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Bronte Academy Trust

Equality Policy

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date

¹ Adapted GLH

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Statement of Intent

Bronte Academy Trust (The Trust) expects all of its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

Employee's of The Trust should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents/carers and other stakeholders, sets an example.

Bronte Academy Trust recognises that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This policy forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated Trust policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This document applies to all staff members who are:

- Employed by the Trust, including Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Employed in units or bases that are attached to The Trust (The Trust Schools)

This document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are centrally employed by the LA
- School catering staff employed by Facilities Management
- Employees of external contractors

These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within The Trust, for example the Data Protection Act 1998.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act

1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'The Equality Act and schools' 2014
- DfE 'Promoting the education of looked after children' 2014

1.3. This policy is related to the following other policies:

- Looked After Children Policy (BAT)
- e-Safety Policy (School)
- SRE Policy(School)
- School Uniform Policy (School)
- SEND Policy (BAT)
- Curriculum Policy (School)
- Anti-bullying Policy (BAT)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (BAT)
- Behaviour Management Policy (School)
- Collective Worship Policy (School)
- Community Cohesion Policy (School)
- Intimate Care Policy (School)
- Staff Induction Policy (School)
- General Data Protection Regulations Policy (BAT)

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The Headteachers and CEO will implement this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.

2.2. The Headteachers and CEO will conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.

2.3. It is the responsibility of all staff in the Trust to be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the school, and to deal with incidents of harassment/discrimination as the highest priority.

2.4. The Trust will have measures in place to ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for pupils who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

2.5. The CEO will review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.

2.6. All Trust staff will have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence.

3. Data protection

3.1. The Trust will adopt secure controls on sensitive personal data, ensuring all data is accurate, secure and processed fairly and lawfully.

3.2. The schools within the Trust will gain consent from the pupil and parents/carers before any sensitive personal data is processed.

3.3. The schools and Trust will respect all pupils' right to privacy and will not disclose a pupil's trans* status or sexual orientation to any other pupils, staff members or third parties.[1]

3.4. The Trust holds a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy containing further information addressing data protection.

4. Protected characteristics

4.1. We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

4.2. We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent/carer, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated.

4.3. We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

5. Sex

5.1. We will ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to pupils of other sexes, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

5.2. There may be occasions where we deem it necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, such as sex and relationship education (SRE), but we will ensure that such classes do not give children an unfair disadvantage when compared to children of the other sex in other classes.

5.3. Where a subject is taught in a single-sex class, pupils undergoing gender reassignment will be allowed to attend the single-sex class that corresponds with the gender role in which they identify.

5.4. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities.

6. Race and ethnicity

6.1. We will ensure that pupils of all races and ethnicities (including those who have English as an additional language) are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our Trust practices to ensure that they are fair.

6.2. We will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' cannot be sustained, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

6.3. We may, however, take positive action to address the particular challenges affecting pupils of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

7. Disability

7.1. We will ensure that pupils with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils simply because they have a disability, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure they are fair.

7.2. We will ensure that we do not discriminate against pupils with a disability by implementing a rule for all pupils that could have an adverse effect on pupils with disabilities only (for example, making physical fitness a basis for admission), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim

7.3. We will ensure that we do not discriminate against pupils with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a pupil on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for him/her to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

7.4. We will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids, necessary to ensure the full inclusion of pupils with disabilities.

7.5. We will meet our duty to undertake accessibility planning for pupils with disabilities, and ensure that any accessibility plan is duly implemented, and reviewed where necessary. The schools hold their individual Accessibility Policies and Plans, specific to their own settings.

7.6. The Trust holds a SEND Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEND.

8. Religion and belief

8.1. We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief, regularly reviewing our school and Trust practices to ensure that they are fair.

