



# LIFE Education Trust

## Learning Is For Everyone

Our Aim is that every School will be:

- An efficient school
- An effective School
- An enriching school
- An enabling school

## EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Policy</b>
<b>Staff consulted on Pay Policy</b>	10.11.21
<b>Policy adopted by Trust Board</b>	9.11.21
<b>Reported to LGBs for implementation</b>	24.11.21
<b>Implementation Date</b>	24.11.21
<b>Review Date</b>	November 2025
<b>Policy Source</b>	<b>Essex Model Policy</b>

## KEY DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY:

The Trust	LIFE Education Trust
The Board/Directors/Trust Board School/Trust school	The Board of Directors of LIFE Education Trust An Academy or school within LIFE Education Trust
Staff	All staff employed by LIFE Education Trust and working with academies, schools or units within LIFE Education Trust

**All schools** within the LIFE Education Trust are legally defined as academies, regardless of whether the term “school” is used to describe them in the following policy.

**Please take note of Appendix 1: Racial Incidents Reporting**

### **Equal Opportunities Statement**

In fulfilling the requirements of the General Equality Duty, outlined in the Equality Act 2010, the Trust has published its Equality Objectives of the Trust on its website and the websites of all schools within the Trust.

This Trust is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, student or other member of its community is treated less favourably on the grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual’s self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated.

The Trust aims to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member. It seeks to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the Trust community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of Equal Opportunities in the context of the Trust’s ethos and values. In particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the Policy.

Every person in the Trust is responsible for promoting the Trust’s Equal Opportunities Policy and is obliged to respect and act in accordance with the Policy. We recognise our duty in setting specific, measurable equality objectives and include these in our school development plan

### **Aims and Objectives**

- The Trust does not unlawfully discriminate against anyone, whether student, parent, staff or visitor on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.
- The Trust aims to increase the extent to which all students, in particular those with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act, feel valued and confident, and in consequence more likely to achieve their potential.

- The Trust promotes self-esteem in students through pastoral support, the curriculum, in particular the PSCHEE (Perspectives) programme and activities including assemblies and all enrichment provision.
- The Trust will aim to increase the involvement of vulnerable students in out of school clubs and activities.
- The Trust ensures that recruitment, employment, promotion and development opportunities are open to all.
- The Trust will maintain robust and secure procedures for identifying and supporting EAL and SEND students and to ensure they have equal access to the curriculum, school facilities, extra-curricular activities and effective support systems.
- The Trust will make effective use of the Pupil Premium.
- The Trust will ensure that all students and staff make a positive contribution in fostering good relations between different communities within the school.
- The Trust will endeavour to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by students which are connected to a particular characteristic they may have (as identified in the 2010 Equality Act)
- Where appropriate the Trust will actively take steps to meet the particular needs of students who possess a certain characteristic (as identified in the 2010 Equality Act). This includes the possibility of implementing the “positive action” clause of the Equality Act 2010 which allows for the setting up of certain courses for specific groups eg Roma students.

## **1. Implementation:**

### **1.1 Recruitment**

- One of the aims of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified.
- In accordance with the spirit of this policy, employees are given an equal opportunity to progress within the Trust.
- When recruiting staff, health questions will not be asked until after the offer of a job is made, and then, only if it is necessary for the role.

### **1.2 Training and Development**

The Trust will endeavour to:

- Enhance and develop the skills knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential irrespective of background or employment status.
- Provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs.
- Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which Staff, Trustees, Parents/guardians and students can make.

### **1.3 Curriculum**

- Every student has an equal entitlement to the National Curriculum and, subject to entry requirements, to all other areas of the curriculum, regardless of language, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.

- All students should have equal access to the curriculum regardless of academic ability. Consequently this policy should be read in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Policy.
- The Trust will monitor any careers advice or work experience placements provided by outside agencies to aim to ensure equal opportunities.

## **2.**

### **2.1 Race**

The Trust will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups.
- The Trust will not tolerate any form of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, it will be dealt with in accordance with Trust procedures.
- The Trust endeavours to be welcoming to all minority groups. The celebration and understanding of cultural diversity is promoted through the topics studied by the students and is reflected in displays, resources and events.
- Cultural diversity and respect for others are celebrated and reflected across the whole curriculum. The curriculum will enhance students' understanding of British and world society and history, including the contributions of minority ethnic groups.
- The Trust will give students the understanding they need to recognise prejudice and reject racial discrimination.

