

Hartlepool Aspire Trust

(Catcote Trust & Catcote Futures)

Equal Opportunity Policy



Hartlepool Aspire Trust (Catcote Trust & Catcote Futures) Equal & Diversity Policy

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1 Introduction

Hartlepool Aspire Trust (HAT) is committed to promoting an understanding of the principles and practices of equality and diversity. We aim to equip students with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference. HAT will always adopt a proactive approach to disability equality, taking it into consideration in all decisions and activities.

2 Responsibilities

The following people have responsibilities under this policy.

2.1 Trustees

The Trustees will ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including staff, pupils and parents, and that they are received and updated at least once every four years.

They delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the Head Teacher

2.2 Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and pupils and monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to Governors.

2.3 Staff

All staff are expected to have regard to this document and work to achieve the objectives set out in it.

3 Policy

3.1 Introduction

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty (PESD) and to publish equality objectives

The Equality Act (2010) provides protection from discrimination and details certain types of unlawful discriminatory behaviour based on aspects of a person's identity known as 'protected characteristics'. Every member of the HAT is regarded of equal worth and importance, irrespective of his/her:

- Age (staff only)

It is unlawful to discriminate against employees, job seekers and trainees because of age

- Disability

HAT will ensure that disabled pupils and employees play as full a part as possible in Trust life and will carry out accessibility planning for all disabled stakeholders

- Gender Reassignment

When a student does choose to go along this route, it is acknowledged that a number of issues will arise which will need to be handled sensitively

- Marriage or Civil Partnership (staff only)

Trusts must accurately state the facts about marriage of same sex couples under the law of England and Wales, in a way that is appropriate to the age and level of understanding and awareness of the pupils. Teaching about marriage & civil partnerships must be done in a sensitive, reasonable, respectful and balanced way. Teachers must have regard to statutory guidance on sex and relationship education, and to meet duties under equality and human rights law

- Pregnancy or Maternity

This applies to students. Employees are covered by separate Maternity & Paternity policies.

- Race

This includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins

- Religion or Belief

This includes any religion or belief including philosophical belief. The lack of religion or belief is also a protected characteristic but not political beliefs such as communism

- Sex

Students and employees of one sex must not be singled out for different or less favourable treatment

- Sexual orientation

This refers not only to the students' and employee's sexual orientation but also to the children and partners of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents. It is recognised that many people's views on sexual orientation and sexual activity are grounded in their religious beliefs but this is not accepted as an excuse for allowing discrimination to continue

The HAT must take steps to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to actively promote equality. This includes all aspects of school/college life in relation to staff and students and includes the way we treat:

- Students (including prospective and former students)
- Job applicants
- Members of Staff
- Parents / Carers
- Wider Trust Community

As a result of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty - PSED) the Trust must:

- Eliminating discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Fostering good relations across all characteristics – between people who do share a protected characteristic and people who do not

3.2 *Eliminating Discrimination*

The Trust is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff are reminded of these duties every September

3.3 *Advancing Equality of Opportunity*

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the Trust will:

- Publish attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing
- Analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

3.4 Fostering Good Relations

The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school/college trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the Trust. For example, our school council has representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the Trust's activities, such as sports clubs.

3.5 Equality Considerations in Decision Making

The Trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The Trust always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys/men and girls/women

3.6 Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher will update the equality information we publish at least every year. This document will be reviewed by the Governing Body at least every 4 years. This document will be approved by Governing Body.

3.7 Complaints Procedure

Any person who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this policy has not been respected, should immediately bring the situation to the attention of Trust in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy, Whistleblowing, Complaints or Grievance Procedures.

The person responsible for this breach will be reminded of the existence and purpose of this policy and asked to adhere to the policy and where necessary there may be an investigation in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

4 Review Period

This achievements detailed in this policy will be reviewed every 1 year. The objectives and the policy itself will be reviewed every 4 year and revised if necessary. The document will be approved by Staffing Committee.

5 Definitions / Abbreviations

Term	Meaning
EHC	Education, Health & Care
HAT	Hartlepool Aspire Trust
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
RE	Religious Education
SEN	Special Educational Need

6 Records

The following records are produced as a result of implementation of this Policy:

Description	Form Number	Retention Period	Storage Location

7 References

Anti-bullying Policy; HAT/POL/HS/05
 Admissions Policy; HAT/POL/EDU/05
 Grievance Policy; HAT/POL/HR/24
 Whistleblowing Policy; HAT/POL/GOV/07
 Complaints Policy; HAT/POL/GOV/05

Appendix 1 –Objectives (updated March 2018)

The Trust aims to ensure that students and staff recognise that discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics is not acceptable and that they contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals. It strives to make sure that the principles and practices of diversity and equal opportunities apply to all members of the Trust community. To this end its objectives are:

1. Eliminating Discrimination

The Academy will have a designated member of staff for monitoring equality & diversity and an equality link governor. They will regularly liaise regarding any issues and ensure senior leaders and governors are aware of these as appropriate.

