



EQUALITY POLICY

Policy Version			
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This policy will be reviewed every 12 months in light of local and Government legislation.

At Mountwood
Academy we
nurture our young
people through
quality experiences
to never stop
learning and be the
best they can be.

Introduction

Mountwood Academy is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we will ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our school development plans, self-evaluation reviews, the school prospectus', school websites and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies (as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council).

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the way we comply with this are found in our recruitment policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Mountwood Academy expects all members of our Academy and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equality and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide training, guidance and information to enable our governors and staff to do this.

The Proprietor

The Proprietor is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy, its related procedures and action plans are implemented. A member of the governing body will be given specific responsibility regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee will keep aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment.

Governors will annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys).

Head Teacher and Leadership team

The Head Teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

The Leadership team have a day-to-day responsibility for co-coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. S/he will have expert and informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their lessons
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all children
- support different groups of children in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

The school will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all new staff as part of induction procedures. Schools will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of each school year.

Visitors

All visitors to the schools, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this. A copy of this policy will be placed on the school websites.

Principles

Our approach to equality is based on the following principles:

1. All children are of equal value.

The school will value and promote the development of every child: whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.

2. We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.

Mountwood Academy will take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength,

which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit our schools.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships.

Mountwood Academy will actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.

4. We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

Mountwood Academy want all members of the school community to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.

5. We observe good equalities practice for our staff.

We will ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment, promotion and in continuing professional development.

6. We have the highest expectations of all our children.

We expect that all children can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential.

7. We work to raise standards for all children, but especially for the most vulnerable.

We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of children raises standards across the whole school.

Purpose of this policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against children or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity.

Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school’s provision relating to children.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty or ‘general duty’

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two ‘specific duties’

This requires all public organisations, including schools to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty by April 6th 2012

2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable by April 6th 2012.

This policy describes how Dunham Trust schools will meet these statutory duties in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the schools are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Development of this policy

When developing this policy, Mountwood Academy has also taken account of DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework 2012, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that Ofsted has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for children who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Further iteration of this policy will take place through sharing this first draft with our wider community and other community groups.

What Mountwood Academy are doing to promote equality:

Mountwood Academy will take account of equality issues in relation to

- admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our children and
- the way we provide access for children to facilities and services.

Mountwood Academy are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for

- disabled children – designed to enhance access and participation to the level
- of non-disabled children and stop disabled children being placed at a
- disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

The Head Teacher will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.

Mountwood Academy will ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones.

We take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day to day life of the schools. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this will be available for review if required.

Mountwood Academy will actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent and we will not discriminate against children by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race,

disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school policies on Behaviour - Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions - take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for children with a disability. We will closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice based bullying

Mountwood Academy challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

Guidance will be provided in the staff handbooks on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and will provide a report to the Proprietor about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them.

We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

What we are doing to advance equality of opportunity:

- We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.
- We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our admissions meetings.
- We collect data, monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of children and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age-appropriate literacy and number skills.

We will collect, analyse and publish data on the school population:

- by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of children identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English

Mountwood Academy schools will publish an analysis of standards reached by different cohort groups at the end of each key stage which will include:

- Boys
- Girls
- Children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
- Student who have English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Student who have Special Educational Needs
- Children with SEN statements
- Children on the School Action and School Action Plus register*
- Looked After Children (LAC) in the care of the Local Authority
- White British FSM and non-FSM
- Bangladeshi
- Black African
- Congolese
- Somali
- Black Caribbean
- Known GRT (Gender Recast)
- Refugees

*Note: The most recent Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (December 2012) advises that School Action and School Action Plus are no longer used; being replaced by a single category: Education and Health Care plans (EHC plans) which include Statements.

Mountwood Academy will also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups.

This data can be found in the Equality Data Analysis on the school websites. We also provide paper copies in the school offices.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future children – we will for example, seek to be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired or Hearing impaired child joins our school through a planned programme of building refurbishment.

We will avoid language that runs the risk of placing a ceiling on any child's achievement or that seeks to define their potential as learners, such as "less able". We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all children.

We provide support to children at risk of underachieving.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

Positive Action

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of children with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

A. What Mountwood Academy are doing to promote good relations

- We will prepare our children for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.
- We will use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole-school ethos and values that challenge prejudice-based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for children to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history that promote positive images of people
- We provide opportunities for our children to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences
- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors, whole school events e.g. Black History Month, Deaf Awareness week
- We include Equalities matters in our Newsletters to parents and carers

B. Other ways Mountwood Academy will address equality issues

- We will keep detailed records of all training relating to Equalities
- Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities
- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed
- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well-being of our children.
- The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs of the whole school community, the school will:

- review relevant feedback from the annual parents' questionnaire, parents' evening, parent-school forums and/or focus meetings or governors' parent consultation meeting
- secure and analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, PSHE lessons, and whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school;
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from governing body committees and working groups.

C. Publishing our equality objectives

The objectives which Mountwood Academy identifies represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We will evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we **achieve improved outcomes** for the different groups. We will produce Equality Data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

Mountwood Academy will set Equality Objectives and will produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives. This will be part of our school development plans.

Monitoring and review

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Head Teacher, who will make an annual report to the Proprietor.

Approval by Mountwood Academy

Signed: _____
 Date: _____
 Review date: _____

This policy, signed by the Proprietor on behalf of Mountwood Academy, is held by the Head Teacher.

End of policy statement