

Policy Name	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Policy Lead	DSL
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Revision History

Version	Type	Date	Notes
1	New	September 2018	New issue
2	Revised	May 23	Complete revised policy and new template format
3	Amendment	July 23	Removal of Staff Recruitment section (moved to staff EDI policy). Changes to reference of KSCIE 22 to 23. Adding of British Values section (pg. 5)
4	Amendment	November 24	Changes to reference of KSCIE '22 to '24. Changes to reference of Working Together to Safeguarding Children '18 to '23. Adding of Sexual Harassment (pg. 8)
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement (EDI) Statement

“We value diversity, recognise difference and treat everyone with respect”

We believe that all have a right to equality of opportunity regardless of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, background or personal circumstance.

We expect all staff, learners and delegates to play an active role in promoting equality and challenging discriminatory behaviour.

We expect any learner, delegate or staff member who feels unfairly treated, is upset by thoughtless comments or jokes, and/or experiences any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or abuse to tell us.

We take any form of discrimination and harassment very seriously.

If you experience or witness any discriminative behaviour you can talk to a member of staff, your tutor or a member of the management team.

Introduction

By celebrating diversity and actively promoting equality, we want learners and staff to feel valued, know that they are valued and respect others within a culturally inclusive environment. To ensure everyone can thrive and meet their full potential, it is essential that inclusion and equality of opportunity be at the core of the organisation's ethos. We aim to promote inclusion, actively tackle any form of discrimination and actively foster social cohesion in all areas of learning life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards creating a cohesive community.

Links

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by government publications and other external guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Suffolk Safeguarding Children Partnership protocols, guidance and procedures
- Data Protection Act 2018 Overview and GDPR
- Equality Act 2010

This policy works in conjunction with a range of internal organisation policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Recruitment Procedures
- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy

This policy is available on the WS Training website and can be made available on request from the management team. All policies can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

Scope

This policy applies equally to current and prospective members of the organisation, including parents and visitors.

The organisation is committed to a zero-tolerance policy in relation to less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic under The Equality Act 2010.

The protected characteristics are defined as:

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender identity or reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race and ethnic origin, including colour
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes (including 'banter') that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated.

Policy Aims

The aims of this policy and WS Training's ethos are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics
- Eliminate all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that an individual has a learning difficulty or special educational need, or because English is an additional language
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the organisation
- Comply with the organisation's equality obligations contained in The Equality Act 2010
- Provide a secure environment in which all our learners can thrive and achieve all of the outcomes of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
- Provide a learning environment and curriculum where all individuals feel valued and feel they have a sense of belonging
- Celebrate and value diversity in their learning environment and in society as a whole
- Prepare learners for life in a diverse and inclusive society in which everyone can take their place in the local, regional, national and global community
- Include and value the contribution of all families and our wider community to our understanding of equality and diversity
- Provide and promote positive information about the diversity of UK society
- Actively challenge discrimination and ensure that all members of the organisation learn from these experiences
- Embed equality and inclusion throughout staff development, our curriculum and co-curricular provision

To achieve our aims, we will:

- Involve, where reasonably practicable, all members of the organisation in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures
- Publish and share policies to the whole organisation
- Collect and analyse data (such as admissions and recruitment data, examination results, engagement, community initiatives and pastoral records) to monitor any potential disadvantage amongst the learner or staff body and to ensure processes are bias-free
- Promote openness at all stages of engagement of the admissions and recruitment processes, recognising that early awareness of need leads to better provision and arrangements
- Help to overcome any potential barriers to learning by providing for learners' diverse needs and learning styles including any learning or pastoral support needs and/or disabilities a learner may have
- Offer a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum that provides equal opportunity for all learners, irrespective of difference, to maximise their potential and thrive.
- Ensure the wider organisation curriculum promotes and celebrates equality and diversity, remaining aware of a hidden curriculum and agenda and subjects that may suggest unconscious gender bias
- Operate a clear zero tolerance policy towards abusive or discriminatory behaviour
- Become an equality champion and community leader in promoting equality and cohesion, challenging discrimination and celebrating diversity
- Actively challenge stereotyping, bias and discrimination within all aspects of learning and literature, ensuring we learn from these experiences
- Work in partnership with staff, families and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and help tackle discrimination, recognising that inclusion cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the organisation community

