



Single Equality Scheme Policy

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1 Statement of Policy

The Constellation Trust is committed to creating an environment which will promote equality of opportunity for all members of its community including students, staff, parent/carers and others working in partnership with it.

2 Background

2.1 This policy will set out how the Trust will meet and respond to its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty, April 2011.

2.2 In order to ensure that our equality information and objectives are easily accessible we will

- Publish our Single Equality Scheme (SES) on the Trust website
- Raise awareness of the SES through the school/academy newsletters, assemblies, staff meeting and other communications
- Make sure hard copies are available and in an appropriate format for visually impaired or EAL users where applicable
- Our equality information will be updated on an annual basis
- Progress against our current equality objectives will be reviewed on a regular basis (please see equality objective action planning) and new equality objectives will be published in 2016

3 Other Policies

3.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy*
- Behaviour Management Policy*
- General Health & Safety Policy
- Health & Safety Policy*
- Inclusion Guide*
- Safer Recruitment and Selection guidelines (within the Safeguarding Policy) *
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy*
- Whistleblowing Policy

*school/academy specific

4 Statutory Requirements: The Public Sector Equality Duty

4.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force on the 6 April 2011 and replaced the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality

4.2 In order to comply with the Public Sector Equality duty, set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and in line with its ethos of excellence and opportunity for all its students and staff, the Trust will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

4.3 The Equality Act 2010 states that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

(EHRC, *The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty*, 2011, p9).

5 Protected Characteristics

5.1 The Public Sector Equality duty covers the following eight protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

5.2 The Trust will ensure that in all its policy, practice and development these are considered in terms of the impact of these policies, practice and development, to ensure that discrimination against them is eliminated and good relations and equality of opportunity between people of these protected characteristics and no characteristic is fostered and developed.

5.3 The Trust will continue to organise students in groups according to age under the exemption to schools regarding age as a protected characteristic including where students are above the age of 18 as outlined in DfE, *Equality Act 2010 and Schools*

6 Statutory Requirements: The Specific Duties

6.1 As a public body, the Trust will fulfil its duty to:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually
- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every 4 years
- All information will be published in a way which makes it easy for all stakeholders to access and understand including making reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of stakeholders within a protected characteristic.

7 Publishing Information

7.1 The Trust will meet the requirement as a public body to publish information to show that we have consciously thought about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. The information published will include:

- Information relating to employees who share protected characteristics (for public bodies with 150 or more employees)
- Information relating to people who are affected by the Trust's policies and practices who share protected characteristics
- The Trust will not publish specific information on staff or students in protected characteristics where the numbers sharing that characteristic may enable identification of specific individuals as this would be in contravention of the Data Protection Act 1998.

8 Setting Equality Objectives

8.1 The Trust will consider evidence of equality issues across all its functions when setting, monitoring and reviewing its Equality Objectives.

- 8.2 The Trust will consider issues affecting people sharing each of the protected characteristics.
- 8.3 The Trust will give regard to each of the three aims of the Equality Duty.
- 8.4 Equality objectives will be specific and set out how progress will be measured.
- 8.5 Equality objectives and progress against them will be published on the Trust website and available in alternative formats where reasonable adjustment is needed to allow access to them by a stakeholder.

9 Responsibilities

- 9.1 The Board of Directors are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and Specific Duties as stated above. The Lead Director for this can be contacted through the Trust.
- 9.2 The Executive Head/CEO is responsible for:
 - Providing accurate and appropriate information to the Board of Directors to enable them to publish and demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
 - Making sure that steps are taken to address the Trust's stated equality objectives
 - Making sure that equality and access plans are readily available and that the Directors, staff, students, parents and carers know about them
 - Providing regular information for staff and Directors about progress against stated equality objectives
 - Making sure that all staff understand their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and receive training and support to carry these out
 - Taking appropriate action in cases of discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- 9.3 All staff are responsible for:
 - Eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
 - Advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

- Fostering good relations across all characteristics – between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it
- Visitors and contactors are responsible for following this and other relevant policies

Appendix 1

1 The effect of Trust policy and practice on people who share a relevant protected characteristic

1.1 Although there is a statutory duty to publish information about the effect of Trust policy and practice on service users and employees who share a relevant protected characteristic, we recognise that care must be taken to ensure that any information published cannot be used to identify individuals.

In respect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, analysis of sensitive information was undertaken by a senior member of the Trust staff and a synopsis passed to the stakeholders.

Information about the effect of Trust policy and practice on students who share a relevant protected characteristic was drawn from the following sources:

- Standards attained and progress made by different groups of students, compared with the standards and progress of all students nationally
- Standards attained and progress made by different groups of students, compared with different groups within the school
- Behaviour, bullying and harassment data*
- Exclusions*
- Persistent absenteeism, attendance and punctuality data for different groups of students*
- Participation in extra-curricular and extended schools' activities*
- Community engagement and community cohesion outcomes
- Parental/Carer involvement in school life (including attendance at open evenings)
- Student and parental questionnaires
- Complaints from students and parents/carers with different protected characteristics
- Engagement with stakeholder groups

*this information was then benchmarked against national statistics (where available).

2 Information about the effect of Trust policy and practice on employees who share a relevant protected characteristic was drawn from the following sources:

- Staff profile**
- Recruitment and retention rates for staff with different protected characteristics**
- Applications for flexible working and their outcomes for staff with different protected characteristics
- Applications for learning and development opportunities and their outcomes for staff with different protected characteristics**
- Staff appraisal/performance management
- Grievances and disciplinary issues for staff with different protected characteristics**
- Return to work of women on maternity leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disability

**information regarding the protected characteristics of staff will be gathered on a voluntary and non-intrusive manner which does not infringe that staff member's right to privacy within the workplace.

3 Analysis of Information Gathered

3.1 The purpose of gathering and analysing the information from the sources will be to provide answers to these two key questions which lie at the heart of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- Does the information indicate that any aspects of current policy and practice have a negative impact on one or more of the dimensions of equality?
- Does the information indicate that any aspects of current policy and practice have a positive impact on equality?

This process will enable identification of the Academy's most significant equality challenges and successes. Equality Objectives will be formulated with reference and regard to this analysis

4 The effect of Trust policy and practice on students, employees and stakeholders who share a relevant protected characteristic

- 4.1 The information published and provided will be a short, evidenced account of our equality priorities and work, with an indication of key trends and issues.
- 4.2 The Trust is conscious of the fact that some information on protected characteristics are extremely sensitive.
- 4.3 In the case of sexual orientation and gender re-assignment status the Trust will use national statistics, research and stakeholder engagement to help us to identify priority equality issues instead.

5 Policy Development, Implementation and Review: Equality Analysis

- 5.1 When developing, implementing or reviewing any policy, procedure or practice the Trust will consider the following questions in order to analyse the impact on equality:
 - Could or does this policy, procedure or practice have a negative impact on one or more of the dimensions of equality – namely, could it increase inequalities that already exist?
 - If so, how can we change or modify it, or minimise its impact, or justify it? (Direct discrimination is illegal and cannot be justified)
 - Could or does this policy, procedure or practice have the potential to have a positive impact on equality, by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist?
 - If so, how can we maximise this potential?