



Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

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Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy

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1. Introduction

The Organisation values every person who works for us. Each of us is unique, whether in terms of our background, personal characteristics, experience, skills or motivations.

Fostering an inclusive culture helps each of us to benefit from a wider range of these different perspectives, experiences and skills. We believe that this creates a positive, more productive working environment for us all.

To support this inclusive culture, this policy:

- outlines our commitment throughout the employment lifecycle to equality, diversity and inclusion and sets out how we put this commitment into practice;
- explains the behaviours we expect of our people in support of this commitment; and
- sets out the key steps we take to make our culture as inclusive as possible, including our diversity and inclusion framework and how we ensure equality of opportunity throughout the employment lifecycle.

2. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working for us. School Governors are bound by the employment legislation detailed in this policy and have the discretion to adopt this policy within their respective schools.

This includes employees, apprentices, workers, contractors, volunteers including school Governors and individuals on work experience. The policy also relates to job applicants and is relevant to all stages of the employment relationship.

The policy accompanies our Anti-Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy and any other equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies adopted by the Council and School Governing Body.

The policy ensures that the organisation meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023.

3. Our commitment to you

We believe that a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion not only benefits our organisation but supports wellbeing and enables our people to work better because they can be themselves.

We are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust and respect, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

We ensure that all of none of our working practices, behaviour, policies and procedures treat people less favourably because of their:

- disability;
- gender, gender identity or gender reassignment status;
- marital status;
- race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- age;
- civil partnership status;
- pregnancy or maternity;

4. What we expect from you

We expect you, and every one of our people, to take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy. Our culture is made in the day-to-day working interactions between us so creating the right environment is a responsibility that we all share.

Cultivating this culture does not happen by accident but requires ongoing commitment and nurturing. The reality is that we live in a world where areas of difference (whether gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or others) often translate to biases, challenges and barriers that may not be faced by others.

We expect you to treat your colleagues and third parties (including customers, suppliers, contractors, agency staff and consultants etc.) fairly and with dignity, trust and respect. Sometimes, this may mean allowing for different views and viewpoints and making space for others to contribute.

By embedding such values and constructively challenging inappropriate comments or ways of working, you can help us achieve and maintain a truly inclusive workplace culture.

Any dealings that you have with colleagues or third parties must be free from any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.

If any of our people is found to have committed, authorised or condoned (including by ignoring) an act of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying, we will take action against them including (for those to whom it applies) under our Disciplinary policy.

5. Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination relating to 9 protected characteristics. These are:

- disability;
- sex;
- gender reassignment;
- marital or civil partnership status;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sexual orientation;
- age; and
- pregnancy or maternity.

Discrimination can be intentional or unintentional and may occur directly, indirectly, by association, or by perception. Please refer to the organisation's mandatory Equality, Inclusion & Diversity (EDI) training for further information.

Different types of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 can be found in the Appendix.

6. Harassment and sexual harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of:

- violating someone else's dignity; or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone else.

Sexual harassment is:

- conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; and
- less favourable treatment related to sex or gender reassignment that occurs because of a rejection of, or submission to, sexual conduct.

You should refer to our Anti-bullying and anti-harassment guidance for further information on our procedure for reporting harassment.

7. Victimisation

Victimisation is treating another person detrimentally either because that person has made a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or because they have supported someone else who has made such a complaint, for example by giving a witness statement that supports the allegations.

8. Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, we regard it as conduct that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting, or an abuse or misuse of power, and usually persistent, that has the effect of undermining, humiliating or injuring the recipient.

Bullying can be physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. It is not necessarily face to face and can be done by email, phone calls, online or on social media. Bullying may occur at work or outside work.

If the bullying relates to a person's protected characteristic, it may also constitute harassment and, therefore, will be unlawful (see Harassment).

You should refer to our Anti-bullying and Anti-Harassment guidance for further information on our procedure for reporting bullying.

9. Our equality, diversity and inclusion framework

Employee support groups

We are proud to have employee support groups to provide a forum for people who have a passion for, or a connection with, a particular aspect of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The aim of these support networks is to:

- provide networking opportunities and community support;
- organise events to raise awareness and provide education; and
- contribute ideas and suggestions for ways the organisation can be more diverse and inclusive.

The most effective networks are sustained by employees and People Services provide a conduit for developing associated policies.

Established employee support networks include:

- Neurodiversity
- Menopause
- Endometriosis

The organisation is committed to supporting the establishment of further support networks.

EDI Initiatives

We are proud to have committed to and signed up to a range of schemes to ensure the organisation is continuously working to support our diverse workforce. These include:

- Age Friendly
- Disability Confident
- Armed Forces Covenant
- Breastfeeding Friendly Employer
- Anti-racism Pledge
- White Ribbon (Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse Sexual Violence)
- Carers Wales

People Services are committed to developing and supporting these and other groups where an interest is expressed.

10. Equality of opportunity

Recruitment

We take reasonable and appropriate steps to encourage job applications from as diverse a range of people as possible.

