



# SENDAT EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

This policy is reviewed biennially by the Provision Committee.

To be read in conjunction with but not limited to:

- SENDAT Safeguarding policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) current guidance
- Appraisal policy
- Complaints policy
- Bullying and Harassment policy
- Disciplinary procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Whistleblowing policy

and any other relevant policies and procedures

## History of Document

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## SENDAT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

SENDAT is a Multi Academy Trust specialising in the care and education of young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. This policy should be considered in the light of this context and the complexity of need that is accommodated within the Trust and its constituent Schools / Alternative Provisions (APs).

### 2. PRINCIPLES

This policy describes the way in which SENDAT will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, social / economic status.

This policy will be applied to all staff, volunteer workers and students at SENDAT Schools / Alternative Provisions (APs).

This policy outlines the commitment of SENDAT Board of Directors, Senior and Middle Leaders to ensure that equal treatment and equality of opportunity is available to all members of the SENDAT community of Schools/APS. This means not simply treating everybody the same, but understanding and seeking to remove barriers and any teaching, working or other practices which could lead to unequal outcomes for individuals or different groups of students and/or staff in SENDAT Schools/APS. It also means celebrating and valuing the diversity, achievements and strengths of all members of SENDAT School/AP communities. These include:

- Students
- Teaching staff



- Support staff
- Casual workers
- Volunteers
- Staff on work experience or training placements
- Parents/carers
- SENDAT Directors and Local Academy Board (LAB) members
- Multi-agency staff linked to the staff
- Visitors to the Trust
- Students on placement

SENDAT Directors and Leadership teams believe that equality within SENDAT Schools / APS should permeate all aspects of school life. Equality, diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of every member of the SENDAT Central Trust team and every member of the SENDAT School / AP community. Every member of the SENDAT community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At SENDAT, equality is a key principle for treating all people equally, irrespective of their gender, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, age, social / economic status or any other recognised area of discrimination. This is not simply treating everybody the same, but recognising and removing barriers to ensure equality of opportunity.

The philosophy of SENDAT is to enhance the range of experiences available to our students and staff and offer them increasing opportunities for personal, social, intellectual and physical development. Linked to this, we will continue to work with the wider community to ensure SENDAT has a central place within it.

We believe that improving the quality of education will be an ongoing process which involves monitoring and evaluation, leading to enhancement of best practice. We embrace the use of new technology to provide new opportunities for learning and teaching.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

Equality, diversity and inclusion is identified as an area requiring careful and ongoing monitoring in our Trust and Schools' Development plans (SDPs) and due regard is given to promotion of all aspects of equality and diversity within the SDP.

The Headteacher/Head of School will be the person responsible for coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of equality and diversity in each School/AP. This responsibility includes (but is not limited to):

- Providing updates on Equalities legislation and the School/AP's responsibilities in this regard; leading discussions, arranging training (see section 5.2 below) and keeping staff updated in designated staff meetings;
- Providing support and opportunities to discuss and promote equality and diversity within the School/AP and wider SENDAT community.
- Working closely with the designated link member of the SENDAT Board or Local Academy Board (LAB) with responsibility for the oversight of equality and diversity (see sections 4.1 and 5.3 below).



- Providing active support to processes and activities which monitor the impact and success of this policy.

All employees have an individual and collective responsibility to comply with Equality legislation and to uphold the SENDAT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy (see section 5.4 below).

## **4. SENDAT STUDENTS**

### **4.1 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

SENDAT Directors will regularly review the impact of the Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and related policies on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for students and parents/carers. The Board will look at the balance within Trust leadership groups for diversity.

Particular attention will be given to assessing the impact of SENDAT policies on the attainment and other outcomes of students from different groups, such as Looked After Children, Free School Meals children, boy/girls.

SENDAT Leadership teams will make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track students' progress as they move through SENDAT Schools/APs. As part of this process, SENDAT Leadership teams will regularly monitor the performance of different groups, to ensure that all individuals and groups of students are making the best possible progress. This information will be used to inform future teaching and learning plans and Risk Benefit Assessments (RBAs) where appropriate. Resources are available to support groups of students where the information suggests that there is an additional need or needs. SENDAT Directors and Local Academy Board (LAB) members receive regular updates on students' educational attainment and other outcomes.

SENDAT Schools'/APs' performance information is compared to national and Local Authority data, to ensure that students are making the best possible progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

In addition to monitoring student performance information, SENDAT Directors and Leadership teams also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Exclusions and truancy
- Incidents of racism, homophobia, transphobia, disability and sexist incidents and all forms of bullying;
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extra curricula activities
- Attendance

These monitoring activities enable SENDAT Schools/APs to identify any differences in student performance. This allows Schools/APs to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups and to set targets in strategic plans, to facilitate and support the necessary improvements.