The Legal Framework

Discrimination can take the following forms, including:

- Direct Discrimination - This occurs where a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or a family member's) actual or perceived protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination - This occurs by applying a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Victimisation - This occurs where an individual has exercised their rights under equality legislation (or has indicated that they intend to do so) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. It applies equally to a person who is supporting (or indicates that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under the legislation.
- Harassment – This is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose OR effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.
- Disability Discrimination - This includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.
- Discrimination by association – This includes treating a person less favourably because they are linked or associated with a protected characteristic.

British Values

British Values focuses on the following key aspects:

1. Democracy: We value the importance of democracy and the rule of law and aim to develop learners' understanding of the democratic process and their role in society.
2. Rule of Law: We aim to ensure that all members of our learning community understand the importance of obeying laws and regulations, and the consequences of breaking them.
3. Individual Liberty: We recognise the importance of individual freedom and personal responsibility and encourage learners to exercise their rights and freedoms in a responsible way.
4. Mutual Respect and Tolerance: We promote a culture of respect, where individuals are valued for their contributions and differences are celebrated. We aim to develop learners' understanding and appreciation of different cultures and beliefs.

Responsibilities

It is the CEO's responsibility to:

- Ensure that the organisation complies with its equality obligations
- Ensure that the organisations policies and procedures are monitored in light of this policy and the organisation's wider equality obligations
- From time to time be involved alongside the CEO in dealing with serious breaches of this policy.

It is the Senior Management Team's and Diversity and Inclusion Rep responsibility to:

- Ensure effective implementation of this policy and its procedures
- Ensure that all staff are sufficiently aware and trained within equality & diversity
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice within the organisation, be it by staff, learners, parents or visitors
- Have procedures in place to deal effectively with any reported incidents of discrimination, victimisation or harassment
- Ensure that all visitors, delegates and contractors are aware of, and comply with, this policy.
- Monitor company data to identify where bias may be playing a role in decisions or outcomes, a number of areas will be routinely monitored, including: admissions data, bursary applications, recruitment data, examination results and post 18 destinations. This will be done within the GDPR and confidentiality of personal information protocols and will be reported in such a way that does not identify any individuals.
- Ensure transparency in assessing the impact of the organisation Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and accountable for future goals.

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Positively role model inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a spirit of reflection and willingness to be open to challenge.
- Support and participate in any measures introduced to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and report any issues associated with equality and diversity in accordance with this policy
- Be alert to and actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying, including banter
- Promote an inclusive curriculum, identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the organisation's culture, taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation from taking place
- Make effective and reasonable adjustments where appropriate to meet the individual needs of staff, learners and visitors

The organisation expects staff to commit to broadening their knowledge, confidence and inclusive behaviour by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

It is important to appreciate that an employee is personally responsible for their own acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out during their employment, whether or not the employer is also liable. Any attempt to instruct, cause or induce another person to discriminate, harass or victimise a third person will also amount to unlawful discrimination and any employee doing so will be subject to disciplinary action.

It is the responsibility of learners to:

- Positively promote inclusive and anti-discriminatory behaviour, including a willingness to reflect on attitudes and/or behaviours and be open to challenge.
- Support any measures introduced by the organisation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and report any issues associated with equality and diversity to their tutor, student support advisor or the Diversity and Inclusion Rep.
- Be alert to and actively challenge any forms of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying, including banter. This includes identifying and using the organisation's reporting systems to challenge bias and stereotype within the curriculum and in the organisation's culture, taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation from taking place.

These responsibilities run alongside the organisation's behaviour expectations. WS Training Ltd places a high premium on:

- Respect for Self
- Respect for Others
- Respect for our Environment and our Community

This is fundamental to all that goes on at WS Training. Any actions, words or attitudes which show a lack of respect for others will be taken very seriously. Instances of discrimination and bullying will be dealt with firmly and sensitively. We require learners to avoid any form of unfair bias, discrimination and unkindness to another member of the community. We also require anyone made aware of any such behaviour to report it. Incidents are recorded on My Concern.