8.2. We will ensure that pupils are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

9. Sexual orientation

9.1. We will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents/carers, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

9.2. We will ensure that there is a designated safe space within our schools where gay, lesbian and bi-sexual pupils can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

10. Gender reassignment

10.1. We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they have undergone, or are proposing to undergo, gender reassignment, or have trans* parents/carers, regularly checking our Trust practices to ensure that they are fair.

10.2. We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for treatment and support of trans* pupils by external sources. Any such absences will be recorded accurately and sensitively by the Headteacher of each school to ensure the privacy of the pupil.

10.3. Pupils have the right to dress in accordance with their true gender identity within the constraints of our dress code, outlined in each school's Uniform Policy.

10.4. Each school will make a decision based on the constraints of space and rooms to either:

Ensure that there are unisex toilets and changing facilities available on-site which are accessible for all pupils, including those who identify as trans*.

or

Pupils who face discomfort using a shared changing space will be provided with a safe and non-stigmatising alternative, such as curtains or a separate changing schedule.

10.5. We will ensure that there is a designated safe space within our schools where trans* pupils can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

10.6. The Trust holds a Transgender Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for trans* pupils with SEND.

11. Looked after children

11.1. Looked after children (LAC), and previously looked after children (PLAC), will be given the highest priority for admissions, as per the requirements of the LA Admissions Policy, adopted by the Trust.

11.2. We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

11.3. A personal education plan will be created, and implemented, for all LAC and PLAC, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

11.4. We will ensure that any SEND that a LAC or PLAC has, are duly taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

11.5. The Trust holds a Looked After Children Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for LAC.

12. The curriculum

12.1. We believe that pupils should be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, and will not make any unjustified changes to our curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a pupil may have.

12.2. We will ensure, however, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way as to prevent discrimination, and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes

12.3. The observation of inclusive teaching strategies is a key aspect of each school's leadership team's annual programme of monitoring

12.4. We will respect the right of parents/carers to withdraw their child from religious education classes.

13. Promoting inclusion

13.1. We will promote inclusion and equality in our Trust through:

- Ensuring that pupils are called by their preferred names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that our Trustees, Local Governing Bodies and school staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Instilling in pupils an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.

- Providing a variety of educational and residential visits which expose pupils to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- Communicating our policy to parents/carers to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
- Discussing equality issues as an agenda item for the school council.

14. Supporting pupils with medical conditions

14.1. We will ensure that any medical conditions related to a pupil with a protected characteristic is fully supported in line with each school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

15. Pupils that have left our schools

15.1. Our liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left a Trust school, but will continue to apply with regards to subsequent actions related to our previous relationship with the pupil, such as the provision of references.

16. The Public Sector Equality Duty

16.1. We will meet our duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the Trust is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding pupils who have any of the protected characteristics outlined in section 4.
- Equality objectives (at least every four years) outlining how we may further equality in our school.

16.2. There are some protected characteristics where statistical data is less likely to be readily available, and pupils will not be pressured into providing information related to any characteristic which they may identify with.

17. Bullying and discrimination

17.1. The Trust Anti-bullying Policy will be used in conjunction with this policy in order to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents.

17.2. Any incidents of a child protection or safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

17.3. It will be up to the Headteacher/ DSL of each school to decide whether it is appropriate to notify social services, and/or the police, of any incident.

17.4. Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in our Complaints Policy.

18. Staff training

18.1. New staff will receive relevant training on the provisions of this policy during their HR induction.

18.2. Staff will receive the appropriate equalities training on a termly basis, which will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide support for teachers to effectively manage any discrimination towards pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- Develop appropriate strategies for communication between parents, educators and pupils about any issues related to a protected characteristic.
- Ensure that the school is aware of, and participates in, relevant awareness days, such as Black History Month, World Disability Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, PRIDE, and International Women's Day.

19. Policy review

19.1. This policy will be reviewed by the CEO and Trustees on an annual basis, updated where appropriate, and duly communicated to staff members.

[1] Trans* is an umbrella term that refers to all of the identities within the gender identity spectrum.