



SECKFORD FOUNDATION
FREE SCHOOLS TRUST

**POLICY
DOCUMENT**

Equalities Policy (Students)

Document Owner:	Trust Board
Responsible Trust Committee:	Education Committee
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APPROVED Signature (Trust Board):	DATE ()
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1. Other relevant policies and documents

- Admissions Policy (Beccles Free School)
- Admissions Policy (Ixworth Free School)
- Admissions Policy (Saxmundham Free School)
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Combatting Extremism and Radicalisation Policy
- Equality Policy (Employees)
- Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SMSC Policy

2. Explanation of terms used in the policy

'Trust' = Seckford Foundation Free Schools Trust

'Free School(s)' = schools within the Trust

3. Purpose of the policy

This document outlines the equalities policy for the Trust and all its Free Schools with regard to student equality. This policy covers the Trust and all its Free Schools and as such there is no need for each Free School to have its own policy. There is a separate Equalities Policy (Employees) that covers the Trust's duties and responsibilities as an employer.

4. Policy statement

The Trust welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity.

The Trust recognises that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit the Trust and its Free Schools.

We believe that equality in the Trust and all of our schools should permeate all aspects of school life and every member of the schools' communities should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

To fulfil this aim we recognise that due regard for equality implications must be fully integrated in everything we do, whether making decisions, developing policy or taking action, and to keep them under review on a continuing basis.

To support this we are committed to the principles for promoting equality set out in 5 below.

5. Promoting equality

5.1 Curriculum

We aim to provide all students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To achieve this we will ensure:

- Curriculum planning reflects a commitment to equality;
- The curriculum prepares students for life in a diverse society and uses opportunities to reflect the background and experience of students and families in the Free Schools;
- There will be opportunities in the curriculum to explore concepts and issues related to identity and equality;
- The promotion of attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour and language wherever it occurs;
- The use of non-stereotyped materials that reflect accurately a range of cultures, identities and lifestyles.

5.2 Achievement

There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes we recognise that:

- Adults in the Free Schools will be expected to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- It is important to identify the particular needs of individuals and groups within the Free Schools and to use targeted interventions to narrow gaps in achievement;
- It is important to place a high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability;
- A range of teaching methods need to be used throughout the Free Schools to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students and that to promote student engagement students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.

5.3 Ethos and culture

- We are aware that those involved in the leadership of the Trust and its Free School communities are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect;
- We strive to achieve a feeling of openness and tolerance which welcomes everyone;
- The students are encouraged to greet visitors to the Free Schools with friendliness and respect;
- The displays around Free Schools are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality;
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure access for students and visitors (including parents / carers) with disabilities;

- Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all students through planning of both assemblies, classroom based and off site activities;
- Students are given an effective voice, for example through the Young Leaders Scheme and through student perception surveys which regularly seek their views;
- Positive role models are used throughout the school to ensure that different groups of students feel welcomed and included;
- The ethos of all Free Schools in the Trust is based on the 6Cs to Success. This is something that has to pervade all that we do and is non-negotiable

5.4 Countering and challenging prejudice and bullying

- We will counter and challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour and this is made clear to employees, students, parents / carers and Trustees / governors;
- The Trust has a clear and agreed procedure for dealing with prejudice related bullying incidents and has a nominated member of staff responsible for recording and monitoring incidents;
- Free Schools report to the Local Governing Bodies on an annual basis the number of prejudice related incidents recorded;
- The Trust's Combatting Extremism and Radicalisation Policy outlines the expectations of all of the Free Schools in relation to how to deal with extremist behaviour and radicalisation.

5.5 Partnerships with parents / carers and the wider community

The Trust and its Free Schools aim to work in partnership with parents / carers. We:

- Take action to ensure parents / carers from all backgrounds are encouraged to participate in the full life of the Free Schools;
- Ensure that there are good channels of communication to ensure parent / carer views are captured and acted upon;
- Encourage members of the local community to join in school activities and celebrations;
- Ensure that the parents / carers of newly arrived students e.g. EAL, Traveller or students with disabilities are made to feel welcome.

6. Responsibilities

Everyone involved with the Trust has a responsibility for promoting equalities.

The Trust Board has responsibility for ensuring that:

- The Trust complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the Trust and its Free Schools;
- The Trust's Equalities Policy is maintained and updated regularly; and that equality objectives are easily identifiable (these may be included within the Trust and School Development Plans, the Free Schools Accessibility Plan or may be stand alone documents);

- The actions, procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented;
- The named Equalities Governor on each Local Governing Body (LGB) will have an overview, on behalf of the LGB, on all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to these incidents.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Teams of each Free School have responsibility for:

- In partnership with the Trust Board, providing leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equalities Policy;
- Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- Ensuring that all who enter their Free School are aware of, and comply with, the Equalities Policy;
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- Taking appropriate action in response to any discriminatory or prejudice-related incidents,

All employees have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Trust Equalities Policies and schemes;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- Ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other equality issues;
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

Parents / Carers and the Wider Community can also play their part in promoting equality by:

- Taking an active part in identifying barriers for the Trust and its Free Schools and in informing the Trust Board of actions that can be taken to eradicate these;
- Taking an active role in supporting and challenging the Trust and its Free Schools to achieve the commitment given to tackle inequality and achieve equality of opportunity for all.

Students are also expected to:

- Support the Trust and its Free Schools to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality;
- Uphold the commitment made by the Headteacher on how learners and parents / carers, staff and the wider Trust and its Free Schools can be expected to be treated.

7. Equality objectives

Specific equality objectives will be developed and included within the Trust and School Development Plans.

These objectives will be developed using the equality data and impact assessments above,

and involving representatives of teaching and support staff, students, parents / carers and the Trust Board and shared with the whole community.

Specific regard will be given to the following aspects of equality when monitoring equality and developing objectives:

- Eliminating discrimination;
- Advancing equality of opportunity;
- Fostering good relations between all groups.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

The Trust will collect quantitative and qualitative data to enable the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy in achieving equality.

The Equalities Policy and other relevant policies will be evaluated and monitored for their equality impact on students, employees, parents / carers from the different groups that make up our schools and the findings used to review and develop the equality objectives for the Trust and its Free Schools.

9. Complaints

Any complaints about this policy from outside the Trust should be made in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy. Any other complaints should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher on the relevant school site in the first instance. Serious issues could be raised through the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

10. Compliance and performance monitoring

The Trust Board will review this policy every two years and ensure that practice across all schools is in line with this policy. Any review will take into account the most up-to-date legislation and guidance.

The Trust has identified a range of Assurance Methodologies as tools by which compliance with policies can be tested. Those most relevant to this policy include:

- Internal Audit
- External Audit