

# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

**The OHC&AT Board of Directors has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies across the organisation – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.**

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Chair of OHCAT Board



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Chair of OHC Board



# Equality & Diversity Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils and students. OHC&AT is proud of its diverse community of pupils/students, staff and stakeholders and is committed to maintaining excellence in teaching and learning by ensuring there is equality of opportunity for all, fostered in an environment of mutual respect and dignity.

As used within this policy, 'equality' means ensuring everyone is able to participate in all our activities. 'Diversity' acknowledges there are differences between people, which should be recognised, respected and celebrated.

## CONTEXT

On 6 April 2012 public bodies were required to publish information showing how they comply with the new equality duty and setting equality objectives. The published information must be updated at least annually and there is an additional requirement to publish objectives at least once every four years.

OHC&AT is required to evidence how it meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in terms of its pupils and students but also as an employer in terms of staff. In addition, it should recognise its wider responsibilities with regard to parents/carers, governors and other stakeholders.

### What is the equality duty?

Previously public bodies were bound by three sets of duties to promote disability, race and gender equality. In April 2011 these were replaced by a single public sector equality duty.

This new duty extends to all the aspects of a person's identity – known as 'protected characteristics' – that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- race
- disability
- sex
- age
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity
- gender reassignment

The equality duty has two main parts: the 'general' equality duty and 'specific duties'.

The **general equality duty** sets out the equality matters that OHC&AT needs to consider when making decisions that affect pupils/students or staff with different protected characteristics. This duty has three elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have 'due regard', when making decisions and developing policies, to the need to:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity is defined further in the Equality Act 2010 as having due regard to the need to:

1. Remove or minimise disadvantages
2. Take steps to meet different needs
3. Encourage participation when it is disproportionately low.

In order to help educational establishments in England meet the general equality duty, there are **two specific duties** that they are required to carry out. These are:

1. To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the equality duty, at least annually;
2. To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives, at least every four years.

Equality objectives for each OHC&AT setting can be found on the relevant website.

## **PRINCIPLES OF EQUALITY ACROSS OHC&AT**

### **Pupils and students**

- All pupils and students are entitled to the best possible education that respects and addresses their individual learning needs.
- All pupils and students should be free from discrimination, harassment or bullying, particularly with regard to their protected characteristics.
- All pupils and students are given the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns with regard to OHC&AT and its discharging of its responsibilities with regard to Equality.
- All pupils and students have equality of opportunity with regard to learning experiences within and outcomes beyond OHC&AT life.
- OHC&AT will make all reasonable adaptations to maximise accessibility for all pupils and students to all aspects of the curriculum and environment.
- All pupils and students are expected to work within OHC&AT's Equality & Diversity Policy. Appropriate support will be put in place or, if necessary, sanctions taken when this is breached.
- OHC&AT will set, monitor and update targets and practices designed to narrow the achievement gap for all pupils and students.
- The diversity within the pupil/student population is recognised, valued and celebrated.

### **Staff**

- All staff have equality of opportunity with regard to support, mentoring, training and career progression.
- All staff are expected to work within OHC&AT's Equality & Diversity Policy. Appropriate support will be put in place or, if necessary, sanctions taken when this is breached.
- The diversity within the staff population is recognised, valued and celebrated and, as far as possible, utilised positively to the benefit of that individual, pupils/students and OHC&AT.
- Staff will be expected to behave as role models for pupils/students and to reflect the aims and expectations of this policy at all times.

### **OHC&AT will:**

- ensure that resources are utilised fairly for the equal benefit of all pupils and students;
- make all reasonable and permissible adjustments to the fabric of the building and surrounding grounds to ensure a safe and accessible environment for all pupils/students, staff and visitors;
- actively challenge all discrimination (racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise), harassment or bullying;
- recognise its role within the community of its pupils/students and their homes and within the wider community to present a positive image of its pupils and students, recognising their abilities and achievements, celebrating their diversity;
- collect and analyse data to ensure it is effectively monitoring both the successes and the achievement gaps between individual pupils/students but also between protected characteristics and their sub-groups (e.g. specific groups of ethnic origins). This data and its associated analysis will be presented to the Orchard Hill Family Board.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Governors and Directors**

- To review and approve this policy on an annual basis
- To review progress against OHC&AT's Equality Objectives on an annual basis
- To monitor Equality throughout OHC&AT through monitoring of data reports and the feedback from the relevant portfolio Governor/Director

### **Executive Team**

- To ensure this policy is updated annually and is disseminated to all staff
- To ensure that all pupils/students are aware of OHC&AT's position on equality and how it relates to them
- To ensure all policies, documents and actions are assessed for their impact in terms of equality
- To ensure this policy is adhered to at all times.

**Staff**

- To ensure this policy is adhered to at all times.
- To model best practice in terms of equality at all times
- To ensure that equality and diversity is an integral part of all lesson planning and delivery

**POLICY REVIEW DETAILS**

<i>Version:</i>	1.1
<i>Reviewer:</i>	Executive Team
<i>Approval body:</i>	Family Board
<i>Date this version approved:</i>	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2016
<i>Due for review:</i>	Summer 2017

**RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Positive Behaviour Policy  
Anti-Bullying Policy  
Relationships and Sex Education Policy  
Mental Capacity and Consent Policy  
SEN Policy