

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for Students and Parents/Carers

Policy Code:	HR8B
Policy Start Date:	July 2020
Policy Review Date:	July 2023

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR8A Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for Staff
- HR12 Disciplinary Policy
- SW4 Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SW6 Anti-Bullying Policy
- SW9 Parental Communications and Complaints Policy
- TL1 Access to Fair Assessment Policy

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Trust recognises that providing equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and promoting a culture of inclusion are vital to creating respectful, positive learning environments where all individuals can flourish.
- 1.2 This policy has been written in accordance with the requirements of the *Equality Act 2010*. This policy explains the way in which the Trust is committed to meet the requirements of the Act.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.
- 1.4 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all Primary, Secondary and Special Educational Needs academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Training, Priory Apprenticeships, Lincolnshire Teaching School Alliance and Lincolnshire Teaching School Alliance SCITT.
- 1.5 The Trust is committed to leading a mentally healthy organisation, which includes a commitment to and promotion of emotional wellbeing and mental health. Therefore, all Trust policies and procedures ensure this commitment is incorporated in order to support all staff and students. Members of staff are encouraged to speak to their line managers, and students are encouraged to speak to any member of staff, if they feel any part of this policy would affect their emotional wellbeing and mental health. Any such comments should be passed to the Trust's HR department (via FederationHR@prioryacademies.co.uk) for appropriate consideration at the next available point in the policy review cycle.

2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Human Resources Director.

2.2 Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

3 Aims

3.1 To ensure that the Trust provides equality, fairness and respect for all and to ensure that no-one is unlawfully discriminated against in line with the 9 protected characteristics as detailed in the *Equality Act 2010*:

- age;
- disability;
- gender identity;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

3.2 To ensure all students within the Trust community have the opportunities to develop in every aspect of school life to the highest level.

3.3 To ensure that each Academy has a broad and balanced curriculum promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of its students.

3.4 To encourage respect and tolerance for others, their faith, culture and way of life.

3.5 To ensure that the Trust reflects the diversity of the communities in which we work.

4 Definitions

4.1 For the Trust, 'equality' is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. 'Equal opportunity' means that all people will be treated equally or similarly and not disadvantaged by prejudices or bias

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- 4.2 'Diversity' is about understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising those individual differences.

5 Discrimination

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to educate against any form of prejudice, discrimination or negative stereotyping and to ensure that their conduct reflects this responsibility at all times.
- 5.2 Students must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, fellow students and parents/carers. This applies within the Academy, outside the Academy (such as when travelling on school transport) or while wearing the Academy uniform and on Academy-related trips or events including social events.
- 5.3 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
- **Direct Discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, refusing admission to the Academy due to a student's religious views or sexual orientation.
 - **Indirect Discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring that no students wear any headwear may disproportionately affect female Muslim students who wear a hijab. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
 - **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
 - **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

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- Discrimination by association: where an individual can bring a discrimination claim based not on a characteristic of their own but on a protected characteristic of another person.

6 Disabilities

- 6.1 If a student is disabled or becomes disabled, the Trust encourages them to inform the Academy and explain their condition in order for the appropriate support to be put in place.
- 6.2 If a student experiences difficulties at school because of their disability, the student can contact their Head of Year to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Trust will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the student's need within reason. If the Trust considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the Trust will explain the reasons and seek ways to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 6.3 The Trust will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, the Trust will take appropriate steps to improve access. All Academies will have an Accessibility Plan, which details how the Academy will improve access to the physical environment and how they will increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils. The Accessibility Plan will be on each individual Academy's website and can be made available from Reception upon request.

7 Teaching and Curriculum

- 7.1 Teachers are responsible for ensuring that:
- methods, language, questioning and classroom management includes and engages all students;
 - suitable resources are chosen which motivate and are sensitive to different groups, cultures and backgrounds;
 - stereotypes and what are thought to be stereotypical activities are effectively challenged;

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- they are aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

7.2 Each Academy's curriculum will be planned and implemented to ensure equal participation by students of both sexes in all the elements of learning, knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes.

7.3 Throughout every aspect of school life students will be given the opportunity to learn about, and experience, equality and diversity. Opportunities will be presented to them to learn about the community, country and world in which they live so that they can become true citizens of the world.

8 Complaints Procedure

8.1 Any person (students/parents/carers) who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this policy has not been respected whether by a student, an employee of the Trust or the Trust as a whole, should immediately bring the situation to the attention of a member of staff, e.g. students may report to their Head of Year, parents/carers may wish to report this to the reception staff. No individual will suffer any detriment as a result of raising a legitimate worry under this policy.

8.2 If any parent/carer of a student at the Trust experiences or witnesses any behaviour from a fellow student/parent/carer on the grounds of the Academy, then they should inform reception staff immediately.

8.3 If necessary, please refer to H36 Complaints Policy or HR23 Whistleblowing Policy.

9 Discipline

9.1 Any student who is found to be acting in such a way which breaches this policy may be subject to disciplinary steps depending on the severity of the breach, as outlined in SW4 Student Discipline Policy.

9.2 If any parent/carer is found to have breached this policy on the grounds of the Academy then they may be subject to a fixed-term ban from entering the Academy's grounds.

10 Public Sector Equality Duty

10.1 The Trust is committed to complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Duty) and this policy is a recognition of that duty.

10.2 The Trust will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations.

10.3 In addition to 10.2 the Trust will:

- Publish information to show how it complies with the Equality Duty. This will be updated at least annually.
- Prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

11 Policy Changes

11.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.

Policy Document
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Students and
Parents/Carers

Policy Status: Approved
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The Priory Federation of Academies Trust Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy for Students and Parents/Carers

This Policy has been approved by the Priory Federation of Academies.

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.