SHEFFIELD UTC ACADEMY TRUST
MAKING THE FUTURE

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY (Staff and Students)

Status: Statutory

Member of Staff Responsible: Business and Operations Director

Related Policies:

- NA

Implementation date:

Reviewed date: September 2026

Next review date: September 2027

Legal Duties

At The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We understand the principal of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity. Protected characteristics make up the part of a person's identity that makes them who they are, such aspects or characteristics are protected from discrimination. Everyone in Britain is protected from unlawful behaviour by the Act.

The protected characteristics are currently as follows:

- age
- disability
- race
- sex
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for employees)

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights' standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998. In developing our policy, we have therefore also taken them into consideration.

To meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to carry out some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- Publish Equality Information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions (**We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any individual)**
- Prepare and publish equality objectives which we will review on an annual basis
- Consult all our stakeholders in the development of our equality objectives and report on progress against our objectives on an annual basis

To do this effectively we will endeavour to collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. We do understand though that some data is only given on a voluntary basis. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a Trust, but we will also analyse available data relating to the context of our local communities, including hate crime data and demographic information.

In relation to the UTCs provision, we will pay particular attention to the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions and suspensions
- Prejudice-related incidents
- Curriculum
- Complaints/compliments

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above, however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any group, we will include work in this area.

We also recognise that our work on equality is central to the successful promotion of fundamental British values, especially in relation to the values of respect and tolerance and the rule of law. We will therefore ensure that our curriculum helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. We will work proactively to address all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including derogatory and discriminatory language. We will mainly do this through the delivery of our statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education Curriculum. We will also utilise all other subject areas to foster positive relations and to ensure that we consciously cultivate opportunities to challenge stereotypes and support positive identity development for all our pupils. We will regularly audit our resources, displays, lesson content, and assessment processes to ensure that they meet the needs of all groups. We will scrutinise outcomes across a range of measures, analyse the results and address any identified areas of concern.

In endeavouring to fulfil our legal duties, we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities' practice, including staff recruitment, retention, and development
- Aim to identify, reduce, and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Consult and involve widely
- Regularly review our progress

The Trust strives to understand, appreciate and value the differences in each individual. We aim to make people feel valued and supported so that they may achieve their full potential.

Definitions

Discrimination is unfair treatment towards another or a group of individuals who share one or some of the protected characteristics.

Direct Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Association occurs when someone is treated less favourably because someone they are associated with, such as a friend, family member or carer, has a protected characteristic.

Direct Discrimination by Perception occurs when someone is treated less favourably because someone believes they have a protected characteristic, regardless of whether their perception is correct or not.

Indirect discrimination can be more difficult to identify and sometimes is not intended. It can occur due to a lack of understanding of the law or a genuine error of judgement about an individual. For example, a policy that is applied to all individuals equally may inadvertently disadvantage individuals or groups who have a protected characteristic. It is therefore essential that all aspects of school life and policies are scrutinised carefully to avoid any unlawful provision, criterion, or practice.

Victimisation occurs when an individual has either raised a complaint or grievance that they have been discriminated against based on having a protected characteristic; or has supported someone who has raised a complaint or grievance.

Harassment is any form of unwanted behaviour intended to violate an individual's dignity or create an environment which may be described as hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive. The victim will be subject to this harassment based on a protected characteristic or the perception that they have a protected characteristic, or because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Prejudice can be conscious or unconscious and involves stereotypes, prejudgements, and beliefs (which are usually negative) about an individual, or group of people, based on a protected characteristic.

Our Ethos

Every member of our Trust and individual UTC communities are committed to ensuring that we have caring and inclusive UTCs where students can feel safe, happy and valued.

Our UTCs offer a rich, varied and inclusive learning experience enabling them to be the best they can be in all areas, within and beyond the classroom preparing them for the workplace and their future.

We believe in providing an engaging, challenging and creative education within a supportive, nurturing environment that builds positive memories and provides students with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to flourish in future life in their chosen career.

At The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust we believe that there are no limits to what can be achieved and through developing students' self-esteem, values, independence, resilience and motivation so they are able to succeed and thrive.

Our Vision

Our vision is to inspire students with the relevance and challenge of solving real-life employer and community related problems. Our students will rapidly gain the confidence in both technical and employability skills to become the creative contributors on whom our businesses and public services will be able to rely for shaping and driving the future of our society.

