Mosaic Partnership Trust

Equality and Diversity Policy (Ref 21MPTEDIB)

The policy includes Equality Information and Objectives

History of most recent Policy changes

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change
V1.0	01/02/2024	Whole Document	Adoption by the Mosaic Partnership Trust and Implementation	New Academy Trust requirement of an Equality and Diversity Policy to comply with the Trust's Statutory responsibilities

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1.0 Equality and Diversity Statement

The Mosaic Partnership Trust have chosen to place Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at the very centre of our ethos.

The Trust believes that valuing diversity means actively recognising the strengths, talents and needs of every individual that works with the Trust and our schools. This requires our nurturing the potential and maximising opportunities for all our employees, volunteers, job applicants and partners in order that they can make their unique contribution.

We will ensure that our Trust is accessible and generates an environment where all contributions are valued. The Trust recognises that to achieve this vision, it is essential that we recognise the reality of discrimination experienced by many communities, groups and individuals.

Despite developments and improvements to legal frameworks, such as the Equality Act 2010, negative impacts of discrimination is still a reality for too many people and communities across the UK.

The schools within the Mosaic Partnership Trust aim to meet their obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

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

We are clear in the Mosaic Partnership Trust that genuine progress is only possible if our approach to delivering on our Equality and Diversity policies and statements systematically seeks to challenge and eradicate unfair and institutional discrimination.

2.0 Legislation and Guidance

In formulating this Policy, the Trust recognises and values the important role played by supporting legislation in defining discrimination and mechanisms to prevent and stop inappropriate practices. The Trust embraces existing and scheduled legislation (listed below). The relevant legislative framework is the Equality Act 2010 which replaces the previously separated legislative framework which included:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act (as amended)

- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998

The Trust is committed to meeting its statutory responsibilities to prevent discrimination and unfair treatment, by fully implementing all relevant legislation and ensuring that all steps have been taken to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to meet relevant provisions.

The Trust is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the Trust.

The Trust will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy (ability aligned to effort, attitude as well as particular gifts and talents), openness, fairness and transparency.

This policy applies to the Trust's employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual and part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to ex-employees, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not our employees, but who work at the Trust and its schools (collectively workers).

This document also complies with the trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The contribution of the Trust's workforce is critical to achieving the aims of this policy. The actions and behaviours of all employees determine equality of access and outcome, and this results in how the Trust is perceived. This includes equality and diversity behaviours.

The Trust is determined to maintain equality and fairness of treatment in all their dealings.

All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy and have a duty to treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against, harass or victimise other members of staff, whether junior or senior to them.

Behaviour, actions or words that are contrary to this statement will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the Trust's disciplinary policy.

Those working at a management and at a strategic and central level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the aims and objectives of the Trust with regard to equal opportunities; this includes the Trust Members and Trustees who need to be rooted in the Trust ethos which places Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at its heart.

The Trust board and the Academy Community Council (ACC) of each school will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, children and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The CEO, Director of Education and Headteacher/Executive Heads will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and children
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to the Trust Board and Academy Community Councils respectively

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8. This is a Trust policy and statement that require all staff to read and sign on an annual basis given the importance to the ethos of the organisation.

4.0 Eliminating Discrimination and duty to make reasonable adjustments

The schools within the trust are aware of their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and comply with non-discrimination provisions. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct. Staff and ACC members 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.

The Trust will actively seek to make reasonable adjustments, where there is a need to ensure that a disabled person has the same access to everything as a non-disabled person, as far as is reasonable and this aligns with each school Accessibility Plan that operates under a Trust model. We will take positive and proactive steps to remove, reduce or prevent the obstacles faced by a disabled individual, as far as is reasonable.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments covers all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, classroom organisation and timetabling, access to facilities, clubs and visits, sports and policies.
In making reasonable adjustments, the Trust is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled children. Staff will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

The Trust will monitor the physical features of the schools' premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the Trust will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. Please see the Accessibility Plan for further information, which can be found on the trust website.

Parents should notify the Headteacher in writing if they are aware or suspect that their child has a disability and provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information about their child's disability upon request. Providing such information will enable the school to support the child as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. Every school will have due regard to any request made by a parent or child (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

5.0 Advancing Equality of Opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school 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. children with disabilities, or gay children who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling children to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all children to be involved in the full range of school societies)

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

- Analyse attainment data each academic year showing how children with different characteristics are performing to determine strengths and areas for improvement
- 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 children

In the employment and recruitment of staff the Trust schools aim to:

- Nurture and build a diverse and representative workforce, which broadly tries to represent the community it serves, enabling it to better meet the needs of all our communities.
- Treat all employees and applicants for employment fairly and ensure they are not discriminated against because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Regularly review its recruitment and selection procedure to ensure fair access to all jobs. People will be selected on merit, based only on their skills, abilities, experience and qualifications to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post for which they have applied.
- Ensure that all employees are valued and treated with dignity and respect. Where harassment, victimisation or bullying is found in the workplace this will be confronted and dealt with through the appropriate procedures. Every employee has a responsibility to challenge and report inappropriate behaviour.
- Provide fair access to CPD opportunities.
- Have due regard to equal pay legislation.
- Support employees who wish to use a mode of dress dictated by ethnic and or cultural background and religious beliefs. However, where protective clothing/equipment is used or provided or where the wearing of any apparel may conflict with health and safety regulations or this policy, restrictions may be imposed.
- Consider and reasonably adapt organisational requirements or existing practices where they are contrary to employees' cultural and religious needs/or where these can be reasonably adjusted to meet the needs of employees with disability.

