

# Moorlands Schools Federation

## Equalities Policy

Review Due:	January 2021
Last Review	January 2018
Applicable to:	Moorlands Schools Federation
Reviewed by:	

### Rationale

The Equality Act 2010, replaced nine previous acts regarding rights and opportunities for all providing protection against indirect and direct discrimination, harassment and victimisation, access to services, premises, education, associations and transport - on any of the nine protected characteristics. These characteristics are defined in the act as:

- Race,
- Disability,
- Sex,
- Religion or belief,
- Sexual orientation,
- Age,
- Gender reassignment,
- Marriage and civil partnership,
- Pregnancy and maternity.

Equality ensures that people are treated fairly, and makes it easier for people to live and work together. Alongside this Act, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 2011 stipulates how public organisations, such as schools, can promote equality, and their statutory responsibilities to ensure it takes all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

### Policy Procedures

Moorlands Schools Federation Local Governing Body is the responsible body with regard to equalities surrounding Moorlands Schools Federation community. They ensure there is no discrimination, harassment or victimization for a pupil or potential pupil in relation to;

- Admissions
- The way it provides education for pupils
- The way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

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The responsible body is also liable for actions taken by all employees unless it can show it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from doing the discriminatory action or from doing anything of that kind.

The Equality Act 2010 deals with the way in which school treat their pupils and prospective pupils; the relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope. However, this policy does require that issues between pupils that fall under one of the named areas above, such as homophobic bullying is taken seriously and treated equally as other concerns.

The schools' liability not to discriminate, harass or victimize does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between school and pupil, such as the provision of references on former pupils or access to "old pupils" communications and activities.

The Governors and staff of Moorlands Schools Federation are totally committed to equal opportunity as defined above for all pupils, staff, parents and others involved in the Trust schools community and to meet fully its requirements in part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), any subsequent requirements and has due regard to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) code of practice for schools (2002).

Decision makers in the school have due regard when making decisions or actions as to the potential impact for people with protected characteristics. Policies are developed with the premise of equality as a fundamental, and reviewed with additional requirements in mind.

The PSED is integrated into school functions, and is embedded in school protocols as an inherent part rather than an external process. Any incidents or concerns are automatically raised as issues at Local Governing Body meetings, and Board of Trustees meetings and reported as part of the minutes of the meeting along with actions. Governor minutes are accessible on request from the Clerk to Governors/Trustees.

The Local Governing Body is responsible for promoting equality in Moorlands Schools Federation, and will also delegate the practical implementation of these actions to the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Equalities with regard to students**

We believe that the diversity of our school community is a great asset, and application of equality duty supports good education and improves pupil's outcomes as well as staff wellbeing.

Our students come from a mainly Christian background and for the vast majority of our students their first language is English, both at home and at school.

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A very small percentage of our students have mobility difficulties. As the makeup of specific special educational needs in the schools population is constantly changing, the processes are continuously monitored and updated to respond to ensure access for all pupils attending the member schools.

The school will keep the access needs of the school under review with regard to equality provision and plan for improvements for pupils within the following strands:

1. The physical environment
2. The curriculum
3. The delivery of information

### **The physical environment**

Moorlands Schools Federation senior leadership team will ensure that the site the school occupies has accommodation designed and adapted to ensure access to all areas appropriate for pupils and staff to enter. Furniture, fixtures & fittings in the school are appropriate to the needs of pupils and altered if necessary depending on cohort need. Future developments on school sites will be constructed and developed with accessibility in mind.

Moorlands Schools Federation provides a range of special equipment for the pupils and suitable play equipment which can be accessed by all pupils. The schools will be well resourced and accessible to all with well-trained staff and equipment.

### **The Curriculum**

Moorlands Schools Federation aims to offer broad and balanced curriculums in their schools, to ensure that the physical environment is accessible and that written information is available to all pupils. The school curriculum is developed to ensure a high level of accessibility for all pupils, and positive opportunities for individualisation of curriculum delivery adapted to current cohorts of learners. This includes:

- An audit of the curriculum, re-write/amend schemes of work to ensure equal opportunities offered to all pupils.
- Review of curriculum delivery - pupil groupings / timetabling to ensure equal access for all pupils.
- Staff training in use of new technology in school or techniques: eg. access for pupils with hearing impairments.
- Assessment and application of appropriate access arrangements to ensure all pupils are able to achieve to their best ability.

PSHME (Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education) – is delivered to all pupils as lessons, during assemblies and across the curriculum formally and informally. A large part of this curriculum area promotes empathy and understanding between

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pupils and tackles bullying. A high priority is placed on inculcating preventative strategies with regard to equalities issues in pupils as a high priority.

Any off-site activities are planned with due regard to the individual needs of the pupils involved and are risk assessed for suitability – a child would never be disadvantaged by being left behind at school or left out of a particular activity because it was deemed unsuitable.

### **The delivery of information**

Moorlands Schools Federation ensures information provided to pupils and parents is in their preferred format eg. Symbols, translations into other languages. Every effort is made to ensure effective communication between school and the school community is accessible to all. Formal information opportunities are available on a one-to-one basis through individual progress meetings, parents' evenings etc. There is no one route of contact to Trust schools - Information can be exchanged on a daily basis through link books, telephone calls, email, letter as the school believes the free exchange of information is vital.

Information regarding attainment and progress of pupils will be published on the school website, along with details of the spend and impact of initiatives such as Pupil Premium, and Primary PE funds. These initiatives are relevant to equalities as they focus on many of the protected groups named in this policy.

### **Staff**

Moorlands Schools Federation's commitment to equal opportunities is expressed throughout its policies, in materials for job applications and in staff job descriptions. As an employer, Moorlands Schools Federation has a commitment to equality encompassing direct and indirect discrimination and will make every effort to be proactive in its approach on behalf of the school community. Moorlands Schools Federation follows the Partnership Trusts Equalities Policy with regard to Recruitment of staff, detailing our procedures.

All systems and policies are designed to ensure that there is no bias against any minority group and if any bias is discovered we have a commitment to redressing it. It is our intention that everyone is treated equitably and with respect and we regularly examine procedures and practices to ensure that they are working.

Moorlands Schools Federation provides a safe and secure environment for all staff and students and will take action against all forms of discrimination and harassment. Harassment of staff or students, whether physical or verbal, by members of the public or colleagues is unacceptable.

Complaints will be dealt with promptly and will be monitored against all areas covered by legislation. We aim for openness and transparency. The process will be monitored against all areas covered by legislation. We will encourage the use of external agencies to support the complaints procedure where required.

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Schools must demonstrate their compliance with the general duty with regard to equalities. There is no longer a requirement for a specific action plan, so school may demonstrate this through incorporation of appropriate equalities objectives into the individual school development plan. These will then be monitored and implemented and progress can be tracked in line with Local Governing body processes. Schools have to update the published information at least annually.

### Additional Relevant Documents

For further information refer to the following school documentation:

Partnership Trust Equalities Policy (recruitment)

Individual Schools Policies with regard to;

SEN Policy & Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy

Curriculum Policy

School Improvement Plan

Complaints Procedure

Behaviour and Discipline policy

Admissions policy

Off-site Activities Guidelines

School Attainment data

Statutory Information

Reference made from:

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005

The Equality Act 2010 (& 2014 amendments)

Equality and Human Rights Commission