The curriculum at our UTCs will provide a blend of academic and technical learning, with balance appropriate to each Key Stage. Integration of employers and the contextualisation of

the curriculum is critical to the success of its implementation. That same curriculum will build the vital employability skills, personal values and professional behaviours required by UTC leavers for rapid progression into the UTCs' target technical sectors. Students' learning in all our UTCs will be enriched and stretched by regular exposure to the work of target sector companies and partner universities. The overall quality of education in our UTCs will be substantiated by the ambitious progression and destinations secured by our leavers.

Essential characteristics of the UTC curriculum

UTCs have unique character and educational contribution. Their aim is to invest in young people's enthusiasm and aptitude for science, maths and technology, and in doing so to accelerate their progression to a career in a technical field. Such progression will feed the talent pipeline into the UTCs' target technical sectors.

In serving this common aim, UTCs have curricula which share distinctive elements. These distinctive UTC elements are secure (protected by governance), observable (monitored jointly by governance and executive) and show impact (demonstrated by executive and reviewed by governance).

The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust has a clear vision to prepare our students for high quality careers in major growth areas of the UK and global economies – Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing, Creative & Digital Industries, Computing, Health Sciences & Social Care and Sport Science. We provide a rounded education to develop the professional, personal and technical skills that employers want.

All of our students achieve a set of qualifications endorsed by both our university and employer partners, enabling them to progress to top universities as well as high quality apprenticeships.

Our focus on positive destinations and the value of both technical and academic learning underpin our core ethos and values.

- We respect and care about each other
- We are destination focused
- Talents are recognised and grown
- Creative, caring, confident, resilient and enterprising
- Technical education has parity with academic education
- Educators and employers work in partnership
- Learning is engaging, exciting, enjoyable and productive
- The development of employability skills underpins everything we do
- We celebrate success and equality of opportunity for all

Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that promoting Equality is everyone's responsibility.

	Responsibility
Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies	Involve and engage the whole UTC community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these. Monitor progress towards achieving equality objectives.

	Publish data and publish equality objectives. Ensure that staff have access to appropriate training and resources.
Executive Principal / Principal	As above including: Promote key messages to staff, parents, and students about equality and what is expected of them and can be expected from the UTCs in carrying out their day-to-day duties. Ensure that all in the UTC community receive adequate training to meet the need of delivering equality, including student awareness. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.
Senior Leadership Team	To support the Executive Principal / Principal as above. Ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.
Teaching Staff	Help in delivering the right outcomes for students. Uphold the commitment made to students and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated. Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum. Record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.
Non -Teaching Staff	Support the UTCs and Trust / Local Governing bodies in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders. Uphold the commitment made by the Executive Principal /Principal on how students and parents/carers can be expected to be treated. Support colleagues within the UTC community. Record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents.
Parents/Carers	Take an active part in identifying barriers for the UTC community and in informing the Trust / Local Governing Body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging their UTC to achieve the commitment given to the UTC community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all. Uphold the commitment made by the Principal on how students and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can be expected to be treated.
Students	Support the UTC to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality. Uphold the commitment made by the Principal on how students and parents/carers, staff and the wider UTC community can be expected to be treated. Report prejudice-based incidents to a trusted adult.
Stakeholders and Community Members	Take an active part in identifying barriers for the UTC community and in informing the Trust / Local Governing Body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment made to the UTC community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.

We will ensure that the whole UTC community is aware of the Equality Policy and our published equality information and equality objectives by publishing them on the Trust and local UTC's websites.

Preventing and Addressing Prejudice Related Incidents

We define prejudice-based incidents/bullying in the following way:

Prejudice-related incidents/bullying – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer, sibling, or friend who is, or because they have a learning or physical disability. It may include misogyny or misandry and be sexist in nature. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior.

At The Sheffield UTC Academy Trust we encourage open discussions around differences between people, we actively challenge prejudice, and we celebrate diversity. This Trust and local UTCs are opposed to all forms of prejudice, and we recognise that young people who experience any form of prejudice- related discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We recognise that prejudice-based bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse and is therefore a safeguarding concern, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. We adopt a contextual safeguarding, trauma-informed and strengths-based approach to bullying and peer-on-peer abuse. We are committed to working with families and outside agencies to proactively prevent incidents and to create an environment in which all members of our UTC community feel welcomed, accepted, and safe. We believe every member of our community should be treated with respect and should not be subjected to prejudice or discrimination in any form. This includes staff, parents/carers, governors/trustees, and visitors to our UTCs.

We provide both our students and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice to prevent any incidents. We will endeavour to proactively tackle all forms of prejudice by ensuring our curriculum is representative of all sections of society and the contributions made by people with different characteristics are consciously embedded across all subjects. In doing so, we will challenge stereotypes and work towards inclusivity and identity-safe classrooms where everyone feels validated, accepted, safe and a sense of belonging.