6.0 Fostering Good Relations

The schools within the Trust aim to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting respect, 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, children will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures

- Holding assemblies and Collective Worship dealing with relevant issues. Children will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies or acts of Collective Worship and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community and extended Trust Community. This includes inviting leaders of local and regional faith groups to speak at assemblies and acts of Collective Worship and organising school trips and activities based around the local or regional communities.
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with potential tensions between different groups of children within the school. For example, Trust School Councils must be representative of the whole school. All children are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

7.0 Equality considerations in decision-making and working practices

The Trust provides educational provisions and services. In these roles and activities the Trust is committed to ensuring fair and equitable practices are an intrinsic part of normal day to day working. All locations, settings and departments within the Trust will take steps to ensure that Trust activities and policies are carried out in a way that complies with statutory requirements, minimises adverse impact on any section of the community and meets the needs of all employees and children (as appropriately as possible).

The Trust aims to:

- Ensure equal access, fair treatment and appropriate provision to the whole community regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and any other reason not connected to entitlement and availability.
- Regularly review working practices and policies to ensure that we have not disadvantaged our employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual and part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to ex-employees, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not our employees, but who work at the Trust and its schools (collectively workers).
- Monitor the physical features of the Trust's premises to consider whether it can make any changes to help remove disadvantages which these may create for disabled users. Where possible and

proportionate, the Trust will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.
- Ensure that wherever practicable, all services and buildings are accessible.
- Consider the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned.

The Mosaic Partnership Trust takes its responsibilities for equality and diversity very seriously and recognises that discrimination can only be effectively eliminated in partnership with all employees, senior leaders, Trustees and related third parties.

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is carried out.

Trustees and senior leaders of the Trust are responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place to ensure effective day-to-day delivery of working practices and management of employees and children with due regards to this policy and statutory requirements.

All employees have a responsibility to carry out their duties in accordance with this Policy and statutory requirements.

The Board of Trustees and its delegated committees will promote, support and uphold this policy in all their dealings related to the management and governance of the Trust.

8.0 Gender Identity

The Trust is mindful of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 towards children identifying as transgender and non-binary. Where possible, our schools have gender neutral facilities for children and staff who wish to use them. In respect of children and staff identifying as trans-gender or non-binary, our schools will be sensitive to their individual needs whilst also recognising the needs and sensitivities of other children and staff. Children and staff who have confirmed that they have commenced the process of transitioning, and therefore fall under the protected characteristic of gender-reassignment will be provided with appropriate pastoral care and support.

9.0 Policies

Uniform policy

Each school's uniform policy within the Trust is consistent with this policy. The same uniform policy applies equally to all children, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy

or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, all schools will consider reasonable requests to alter the uniform, for example for genuine religious requirements and in making reasonable adjustments for disabled children to avoid substantial disadvantage.

Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by pupils when doing so is genuinely based on 4 manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity.

Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred to the Headteacher, whose decision will be final, subject to the complaint's procedure.

Admissions policy

Admissions criteria are defined under the trust's Admissions Policy and are applied consistently to child, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

10.0 Equality Objectives

Objective 1: To ensure that all our new Trust policies and procedures reflect the principles of equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging, thus establishing a strong Trust culture.
To achieve this objective, those developing new policies and procedures should take the necessary steps including equality impact assessments.

Objective 2: To ensure our school environments are accessible as possible to all children, staff and visitors.
To achieve this objective, we plan to implement a new Trust approach to our accessibility plans and review them regularly and undertake conditions surveys of the Trust Estate. In this context we have the following priorities within our accessibility plan objectives:

- Access to the premises (physical environment)
- Access to the curriculum (learning and social)
- Access to information

Objective 3: To promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of education provision, experience, both in and beyond our schools.
To achieve this objective, we plan where appropriate to engage with equality-based organisations on individual school curriculum work. Schools also have planned ongoing programme of visits across the communities they serve and host a regular programme of visitors to share different perspectives, faiths and cultures.

Objective 4: To eradicate prejudice related bullying in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.
To achieve this objective, we plan to create effective systems for recording incidences of discriminatory behaviours at school and Trust level for all children and staff. We will ensure our systems allow swift identification of any issues, prompt and effective action involving parents where necessary and comprehensive recording and engagement.

Objective 5: Actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between children; especially those eligible for free-school meals, children with special educational needs and disabilities and looked after children.
To achieve this objective, we have a focus on Inclusion and SEND within the Trust Strategic Plan which will focus on improving provision and outcomes.

11.0 Breaches to this Policy

If a member of staff believes they may have been disadvantaged because of a Protected Characteristic, they are encouraged to raise the matter through the Trust's grievance procedure, if a child believes they may have been disadvantaged because of a Protected Characteristic their parent/carer should raise this through the Trust's Complaints Policy. If a member of staff believe that they may have been harassed because of a Protected Characteristic, they are encouraged to raise the matter through the Trust's Dignity at Work policy. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure.

These procedures apply during and after termination of their employment in the context of a member of staff or after transition to a new school in the context of a child.

Staff, parents and/or children who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result.

False allegations of a breach in this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure in the context of staff. If, after investigation, a staff member is proven to have engaged in any unwanted conduct because of a Protected Characteristic, or otherwise acted in breach of this policy, they will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

The Trust will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

12.0 Monitoring Arrangements

The designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy' in each school is the Headteacher and at Trust level the Chief Executive Officer.

Additional support would also be provided to any parent or significant person, wishing to know more about the policy and procedures outlined above.

A copy of this policy document is posted on our Mosaic Partnership Trust website.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed on a biannual basis.

13.0 Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Risk assessment
- Dignity at Work Policy
- SEND Policy