



Avonreach

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment Policy

Avonreach Academy Trust

This document sets out the regulations for the MAT and member academies.

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Approved date	June 2024
Next review	June 2027
Version control	Vs1

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1. Introduction

Avonreach Academy Trust (the trust) recognises that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal opportunity. The trust is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among its workforce and stakeholders, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. The trust will aim for its workforce to be representative of society and our community, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

This policy applies to all employees of the trust and offers protection against discrimination on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Discrimination law protects people against discrimination at work (Equality Act 2010), including those applying to work for the trust. Discrimination means treating someone less favourably than someone else, because of a protected characteristic.

Less favourable treatment can be anything that puts someone with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage, compared to someone who does not have that characteristic. It is also unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their connection with someone who has a protected characteristic or due to a perceived protected characteristic; or if someone has complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim of discrimination.

It is lawful, in certain circumstances, to take positive action to help people with a protected characteristic if they are at a disadvantage, have particular needs or are under-represented in an activity or type of work.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality, fairness and respect for all of the trust's employees, whether temporary, part time or full time. It aims to oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- Pay and benefits
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Dealing with grievances and discipline
- Dismissal
- Redundancy
- Leave for parents
- Requests for flexible working
- Selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

3. Commitments

The trust commits to encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, which is good practice and makes good business sense. The trust aims to do this by:

- Creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- Providing information to managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. This will include information about how staff conduct themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All staff should understand that they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
- Taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others, in the course of the trust's activities. All employees and members of our school community have a legal and moral obligation not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group of individuals to their Headteacher or line manager.
- Carrying out selection for employment, volunteering, promotion, training or any other benefit on the basis of aptitude and ability.
- Making opportunities for training, development and progress available to employees, within the budgetary and operational restraints of the trust. Employees of the trust will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Making decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Reviewing employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and updating procedures and policies to take account of changes in the law.

Breaches of the trust's equality, diversity and inclusion policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings or removal of rights to use the trust's facilities. Sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, e.g. sexual assault allegations. Harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 is a criminal offence.

The trust will monitor the make-up of the workforce including age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any

supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

4. Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions. The successful implementation of this policy depends on the awareness and commitment of all employees and the school community. They will, therefore, be made aware of the policy on joining the trust or using the trust's facilities.