The organisation's approach to wellbeing means we aim to educate, help and support learners to understand their responsibility towards others, feel heard and valued and learn from their experiences. Bullying and discrimination will not be tolerated. Anyone who continues to bully or discriminate against others will have their place at WS Training reviewed by the Heads of Departments.

Inclusion within the Life of the Organisation

No learner or staff member should be made to feel uncomfortable because they differ from the majority, e.g. in ethnic or social background, in terms of academic ability, neurodiversity, being from financial disadvantage, having English as an additional language or a special educational need and/or disability.

Learners with particular areas of disadvantage, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities will be given assistance to achieve their potential by differentiation of tasks, positioning in the classroom, equipment that supports academic progress and additional support where appropriate.

Curriculum

The curriculum is crucial to tackling inequalities for learners, including gender stereotyping, preventing bullying and raising attainment for traditionally and newly disadvantaged groups. The principles of equality and diversity are embedded in our academic and wider curriculum.

The curriculum will aim to:

- Normalise diversity in the content and examples utilised
- Stress the contribution and achievements of all kinds of individuals and cultures, actively challenging bias and stereotyping
- Reinforce the importance of embracing difference and of equality of opportunity as a desirable aim
- Provide inclusive and accessible activities, including educational trips and co-curricular provision.

Resources and activities should be monitored for possible bias, reinforcing stereotypes and ethnocentric elements.

Pastoral Care

The organisations pastoral care system promotes respect and understanding of ourselves and others, acknowledging that our community is strengthened by diversity. Wellbeing, social cohesion and academic resilience underpin the sense of belonging and acceptance our learners need to overcome challenges effectively and develop a strong sense of self.

Whilst all staff are responsible for the pastoral care of our learners, Student Support advisors and tutors have a duty to ensure equality, diversity and inclusive practice are upheld.

Student Support Advisors and Tutors should aim to:

- Acknowledge and celebrate the positive impact of diversity within groups.
- Deliver dedicated PSHE activities stressing the organisation's shared values of inclusion, tolerance, kindness, care and unconditional respect for members of the organisation and wider community.
- Actively challenge and report bias and stereotyping during tutor time and learner interaction outside the classroom.
- Encourage learners to celebrate their unique contribution to the organisation through learner voice, leadership roles and participation in initiatives that shape the future of the organisation, such as student council.
- Understand the impact of discrimination on learner wellbeing and mental health, remaining alert to our own bias and the impact of power dynamics between dominant and minority groups. This includes having an awareness of how intersectionality (understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine) can create different modes of discrimination and privilege.
- Use data from attendance records, reporting, rewards and sanctions and pastoral systems to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged or discriminated against on the grounds of protected characteristics.
- Provide inclusive and accessible support systems, ensuring that access to support, mentoring and external agencies reflect the diversity within our community.
- Work with parents regarding factors such as caring responsibilities, disability, gender reassignment and family relationships to reduce barriers to learning and support equality of opportunity.
- Encourage learners to develop their own voice through initiatives such as, 'It Matters to Me' and Inclusion Groups.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature and is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010. Learners are protected against sexual harassment in educational settings, including during interactions with:

- Staff and faculty members
- Fellow learners
- Contractors or visiting professionals
- Any individual they encounter through educational activities

To constitute sexual harassment, the unwanted behaviour must either:

- Violate someone's dignity
- Create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment

This may be considered sexual harassment if the behaviour:

- Had one of these effects even if unintentional
- Was intended to create such an effect, regardless of whether it did

Responsibility and Duty of Care

The educational institution holds a responsibility to maintain a safe and respectful environment, taking active steps to prevent sexual harassment. All members, including staff and learners, have a role in upholding this standard. The institution is accountable for addressing any harassment concerns and ensuring the wellbeing of learners, which is essential to a positive educational experience.

Recognising Sexual Harassment in Education

Sexual harassment can affect individuals of any gender identity or sexual orientation. Learners should feel safe to report concerns involving:

- Fellow learners
- Staff, tutors, or other individuals in positions of authority
- Third parties such as visitors, contractors, or community members interacting with the institution

Reporting Concerns

Any learner who feels they have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment is encouraged to report their concern to the designated safeguarding or EDI lead. All reports will be handled sensitively and in confidence, ensuring that learners have access to appropriate support and resources.

