Policy Statement on Equality and Accessibility

Acer Trust Equality Principles

The Acer Trust recognises its responsibilities in relation to equality law and is committed across its schools to the key principles of equality.

In all of our schools measures are taken to create an inclusive culture to ensure equal educational opportunities for all our students and staff at all times. We do not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristics in admission or employment, nor in access to our educational and professional programmes and activities. We take positive action to provide equal opportunity to all students and staff and others using the trust's school facilities.

It is a statutory responsibility for all employers to have an Equality Policy and for each of the Trust schools to set Equality Objectives which are reviewed every 4 years. Trust schools are also required to publish a report detailing progress against these Objectives on an annual basis.

Legal framework

Acer Trust schools welcome their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations among all members of the school community and particularly with respect to protected characteristics. The Act covers the following protected characteristics:

- Sex
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership

Similarly, the Trust schools welcome their duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

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Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, Acer Trust schools are guided by six principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value, whether they have a protected characteristic.

Principle 2: We embrace and celebrate diversity.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that may already exist

Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve the school community.

Accessibility

The Acer Trust schools recognise the need to ensure that they improve access to the curriculum (for students) and to their school buildings for those members of their school communities who are disabled.

The Governing Body of each trust school has three key duties towards disabled students:

- Not to treat disabled students and staff less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and staff, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled students through an Accessibility Plan.

Accessibility Plan for Students

All Trust schools will have an Accessibility Plan, which aims to reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for students, and prospective students, with a disability.

Each Accessibility Plan shows how, over time, access to each school will be improved and where possible practical solutions to reducing and removing barriers for people with disabilities will be sought. The Accessibility Plan must be reviewed every three years.

The schools will monitor and evaluate the impact of their Accessibility Plan and report the outcomes to the School Governing Bodies.

Staff Support

For staff who have disabilities advice can be sought on support for the employees in the workplace from the Trust HR Manager. This can be through support options such as Occupational Health or Access to Work and would be worked on along with the Headteacher or Line Manager.

The Trust also undertakes to support equality through following systems that promote equal pay such as School Teachers Pay and Conditions and Job Evaluation processes for support staff roles using the Green Book. We produce a Gender Pay Gap Report annually

with recommendations and will aim to improve our ICT in order to look at extending this into further areas to increase the diversity and equality of our current and future workforce.