

Single Equality Policy – appendix

Bracken Lane Primary Academy

February 2023

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1 Executive summary

1.1 In developing an equality policy, Diverse Academies Trust (DAT) and Bracken Lane Primary Academy (BLPA) has been guided by the following principles:

- that all stakeholders are of equal value – in terms of education, a stakeholder is someone who has a personal stake in the success and welfare of a school or education system. This includes all parties that are directly affected by the success or failure of an educational system, as well as those indirectly affected. For the purposes of this policy, a stakeholder is anyone with a responsibility to the trust (trustee), is employed by the trust and anyone who uses or provides any services including (but not exclusively) pupils, parents/carers, training providers, outside agencies and contractors.
- difference should be recognised and respected
- positive attitudes and relationships should be fostered, resulting in a shared sense of cohesion, and belonging.
- clear evidence of this policy in the practices of staff recruitment, retention, and development
- the reduction and eventual removal of pre-existing inequalities and barriers
- wide consultation with, and involvement of, all stakeholders in the formulation of policy
- sound evidence is used as a base for our policy and practices
- objectives pertaining to this policy are specific and measurable over reasonable timescales

1.2 With regard to groups as described under Section 5.2 below, we will ensure that they are all treated of equal value. Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate, but will take account of differences of life-experience, outlook, and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage that people may face in relation to their choices.

1.3 Additionally, we intend that our policies, procedures, and activities should promote positive attitudes and interactions between people in these groups, leading to mutual respect and good relations between all, and with an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents.

1.4 Bracken Lane Primary Academy are committed to policies and procedures that benefit all employees, current and potential, in recruitment and promotion and their continuing professional development, and will take opportunities to maximise positive impact by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people of these groups.

1.5 Bracken Lane Primary Academy will engage with a range of groups and individuals to 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, consulting and involving, wherever possible, members within these groups.

1.6 Bracken Lane Primary Academy intend that our policies and activities should benefit society, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion between, and encouraging greater participation in public life of, people in these groups.

1.7 Diverse Academies, within the annual framework of improvement planning and processes of self-evaluation, will set out specific and measurable equality objectives that the trust, its employees, and stakeholders shall pursue and review. The objectives which we identify will take into account national and local priorities and available information as appropriate.

1.8 Diverse Academies and Bracken Lane Primary Academy will regularly review and renew this policy and our overarching statement pertaining to equality across all our organisations.

2 Policy statement

2.1 Introduction

The UK has specific legislation on equality that outlaw discrimination and offers protection and redress to employees and stakeholders, underpinned by core British values, individual freedom, belief in personal responsibility and mutual respect and fairness.

2.2 This policy describes how Bracken Lane Primary Academy is meeting statutory duties in line with national guidance. It includes information about how its academies are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

3 Scope and purpose

3.1 This policy applies to all stakeholders, students, employees, including volunteers, agency workers, consultants, or self-employed contractors.

4 Responsibility for implementing the policy

4.1 Diverse Academies Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to Helen Cawkill, Academy Principal

5 Legal duties

5.1 As an organisation we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- foster good relations between different groups

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of specific protected characteristics. A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- age
- disability
- race
- religion and belief
- sex (including transgender)
- gender reassignment
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for employees)
- maternity and pregnancy

6 British values

6.1 Equality and diversity are embodied in the aims published by Diverse Academies and Bracken Lane Primary Academy. All who work in the trust will aim to promote the spiritual, moral,

cultural, mental, and physical development of all students and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in a world where we value individual liberty, democracy, the law, mutual respect, and tolerance. Our students will meet, live, and work with people of different cultures, religions, languages, and ethnic origins. We are committed to providing equal opportunities for all and recognise that preparation for life in a diverse society is relevant to everyone.

6.2 In addition, these British values are also promoted at various times in and across the curriculum throughout the year. The curriculum at Bracken Lane Primary Academy is broad and balanced, complies with current legislation and provides a wide range of subjects to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of life in modern Britain. It actively promotes fundamental British values and extends beyond the classroom via a wide range of visits and experiences, engaging them in extracurricular activity and volunteering in the local community, and promoting tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths, cultures, and lifestyles through effective spiritual, moral social and cultural development. It is supported by a well-rounded programme of assemblies and tutorials which offer clear guidance about the values

7 Aims and objectives

7.1 Bracken Lane Primary Academy is committed to equal opportunities and to preventing discrimination, victimisation, and harassment. In particular:

- no employee, volunteer, student, governor, parent, or any other stakeholder shall suffer discrimination on the grounds of their sex, race, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability (discrimination)
- no employee, volunteer, student, governor, parent, or any other stakeholder will be treated less favourably because of exercising his or her statutory rights (victimisation)
- no employee, volunteer, student, governor, parent, or any other stakeholder will be subjected to unwanted, unwelcome, upsetting, or embarrassing behaviours based on their sex, race, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability (harassment)
- it is the responsibility of all staff, students, and governors at every level of Diverse Academies to adhere to the policy and to ensure it is effective.
- Bracken Lane Primary Academy will provide a friendly and secure environment for all
- every student should have the opportunity for full involvement in academy activities
- the contributions of all members of the academy, students, teaching and support staff should be valued and respected

- no form of harassment, whether religious, racial, sexual or any other sort will be accepted
- Bracken Lane Primary Academy will show due regard for the principles of equal opportunities in the selection, promotion, deployment, and training of staff
- resources should be free of inappropriate stereotypes and, where appropriate, selected with a view to promoting the ethos of equal opportunities and to reflect the pluralism of society
- all students should have equal opportunity to study any area of the curriculum to the level that best suits their ability and should be encouraged to take a full and active part in lessons
- the whole curriculum should take account of the issues of equal opportunities.