Anyone making a decision about recruitment must not discriminate in any way and must have completed the mandatory EDI training.

Every decision-maker should challenge themselves, and other members of the recruitment selection panel, to make sure that any stereotypes, unconscious bias or prejudice do not play any part in recruitment decisions.

Career development

Any decision you make relating to a person's promotion or career development must be objective and free from discrimination.

We ensure that selection criteria and processes for recruitment and promotion are reviewed on a regular basis so that there is no discriminatory impact on a certain group.

Disability inclusion

The recruitment team will consider disability in advance of a recruitment campaign so that advertising, application forms and assessments, arrangements for interviews, job descriptions and employee specifications, and selection criteria are appropriate and as inclusive as possible.

We will ask applicants at the outset if they require any reasonable adjustments to be made to the recruitment process. These may include ensuring easy access to the

premises for an interview/adapting psychometric tests/replacing psychometric tests with an alternative option/providing an alternative to a telephone interview for a deaf candidate/providing a suitable chair for an interview with a candidate suffering from back problems.

If you are involved in the interview process, you must not ask job applicants about their health or disability except with prior approval from the Professional Lead Human Resources. Such approval is given only in exceptional circumstances and where there are specific legal grounds for doing so.

11. Talking about disability

We understand that some people find it hard to discuss their disabilities and that disability can be invisible.

Psychological safety, where people feel able to speak up about their experiences without fear of negative consequences, is paramount to ensuring disability inclusion.

However, this is only possible if we treat people with dignity, trust and respect and we expect everyone to uphold these values.

We do not tolerate ableist language in our organisation. Ableist language is language that is negative, inappropriate or offensive towards people with a disability and may take the form of jokes or "banter". If you adopt such language, we will take action against you including (for those to whom it applies) under our Disciplinary policy.

Support and Reasonable adjustments

If you have a disability, you do not have to share this information with your manager. However, we would encourage you to share this, so that your manager can support you, for example by making reasonable adjustments to the environment that you work in or to aspects of your role, or to our working practices.

If you are experiencing difficulties at work because of your disability, please contact your manager to discuss potential reasonable adjustments that may alleviate or minimise such difficulties. Your manager may need advice from an Occupational Health professional to help put the right support in place. If you are experiencing difficulties in getting reasonable adjustments you should follow up with the service area HR contact.

Additional Support

If you have a disability, or you care for someone with a disability, and need emotional support or help with practical issues, please contact our Employee Assistance Programme for free, confidential advice. Details of how to access this service are on our [HR Hub](#).

We also encourage you to join our Disability Network to speak with others who also have experience of disability and who understand the associated workplace challenges. You can make your voice heard and make a difference by helping raise disability awareness and understanding across the wider organisation.

Accessibility

Accessibility tours enable our organisation to gain a better insight into accessibility issues from the perspective of the person with a disability. If you experience accessibility issues due to your disability, for example because of aspects of our premises or because you do not have adaptive equipment to help you perform your role, please contact your manager.

12. Training

Every member of staff is required to undertake equality, diversity and inclusion training as part of the organisation's mandatory training programme.

We expect all our people to proactively support our equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives by attending events and workshops across the organisation to educate themselves on the challenges faced by others and how to help alleviate these in the workplace.

13. Monitoring and review

We analyse diversity and inclusion data (in compliance with our data protection obligations) on an ongoing basis to assess the impact of this policy and our equality, diversity and inclusion strategy.

Appendix

Different types of Discrimination

- **Direct discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic compared with someone who does not have that characteristic (for example choosing not to recruit someone because they are disabled and you think they "wouldn't fit in" to the team).
- **Indirect discrimination:** Where a policy, procedure or way of working that applies to everyone puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage, compared with people who do not have that characteristic, unless there is a good reason to justify it. An example is introducing a requirement for all staff to finish work at 6pm. It is arguable that female employees, who statistically bear the larger share of childcare responsibilities could be at a disadvantage if the new working hours prevent them from collecting their children from school or nursery.
- **Associative discrimination:** Treating someone less favourably because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example because their partner is transgender.
- **Discrimination by perception:** Treating someone less favourably because you perceive them to have a protected characteristic even if they do not, for example choosing not to promote someone because you mistakenly perceive them to be gay.
- **Discrimination arising from disability:** Treating someone unfavourably because of something connected with that person's disability and where such treatment is not justified. Examples include:
 - dismissing or failing to pay a bonus to someone because of their disability-related absence; or
 - disciplining someone for losing their temper where such loss of temper was out of character and was due to severe pain caused by them having cancer.
- **Failing to make reasonable adjustments:** Employers are legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that aspects of employment, or the employer's premises, do not put a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage. Failing to comply with this duty is unlawful. Examples of reasonable adjustments might include:
 - allocating some of the disabled person's duties to a colleague;
 - changing their working hours or place of work;
 - adjusting procedures for assessing job candidates; and
 - modifying disciplinary and grievance procedures.