### **4.2 PROMOTING EQUALITY THROUGH THE CURRICULUM**

#### **Learning and Teaching**



SENDAT aims to provide all its students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- a. Ensure quality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- b. Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- c. Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour;
- d. Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- e. Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions;
- f. Develop students' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality;
- g. Ensure that PSHE and Citizenship cover issues of equalities, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion; as well as ensuring that different types of family (including families with lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender parents) are presented as of equal value.
- h. Celebrate diversity and promote the contribution of different ethnic groups to the curriculum area as well as profiling the positive contributions made to society by other minority groups, such as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people;
- i. Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- j. Provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all student groupings;
- k. Take account of the performance of all students when planning for future learning and settling challenging targets;
- l. Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of students;
- m. Ensure access to all to outside areas e.g. Forest Schools.

### **Learning Environment**

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 for all our young people, we recognise the importance of:

- a. Teacher enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students;
- b. Other adults (e.g. volunteers and other visitors) in the school who will try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity;
- c. Meeting all students' learning needs including the more able through carefully assessed and administered programmes of work (see SEN policy and Disability Equality Scheme);
- d. Providing an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources;
- e. Creating an environment where all students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning;



- f. Using a range of teaching methods throughout the Trust to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students.

## **Curriculum**

At SENDAT, we aim to ensure that:

- a. Planning reflects the Trust's commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity;
- b. All students have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality;
- c. Steps are taken to ensure that all students have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all students, their linguistic needs are taken into account and their learning styles are considered.
- d. All students have access to appropriate qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

## **5. SENDAT STAFF, CASUAL WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

### **5.1 STAFF RECRUITMENT**

All posts will be advertised formally and open to the widest possible pool of applicants. Targeted recruitment will be considered with regard to under-represented groups;

All those involved in recruitment and selection will be trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice which takes account of equalities through the recruitment and selection process;

Steps are taken to encourage all staff colleagues to apply for positions at all levels of the Trust and its constituent schools and to apply for more senior posts.

All supply staff are made aware of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies and practices;

### **5.2 TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Equality, diversity and inclusion training is embedded in training and other CPD activities across the Trust, including:

- Induction and Probation training programme, as detailed in the SENDAT Induction and Training policy and procedure.
- PD day programme (annual update)
- CPD (part of rolling three-year programme)

Training will take the form of face-to-face sessions, combined with on-line training. Face-to face training will include education about SENDAT policies and discussions around implementation and monitoring of those policies. The purpose of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training will be to:

- a. Educate staff about what equality and diversity means and how it affects individuals;
- b. Identify barriers that can prevent equality from being realised, such as prejudice; stereotyping, victimisation and harassment;
- c. Identify key legislation and both employers' and employees' responsibilities in relation to it;
- d. The Equality Act 2020 and the protected characteristics that form the basis of the law;



- e. Educate staff about the specifics of SENDAT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and how it should be implemented and monitored.

Decisions concerning staff career development e.g. promotion and/or secondment opportunities will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act or other relevant legislation).

### 5.3 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Equality, diversity and inclusion in employment is identified as an area requiring careful and ongoing monitoring across the Trust. The Headteacher / Head of School / AP, as the person responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating implementation and monitoring of this policy in each School / AP, will promote an ethos and atmosphere where behaviour which fails to uphold this policy is unacceptable and will not be tolerated (see section 6 below).

#### **The Headteacher / Head of School/AP will:**

- Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a standard agenda item for Senior Leadership (SLT) and Educational Management (EMT) team meetings, leading and supporting discussions.
- Provide updates on Equalities legislation and the school's responsibilities in this regard;
- Provide support to discuss and promote equalities within the school community.
- Work closely with the designated member of the SENDAT Board and/or LAB.
- Provide active support to processes and activities which monitor the impact and success of the policy.
- Investigate complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, students, parents, visitors or any others in the course of SENDAT's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the SENDAT Grievance and/or disciplinary procedures and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Details of the SENDAT Grievance and Disciplinary procedures can be found on SharePoint:

<https://priorsuffolksch.sharepoint.com/sites/SENDATHRolicies/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?viewid=0a00574b%2Dce8a%2D4013%2D9cec%2D1f8104d8c1df&id=%2Fsites%2FSENDATHRolicies%2FShared%20Documents%2F01%20HR%20Finance%20S%26P%20H%26S%20policies>

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.



### **SENDAT Directors will**

- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability to encourage equality, diversity and inclusion, and to meet the aims and commitments set out in this policy
- Monitoring will also use information gained from exit interviews to help assess how this policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually to consider and take action to address any issues.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them at least biennially, and considering and taking any action to address any issues.

### **5.4 EMPLOYEE, CASUAL WORKER AND VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

All SENDAT employees, casual workers and volunteers should understand that they, as well as the employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against students, fellow employees, suppliers and the public.

### **6. ETHOS AND ATMOSPHERE**

At SENDAT, we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in modelling and upholding mutual respect between all members of the school community, whether they are students, staff, casual workers or volunteers.

There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school and ensures all visitors are greeted with friendliness and respect by students and staff;

The displays around the school should be of a high quality and reflect all aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion;

Although physical access to the school is difficult under normal circumstances, vehicular access to a school door can be easily arranged for disabled visitors;

Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

The ethos and atmosphere at all SENDAT Schools/APs should create an environment which is free from any forms of bullying, harassment, victimisation, unlawful discrimination and which promotes dignity and respect for all.