### **2.2 Gender**

- Expectant mothers or new mothers will not be discriminated against.
- The school regards it as very important that we seek support from re-integration and education welfare officers to enable pregnant students and School age mothers to complete their education.

### **2.3 Disability**

- Where appropriate, specialist aids and facilities will be provided to enable disabled people to access services, and opportunities. This policy runs in conjunction with our Disability Equality Scheme.

### **2.4 Religion**

- We will promote tolerance of all religious beliefs through the curriculum and through assemblies.
- We will not discriminate against someone on the grounds that they do not adhere, or sufficiently adhere, to a particular religion or belief (even one shared by the discriminator), or indeed any religion or belief at all – such as, for example, an atheist.

### **2.5 Sexual Orientation**

- We will inculcate in all students a respect for people of all sexual orientations.
- Bullying or derogatory comments based on the sexual orientation of an individual will not be tolerated.

## 2.6 Age

- The Trust will put procedures in place to ensure that no-one is denied a job, an equal chance of training or promotion or suffers from harassment or victimisation because of their age.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities:

All who work in the Trust have a responsibility for promoting equality and inclusion, and avoiding unfair discrimination.

### 3.1 The Trust is responsible for:

- making sure the Trust complies with all current equality legislation; • making sure this policy and its procedures are followed.

### 3.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the Trustees, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it;
- making sure its procedures are followed;
- producing regular information for staff and Trustees about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary;
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.

### 3.3 Staff are responsible for:

- modeling good practice, dealing with racist incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- promoting equality and good race relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, ethnic or national origins, language, culture, religion or belief, disability, gender, sexual orientation or social class;
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities.

### 3.4 Students are responsible for:

- keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda, through a shared input with staff on developing policies relating to this area. This may include:
  - the anti-bullying policy and specifically racist and homophobic bullying;
  - developing school/class rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Actively modelling kindness and non-discriminatory behavior, in keeping with said rules and related school curricula

### 3.5 Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- keeping equality and diversity issues on the Parent Staff /Association agenda, through a shared input with staff on developing policies relating to this area. This may include:

- the anti-bullying policy and specifically racist and homophobic bullying;
- ensuring the above is explicit within our Home School Policy.
- Discussion at PIP meetings and active support wherever possible.

### **3.6 Visitors are responsible for:**

- knowing and following our equality policy.

## **4. Monitoring and Evaluation**

As a Trust we will :

- Define equality objectives that support the aims of the act and review them every 4 years.
- Ensure the objectives are specific and measurable.
- Publish the objectives so that they are accessible to the public.
- Undertake an annual evaluation process to ensure that the policy is clear, in keeping with current legislation and being adhered to.

## **5. Complaints Procedure**

### **Stage 1**

Any parent or student who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this Equality and Diversity Policy has not been respected should follow the procedure in the Complaints Policy. The person responsible for this breach will be reminded of the existence and purpose of this policy, and asked to adhere to the policy.

### **Stage 2**

If any staff member is found to be behaving in an unacceptable manner according to this policy, the matter will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedures.

This may result in:

- A warning being issued
- An investigatory meeting
- A disciplinary meeting
- A referral to a higher level of authority

### **Stage 3**

Members of staff who have been dealt with under Stage 2 have the right of appeal to the Appeal Committee. The right of appeal for parents is highlighted in the Complaints Policy.

## Appendix 1:

### Racial Incidents Reporting

#### 1. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the policy.
- The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy and procedures.
- All members of the school community are responsible for following the procedures.
- The Local Authority will advise schools on the management of racial incidents and the findings from its monitoring.

#### 2. Recording the Racial Incident Investigation

The Headteacher has overall responsibility (which may be delegated to an appointed senior member of staff) for managing racial incidents. The Headteacher should ensure that the school has:

- Made it a requirement to investigate, record and report where there is a perception that a racial incident may have taken place.
- Communicated the school's commitment to tackling racial incidents to all members of the school community, including provision for this procedure to be made available in community languages where appropriate.
- Recorded the Racial Incident as soon as possible after an incident has taken place.