If incidents still occur, we will address them immediately ensuring that appropriate levels of support are provided to those affected; that we thoroughly investigate all reports/allegations; and that we will apply appropriate sanctions and address offending behaviours through a programme of education. All adults in our Trust community are expected to comply with the Trust's Code of Conduct. Any allegations made against staff will be investigated in line with our policies and procedures relating to staff conduct and behaviour. Any staff member/parent/carer, governor/trustee or visitor to the UTC, who is subjected to prejudice-based abuse can also expect to have their complaint thoroughly investigated and will be supported in accordance with their wishes.

We review our practice following each incident including what more we might do to prevent further incidents. We recognise that we must not become complacent and will regularly evaluate satisfaction levels in respect of how we have responded to any reports or concerns raised.

We encourage all students to report any concerning behaviour to a member of school staff – this can be any member of teaching or non-teaching staff, including their Learning Manager, a class teacher, an LSA, any member of SLT, any member of support staff.

The member of staff will listen to the student and make an initial note of their concerns, they will then discuss next steps with them and reassure them that they will be supported. In line with the statutory guidance provided in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, we will never promise a student that we will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may not be in the best interests of the student. The member of staff will make a formal record of the concern/report in line with the UTC's recording system and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The member of staff will directly alert the UTC's Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy if the report is deemed urgent or if a student is considered at risk.

We ask that if parents/carers have concerns about their child experiencing or allegedly perpetrating any such incident, that they contact the UTC's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy either in person, via telephone call or email to explain their concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will take an initial note of the concerns but may ask to schedule a meeting to allow for more time to discuss the concerns in detail. Following the report and/or the meeting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will make a formal record of the report in line with the UTC's recording system and other relevant members of staff will be alerted. The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will seek advice from the police if a pupil is considered at risk.

We ask that parents/carers come directly to the UTC with their concerns rather than discussing them with other members of the UTC community in person or online.

Our Trust remains committed to supporting students and their families. We will endeavour to ensure that all parties are kept informed of progress and any developments, but we will also need to show due regard to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and any ongoing investigations by external agencies where a serious incident has been reported (e.g., the incident is a hate crime). This may mean, at times, that we are not able to provide or share information or updates immediately.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with the local UTC's actions, we ask that they follow the UTC's complaint policy and procedures. This is available online from the UTC website and on request from the UTC office.

Our staff work closely with our students and therefore may notice a change in a student's behaviour or attitude that might indicate that something is wrong before receiving a report from a student or a member of the UTC community. If staff have any concerns about a student's welfare or are concerned that a student is displaying behaviours that may show they have been the victim of or that they are perpetrating prejudice-based abuse, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

We ask that staff report their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead/their Deputy directly to the Principal. The member of staff receiving the report will take an initial note of the concerns and will then make a formal record of the report in line with the UTCs recording system and other relevant staff members will be alerted. The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will seek advice from external agencies including the police if a student is considered at risk.

The workforce

The Trust will ensure that no employee receives less favourable treatment and that appropriate support is provided so that all employees attain their full potential to the benefit of the UTC and themselves.

The UTC wishes to achieve an ability-based workforce which is in line with the working population mix in the relevant labour market.

The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. However, the Trust has lead responsibility for achieving the aims of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant Acts of Parliament and Codes of Practice. Behaviour or action against the spirit or the letter of the aims on which this policy is based will be considered a serious disciplinary matter and may lead to dismissal.

Positive action

Under-represented groups should be encouraged to apply for training and employment opportunities within the UTCs. Recruitment to all jobs should be strictly on merit.

Wherever necessary, use should be made of lawful exemption to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the special needs of particular groups.

Efforts should be made to identify and remove unnecessary and unjustifiable barriers and to provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the needs of under-represented groups.

Vacancy advertising

The Trust shall put in place arrangements to determine which vacancies must be advertised both internally and externally simultaneously. It is anticipated that senior posts would always be advertised externally.

Steps will be taken to ensure that knowledge of vacancies reaches under-represented groups internally and, where appropriate, externally.

Wherever appropriate, vacancies will be notified to job centres, careers offices and colleges as well as to minority press, media and organisations.

All vacancy advertisements will include a short statement on equal opportunities.

Recruitment and Selection for staff

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises, such as redundancy selection, will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person if possible.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

Disabilities

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Part-time and fixed term work

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate) unless different treatment is justified.

Monitor and Review

As a minimum, we will review our objectives in relation to any changes in our Trust profile at least every three years. Our objectives will sit in our overall UTC improvement plan and therefore will be reviewed as part of this process.

Useful Links:

- Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)
- The Human Rights Act | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)