7.2 To achieve our aims we will:

- publish and share our policy with all stakeholders of the academy community to show compliance with the Equality Duty
- reinforce our ethos of the value we place upon equality and diversity
- use existing data to ensure compliance with legislation
- challenge inappropriate behaviour that does not fulfil any equality commitment.

7.3 Success criteria

- students are aware of the impact of prejudice and understand their responsibility to prevent it
- staff are aware of the single equality policy
- data is collated and analysed to monitor equality
- incidents are logged and reported.
- Diverse Academies and Bracken Lane Primary Academy's equality objectives are published at least once every 4 years, ensuring they are specific and measurable.

8 Roles and responsibility

8.1 Promoting equality is the responsibility of all employees within Diverse Academies, Bracken Lane Primary Academy and other stakeholders.

8.2 Diverse Academies is responsible for ensuring that legislation relevant to this policy is complied with and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

8.3 The principal, Helen Cawkill (in conjunction with the business manager) in Bracken Lane Primary Academy is responsible for the local implementation of this policy, ensuring that:

- all staff are aware of their responsibilities
- all staff are given appropriate training and support
- appropriate action is taken in cases of unlawful discrimination

8.4 All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos
- deal with, and report, any prejudice-related incidents that occur
- plan and deliver curricular lessons that reflect the objectives in paragraph 6
- support students for whom English is an additional language
- support students and staff who may have social, emotional, mental health concerns
- support students and staff who may fall under the areas covered in para 6 and 7 in the policy
- keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work
- adhere to relevant academy and head office risk assessments – including those published in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and any other relevant risks

8.5 Students are expected to:

- treat each other with respect and courtesy
- explore and value diversity
- speak out if they witness, or are subject to any, inappropriate language, or behaviour, or feel that they have been treated unfairly
- adhere to their relevant academy risk assessment, as guided by respective academy staff – including the risk assessment published in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and any other relevant risks.

9 Information and resources

9.1 We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all employees and governors of Bracken Lane Primary Academy and, as appropriate, to all students, parents and carers.

9.2 All employees and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss

and explain concepts of equality, diversity, and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

10 Religious observance

10.1 We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all employees, students, and parents/carers, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

11 Staff development and training

11.1 We ensure that all Bracken Lane Primary Academy employees, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as cohorts.

11.2 All staff are trained and made fully aware of their obligations to follow the Covid-19 risk assessment, and any other relevant risks, in their place of work

12 Record keeping

12.1 Bracken Lane Primary Academy records will be retained securely. Whilst we acknowledge that such allegations (as all others) may be false, malicious, or misplaced, we also acknowledge that they may be founded. It is therefore essential that all allegations be investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures. The following definitions will be used to determine the outcome of any alleged allegation – which will follow the protocol and policy laid out in the Diverse Academies concerns and complaints policy document:

- substantiated: sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- malicious: sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- false: sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- unsubstantiated: insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence
- unfounded: no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegations being made.

13 Supporting those involved

13.1 Bracken Lane Primary Academy has a duty of care to its employees and will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and explained the course of action unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police. The investigating officer will appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual e.g., contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support, access to welfare counselling or medical advice. Diverse Academies will deal with any allegation of abuse made against a teacher, other member of staff, or volunteer, in a quick, fair, and consistent way to minimise the stress inherent in the situation, thus providing effective protection for the child, whilst simultaneously supporting the subject of the allegation.

13.2 Diverse Academies and Bracken Lane Primary Academy has a duty of care to its employees in respect of Covid restrictions and the associated heightened threat to health and well-being because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This would equally apply to any other identified risk.

Staff with identifiable additional risks, either because of pregnancy, age, gender, ethnicity, diagnosed vulnerable clinical conditions or diagnosed critically vulnerable conditions will be supported in accordance with the measures outlined in the respective Covid-19 risk assessment, and any other identified risk.

14 Confidentiality

14.1 Bracken Lane Primary Academy will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The Education Act 2002 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a student from the same academy (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). The reporting restrictions apply until the point that the accused person is charged with an offence, or until the Secretary of State publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation

15 Monitoring and evaluation

15.1 Diverse Academies collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the

implementation of this policy, and in accordance with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) legislation (May 2018) may adjust it as appropriate.

16 Review of the policy

The policy is reviewed by the trust, which will monitor the application and outcomes to ensure it is working effectively.

The policy will be monitored to reflect any substantive changes necessary in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, (and any other identified and relevant risk) and the effect on staff working practices and staff/student safety.