#### 3. Management of Racial Incidents

##### Considerations for All Incidents:

- Investigate the incident thoroughly by talking to all involved including staff and potential witnesses
- Record the incident on the Racial Incident Monitoring spreadsheet in any instance where the victim or perpetrator is a student.
- Keep the situation under regular review to ensure that any harassment, abuse or victimisation has stopped and that the victim feels safe.
- Consider any curriculum implications, including the need for a special assembly or changes to the school's behaviour code or other policies. □ Support for the Victim (if a student).
- Support for the alleged Perpetrator (if a student ).
- Consider if there is a child protection issue in this case.
- Consider seeking advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead

##### Support for the Victim (if a student)

- Take appropriate action to offer support to the victim.
- Meet with the student's parent(s)/guardian/carer to discuss the matter and explain the action taken. An interpreter/translator may be needed at the meetings.
- Reinforce the school's commitment to tackling racist incidents.

##### Support for the alleged Perpetrator (if a student)

- An appropriate member of staff should intervene and take immediate action, for example, placing the victim(s) and perpetrator(s) into separate rooms.
- Any racist behaviour should be challenged immediately. The perpetrator should be told that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

- Appropriate action should be taken to support, educate and monitor the behaviour of the perpetrator to ensure that the racist behaviour will not be repeated.
- The incident should be reported to the Principal and he/she should decide whether any further action needs to be taken, including notifying the police and informing the parent(s)/guardian/carer of the relevant student(s) of any investigation and the outcome.
- The Headteacher should consider the use of a full range of sanctions including the use of fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Discuss the incident with the alleged perpetrator's parent(s)/guardian/carer (if appropriate) and reinforce the school's commitment to tackling racial incidents.

### **Dealing with Members of Staff as alleged Perpetrators or Victims**

All members of staff are required to abide by the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy. Substantiated racial discrimination by any member of staff towards students may be considered as misconduct and the perpetrator may be subject to disciplinary action. In the event of such an allegation being made against a member of staff, the Headteacher or his/her nominee should investigate the allegation in accordance with the relevant Disciplinary Procedures. In the case of the Perpetrator the Headteacher will nominate the member of staff to investigate the incident. All members of staff have the right to use the Trust's Grievance procedure if they suffer discrimination and cannot get satisfactory management support. The Local Governing Body and Headteacher have a duty of care towards employees, and must ensure that they address any complaints from employees about discrimination by students, parents or colleagues, and provide appropriate support and referrals as necessary.

### **Dealing with Members of the Public as alleged Perpetrators**

Racially motivated conduct by members of public requires an immediate response. The following procedure is to be followed in cases of racial incidents involving a member of the public:

- The incident to be reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
- The police to be informed of incidents involving violent, threatening or abusive behaviour.

## **4. Managing the impact of racial incidents in the school and the community**

- Racist graffiti or slogans should be reported and removed immediately.
- Racist literature, badges and insignia should be confiscated immediately, giving a clear explanation setting out the reasons why the property has been confiscated. The confiscated property should be handed to the police in criminal proceedings or returned to the student's parents at an early opportunity, as appropriate. A teacher may not deliberately destroy a confiscated item unless such action is necessary in the immediate interests of safety.
- If the incident has caused damage or is seen as a threat of damage to a person or property, it may be appropriate to call a meeting either with staff only or with students to discuss what has happened. Support and advice may also need to be sought from the Local Safeguarding Board, the Police, the local Racial Equality Council, a Victim Support group or another appropriate agency.

## **5. Reporting to the Police**

Violent, criminal or other serious racial incidents may be reported to the Police. This applies to all racial incidents brought to the attention of the school, regardless of the relationship of the parties to the school. The Police have the discretion to decide to pursue action based on incidents. Violent, criminal or serious incidents should also be reported to the Local Governing Body and Board of Directors if necessary.



## **6. Reporting information to parents, governors and the Local Authority**

The Local Governing Body will receive a termly report on any racial incidents

The school will report annually to the Board of Directors and Local Authority on racial incidents during the preceding year. The LA will send a data collection form to the school for this purpose and ensure that schools, together with senior Local Education Authority officers, are informed of the outcomes of its monitoring, so that any trends or concerns can inform school planning and curriculum development.