Training and Development

The success of the Equal Opportunities Policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training. Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self-development, encouragement and motivation.

The organisation will endeavour to:

- Enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status
- Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution made by our staff, trustees, parents, learners and wider community
- Equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions to discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote inclusive behaviour generally.

- Ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.
- Respond to changing and emerging training needs, providing opportunities for reflection, feedback and shared learning.

The Look and Feel of the Organisation

- Ensure that the everyday look and feel of the organisation reflects our diverse learner body.
- Ensure that our behaviour code, staff dress code and uniform code takes into account issues of diversity and inclusion.
- Ensure that events, visiting speakers and whole organisation initiatives reflect our diverse learner body

Links with the wider community

Community links are at the heart of what makes this a strong and safe environment.

- All visitors to the company whether in a teaching role or as visitors, contractors or casual users of organisation premises will be expected to act in accordance with the principles of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. All members of the organisation will be expected to act in accordance with the principles of this policy when in contact with others, outside the organisation.
- Staff supervising visitors or on educational visits may need to support learners with bias encountered in the wider society, reporting this through our pastoral system.

Admissions

- The organisation treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy. The organisation accepts applications forms, and admits, learners irrespective of any protected characteristic.
- Parents/Carers must inform the organisation when completing the registration form of any special circumstances affecting their child (such as learning support needs) which may affect the child's ability to fully participate in the education provided by the organisation.

Religious Belief

- Absence from learning for religious observance is allowed and should be marked as authorised where the organisation is satisfied that the day has been set aside by the religious body and the parents/carers of the learner are members of that religious community.
- The organisation recognises that religious observance has an important part to play in valuing the spiritual development of all members of our community, strengthening social cohesion, developing a strong sense of self and celebrating shared values.
- Where possible religious observance will be facilitated, perhaps through allocation of prayer space or provision for resting whilst fasting.

Reasonable Adjustments

- The organisation acknowledges its responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage, for example by taking positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a group because of a protected characteristic. For example, taking positive action to support learners if there is evidence that they are being disproportionately subjected to sexual harassment or stricter behaviour or effort expectations for a particular gender.
- The organisation will inform and consult with learners and parents/carers about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the organisation are able to make for their child. The organisation will carefully

consider any proposals for additional resources or changes to provision that support full access to learning life.

- The organisation has a duty make reasonable adjustments (case by case considerations) for staff or learners who request to be known as gender neutral, gender fluid, are undergoing gender reassignment or are transgender.
- The organisation is not legally required to make alterations to the organisation's physical environment as part of the reasonable adjustment's duty. However, the organisation monitors and reviews the physical environment to consider what reasonable and proportionate steps can be taken to alleviate any substantial disadvantage caused to learners or staff with disabilities and neurodivergent learners or staff.

Raising Concerns

- The organisation will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment. Learners should report discrimination through the pastoral system or directly to the Diversity and Inclusion Rep. Staff should report discrimination to the HR Department
- Any member of the organisation who harasses another on the grounds of any protected characteristic will be subject to the organisation's disciplinary measures in accordance with the organisation's Behaviour Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- If parents/carers or visitors feel this policy has been breached they should raise their concern with the CEO.
- All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the organisation's Senior Management Team. We recognise that learners need to learn from mistakes to develop a strong sense of self and an awareness of how their behaviour impacts others. Ill-considered, rather than deliberate, incidents should therefore be dealt with immediately and informally, where possible taking the opportunity for a teaching or tutor discussion. These should all be reported through the pastoral systems.
- Intentional and/or sustained incidents should be reported directly to Student Support and Diversity and Inclusion Rep within 24 hours of the incident.
- Learner infringements of this policy will be recorded on the organisation reporting system, MY Concern. Staff and visitor infringements of this policy will be reported to HR.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy is monitored on an ongoing basis to evaluate its effectiveness and ensure appropriate steps can be taken to eliminate discrimination.
- This policy document will be reviewed and publicised, at least annually and, if necessary, more frequently in response to any significant incidents or new developments in national, local and organisational policy, guidance and practice.