

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

September 2021 - September 2024

OUR TRUST PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
Let peace, friendship and love grow in our schools.
Send the Holy Spirit to give
excellence to our learning,
love to our actions and
joy to our worship.
Guide us to help others,
so that we may all
Learn, Love and Achieve, Together with Jesus.
Amen

The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust (our 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.

Our 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. Our 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"- our 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 to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Who this policy applies to:

All employees, pupils/students, Board of Directors and Local Governing Body members of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust ('our Trust')

Date of last review by Trust Board:

Introduction

This policy outlines the vision for equality, diversity, and inclusion within our Trust. The policy covers the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998. This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

It is an 'umbrella policy' covering employees, pupils/students, and governance. All our schools are required to put in place their own equalities information and statement and to set equality objectives at a local level with due regard to this policy.

Policy

Our Trust values and respects difference and meets its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- 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

In meeting these duties, we will have regard for the equal treatment of people based on the Equality Act's nine protected characteristics and will also have due regard to the way in which policies and strategic decisions can reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

Age
Disability
Gender Reassignment
Pregnancy and Maternity
Marriage and Civil Partnership
Race/Ethnicity
Religion and belief
Sex
Sexual Orientation

Additionally, our Trust and schools gather information on other groups including (but not limited to):

Pupil Premium status
Carer status
English as an additional language
Special educational needs
Looked after children
Offending past

We aim to create a culture of acceptance, respect and inclusion. We do not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying or discrimination in or out of the workplace. By valuing diversity and being inclusive, our vision is to enable the communities in which we serve to flourish and achieve. Founded on Christian values, we help our schools to meet their purpose of providing an outstanding education for all learners.

Our 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 our Trust's values and consideration of how behaviour affects others inside and outside our Trust;
- regularly reflecting on our own practice to ensure that what we do 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 the communities it serves.

We recognise the importance that Equality and Human Rights legislation must 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.

Our Trust will:

- set equality objectives (reviewed annually), and publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED);
- seek to ensure that our Trust-wide recruitment strategy attracts a representative sample of our communities and we aim to have a 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 to the Board and management team, on how our Trust is doing on its representation priorities;
- 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 our Trust's Christian values;
- work in partnership with organisations that support our Trust's values and vision.

Our schools will:

- be at the heart of the community, underpinning our Trust's values to create a welcoming environment for all, celebrating the diversity of the communities they serve and promoting community cohesion;
- ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion run through everything they 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 specific equalities statement, information and objectives which will be consistent with our Trust's umbrella policy, and which will be reviewed and updated annually;
- bi-annually review admissions processes to ensure that our practice supports our vision for equality, diversity and inclusion;
- ensure procurement criteria are inclusive and support the values of our Trust and the school;
- have clear complaints procedures and report on complaints annually;
- ensure their Governing Body is open and inclusive by:
 - asking for annual reviews of meeting times;
 - aiming to ensure that the Governing Body recruitment attracts a representative sample of the local community and has a balanced gender composition;

- communicating in an open and inclusive manner;
 - advertising community/staff/parent/carer governing body opportunities to all communities in which the school serves.
- report annually on the equality objectives set, the equality & diversity profile of their staff (this will be used to create a Trust-wide profile) and student/pupil population, complaints received, and the activities taken to ensure their Local Governing Body is open and inclusive.

LIVERPOOL DIOCESAN SCHOOLS TRUST

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: To embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum and teaching & learning practices, so that all pupils can overcome barriers and achieve the highest standards of education

LDST and its schools will work towards a curriculum and teaching & learning practices which:

- are inclusive - all pupils can access the curriculum and achieve their potential
- show respect for and appreciation of one another as individuals
- prepare pupils for life in a diverse society by encouraging respect for linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity that exists in local communities and the wider world
- use specialist programmes and dedicated resources to support pupils who need it the most
- widen educational and personal horizons of all pupils if limited by factors that compromise equality
- monitor and analyse pupil achievement and progress by ethnicity, gender and disability, and act on any trends or patterns in this data which identify the need for additional support for pupils
- are proactive in tackling discrimination
- promote benefits of diversity

Objective 2: to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion across the whole Trust

LDST and its schools will work towards this objective by:

- improving the recruitment, retention, progression, development, and experience of the people employed by LDST, to enable the Trust to become an inclusive employer of choice.
- ensuring, as we adopt a Trust-wide HR information system, that this incorporates the ability to provide robust reporting on and monitoring of equalities data.
- further developing reporting on our gender pay gap and – in future – other pay gaps (e.g., ethnicity), and taking positive action to reduce these gaps where possible.
- taking steps to address the risk of bias and discriminatory behaviour, initially by raising awareness of this facet of equality and diversity through leadership training; and ensuring that 'blind recruitment' takes place for all roles across our Trust.
- creating and promoting opportunities for staff voice, and debate & dialogue, within our Trust around these key issues.