Arrange for all pupils, a termly enrichment day which addresses in depth one or more of the nine protected characteristics. When possible, the enrichment days will involve appropriate visitors and places to visit for at least some of the pupils

Review books, posters/displays, and other classroom resources to ensure that people of all backgrounds and family/personal circumstances are represented in a positive way. In addition ensure that they reflect cultural and racial backgrounds of students and positive roles for both men and women.

2. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

The Trust will create a whole school key question focused on the progress of learners with protected characteristics.

To re-introduce an inclusion programme to support other schools/colleges develop their ability to educate students with disabilities.

3. Fostering Good Relations

Engage with a range of groups and individuals from the community who can help us celebrate our diversity and those who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics who can support the development of our approach and assist us to foster good relations.

4. Equality Considerations in Decision Making

The Trust will maintain a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show that we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions.

Appendix 2 – Policy in Practice (updated March 2018)

1. Eliminating Discrimination

Students are seen as individuals and each student's education and care is to be developed in direct relation to their needs and abilities. This eclectic approach is to be based upon sound knowledge and awareness of an appropriate range of teaching and learning styles, teaching interventions behavioural methods, medical and diagnostic issues. All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, sports/physical activities and educational visits according to their SEN.

We monitor the progress of pupils identified as "vulnerable" to ensure that their needs and aspirations are met to the best of our abilities, and to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in relation to other pupils.

Equal Opportunities practices are evident in

- a) the formal curriculum (the programme of lessons, teaching materials and displays)
- b) the informal curriculum (extra-curricular activities)
- c) the 'hidden' curriculum (the ethos of the Trust, the social interaction between staff and students etc).

The National Curriculum, RE and assemblies are used regularly to ensure that our pupils learn about equality and diversity. We promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others. We are committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions and ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity, and encouragement, to experience subjects regardless of gender.

Student and staff names are accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students are encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

We ensure positive attitudes towards people with protected characteristics through a robust anti bullying policy and communicate ways to report any unacceptable behaviour through our whistleblowing, complaints and grievance procedures.

Admissions procedures ensure we do not discriminate but take account of our students needs and provide a curriculum, which ensures individuals, can meet their potential regardless of their differences and similarities Hartlepool Aspire Trust do not permit the protected characteristics to be used as criteria for non-admission. However as a Special Trust and Post 19 SEN provision there is a requirement for an EHC plan to be in place.

Recruitment policies and procedures take due regard of the recommendations. Advertisements, short listing and interview procedures are without any hint of direct

or indirect discrimination. During employment it there is no discrimination in the way opportunities for promotion, transfer or training offered.

Staff can take advantage of part-time work arrangements, depending on their precise job descriptions and the business needs of the Trust

2. Advancing Equality of Opportunity

We actively promote inclusion in all aspects of the curriculum by providing equipment, modifying spaces and training staff.

HAT recognises the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and takes positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and performance.

There is gender equality with respect to staff appointment, progression and salary based on ability and responsibility.

3. Fostering Good Relations

The Trust intends that our policies, procedures and activities foster good relationships across all characteristics. We strive to ensure we have good social cohesion locally and nationally and that our students are prepared to take an active, relevant and rewarding role in society.

The Trust foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

In assemblies, we have opportunities to embrace and celebrate a range of religious celebrations and festivals and deal with relevant issues and current events which may impact on the wellbeing of people with protected characteristics

Working with our local community. Ensuring students have equality of access to their communities and demonstrate to the community and its business partners the abilities of students with SEN thus reducing the segregation of students in the community.

Our 'Aspire' film is used to promote within the business community 'not what we can't do, but what we can'. The Trust works closely with local employers to improve their understanding of student's disabilities and to therefore provide work placements for students. In addition the Trust operates a retail and catering facility in the community which enables it to educate the community regarding the aspirations and abilities of students with SEN and also to enable students requiring a more supported environment to access real life work place settings.

We have developed international links and understanding as part of our involvement in Erasmus projects. Our participation has helped us to foster good relations with colleges in partner countries and helped our students and staff widen

and develop their engagement and understanding of the lives of others with protected characteristics from other countries, cultures and religions.

4. Equality Considerations in Decision Making

Equality is an active consideration in all decisions made by Trustees, Governors and the Senior Leadership Team. Staff and Governors are updated with regards to this policy and new employees upon induction.