Date of last review by Trust Board: January 2019

Introduction

This policy outlines the vision for equal opportunities within the Trust. The policy covers the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

It is an 'umbrella policy' covering employees, pupils/students and governance, and all Trust schools are required to put in place their own individual school equal opportunities statement and to set equality objectives at a local level with due regard to this policy.

Policy

Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust values and respects individuals' differences. These differences include, but are not limited to gender, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, culture, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, marital and civil partnership status, education, learning styles and those with a caring responsibility. The Trust does not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination in or out of the workplace.

Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust values variety and individual differences, and aims to create a culture, environment and practices at all levels which encompass acceptance, respect and inclusion. The Trust's vision is that by valuing diversity and being inclusive it will enable the communities it serves to achieve, and help the Trusts schools meet their purpose of providing an outstanding education for all their learners, founded on Christian values.

Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust commits to:

- creating a community where diverse cultures are celebrated, where everybody feels welcome and can use their differences to develop themselves and the environment they work in;
- a culture that is based on the Trust's values and consideration of how behaviour affects others inside and outside the organisation;
- regularly reflecting on its own practice to ensure that what it does doesn't create barriers to participation for pupils/students, employees or Local Governors/Trust Board members;
- providing outstanding opportunities and education to all its communities;
- supporting and promoting all of the communities it serves.

We recognise the importance that Equality and Human Rights legislation has to play in promoting equality and eliminating unlawful discrimination, and seek to exceed our legal obligations and to provide an inclusive environment for all where employees, pupils/students and local communities can develop and reach full potential.

Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust will:

- set equality objectives (reviewed annually), and publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the public single equality duty;
- seek to ensure that the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies recruitment attracts a representative sample of our neighbourhoods, in particular, we aim to have balanced gender composition. In the case where this balance does not represent the population, we will formally review our recruitment efforts to ensure they are inclusive and make improvements where appropriate;
- report on how the Trust is doing on its representation priorities for the Board and the

- management team;
- review all policies and practices on a rolling basis to ensure that they meet legal obligations, and work to exceed these;
- create a culture that drives positive behaviour;
- have clear complaints procedures and report on complaints annually
- bi-annually review recruitment processes to ensure that our practice supports our vision
- ensure our procurement criteria are inclusive and support the Trust's Christian values
- work in partnership with organisations that support the Trust's values and vision

Our schools will:

- be at the heart of the community, underpinning Trust values to create a welcoming environment for all, celebrate the diversity of the communities they serve and promote community cohesion;
- ensure that equal opportunities run through everything we do and are included in all policies when reviewed;
- provide a safe environment where adults are dedicated to protecting the rights, meeting the needs and supporting the aspirations of children. Each school will be recognised by all as an inclusive, high quality learning environment;
- publish their own school equal opportunities statement which is consistent with the Trusts policy, and publish equality objectives which are reviewed and updated annually;
- bi-annually review admissions processes to ensure that our practice supports our vision for equal opportunities;
- ensure procurement criteria are inclusive and support the values of the Trust and the school;
- have clear complaints procedures and report on complaints annually;
- ensure their Governing Bodies are open and inclusive by:
 - asking for annual reviews of meeting times;
 - aiming to ensure that their Governing Body recruitment attracts a representative sample of their neighbourhood, and in particular has a balanced gender composition;
 - communicating in an open and inclusive manner;
 - advertising community/staff/parent/carers governing opportunities to all communities the school serves.
- Report annually on the equality objectives set, the equality & diversity profile of their staff and student/pupil population, complaints received, and the activities taken to ensure their Local Governing Body is open and inclusive.