



*Thinking Schools Academy Trust*  
**“Transforming Life Chances”**

Thinking Schools Academy Trust

Equality Policy

This policy was adopted on	November 2020
The policy is to be reviewed on	September 2021

## **1. Introduction**

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (The Trust) is committed to ensuring that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups whilst having an inclusive approach and focus on the wellbeing and progress of every child. We aim to ensure that students, parents, governors, employees, contractors, partners, clients and those who may potentially join the Trust community, are treated fairly, and with dignity and respect.

The Trust believes that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people.

## **2. Equality Statement**

In accordance with Trust and Academy ethos and values we respect the equal human rights of all our students, educate them about equality and respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community.

We assess (“Equality Impact Assessment”) our school practices, policies, procedures and provision and implement all necessary resulting actions in relation to ethnicity, religion or belief, socio-economic background, gender and gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity

We promote community cohesion at Academy, local, national and global levels, comparing our school community to its local and national context and implementing all necessary actions in relation to ethnicity, religion or belief, and socio-economic background.

## **3. Policy & Scope**

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics).

This means that schools cannot discriminate against students and employees or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity. Age, marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” and relevant to employees but are not part of the school provisions related to students.

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

This Policy sets out how the Trust and its schools meet the two specific duties with in the Equality to act.

The Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two Specific Duties:

- Our schools to publish information to show compliance with equality duty

- Our schools to publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years, which are specific and measurable.

#### 4. Thinking Schools Academy Trust 6 Principles

The Trust's approach to equality is based on the following key principles:

**1 All learners are of equal value**

Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, gender or sexual orientation

**2 We recognise and respect diversity**

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised.

**3 We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

**4 Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:**

Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, gender or sexual orientation

**5 We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist, and take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:**

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men and LGBT

**6 We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:**

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys and LGBT

## **5. Responsibilities**

The Trust Governing Body are responsible for:

- Making sure the Academies/Schools follow all of its equality and diversity policies and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality.

The Head teacher/Principal/Line Manager is responsible for:

- Giving a consistent and high profile lead on equality and diversity
- Putting the Trust's equality policy into practice
- Ensuring that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out
- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination.
- Actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination, related to protected characteristics perpetrated by students, other staff or visitors.
- Keeping up to date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training.
- Complaints from parents, students and the community will be dealt with in line with the academy's complaints procedure, and as such appropriate staff will deal with the relevant stage of the complaint.

Students are responsible for:

- Respecting others in their language and actions.
- Obeying all of the Academy/School equality and diversity policies.

## **6. Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our students and the way we provide access for students to facilities, services, trips and visits.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled students –designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled students and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- We ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We 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.

- We take seriously the need to consider equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day operations of our schools/academy's.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all, working together and the need for all to embrace diversity.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

## **7. Breaches of this policy**

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure.

## **8. Links to other policies and documentation**

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the approach outlined in this policy underpins all decision making in relation to our academy/school transformation plans, policy reviews, self-evaluation, the academy/school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

There are also references to equalities in the behaviour, attendance, admissions, SEN and anti-bullying policies, as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and the student councils.

The Equality Act also applies to schools in their role as employers, and the ways we comply with this are found in all our related HR policies.

## **9. Monitoring and review of the policy**

This policy is reviewed annually by the Human Resources Department to ensure it is achieving its objectives. Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved.