Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment - policy and procedure

Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:-	**Caister Primary Federation**
On:-	**17th September 2025**
Chair of Governors:-	**Payal Patel**

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment - policy and procedure P331

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We, the Governing Board, have adopted this policy and procedure.

1. Introduction and scope

1.1 This policy and procedure forms part of our overall commitment to creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, with promotion of dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and contributions of all employees are recognised and valued.

1.2 Each of us is unique, whether in terms of our background, personal characteristics, experience, skills or motivations and we value everyone for the differences they bring to the organisation. Fostering an inclusive culture helps each of us to benefit from a wider range of these different perspectives, experiences and skills. We believe that this creates a happier, more productive working environment for us all.

1.3 To support this inclusive culture, this policy:

- outlines our commitment throughout the employment lifecycle to equality, diversity and inclusion and sets out how we put this commitment into practice;
- explains the behaviours expected of our employees in support of this commitment; and
- sets out the key steps we take to make our culture as inclusive as possible, including our diversity and inclusion framework and how we ensure equality of opportunity throughout the employment lifecycle.

1.4 This policy applies to anyone working for us, including employees, workers, contractors, volunteers and apprentices. It also applies to job applicants and is relevant to all stages of the employment relationship (including application for employment and post-employment activities such as provision of references). Where in this policy and procedure we make reference to employees, it should be read to include workers, contractors, volunteers and apprentices as far as is reasonably practicable.

2. Linked policies

2.1 Disability

It is the intention through this policy that full and fair employment opportunities are made available to people with disabilities. As this is an area of the law which places, at times, quite complex obligations on employers, further information about this is contained in a separate document, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment – Disability policy and procedure.

2.2 Discrimination, bullying and harassment

A separate Discrimination, bullying and harassment policy exists to help ensure that all employees are aware that no employee should tolerate discrimination, bullying or harassment from colleagues, pupils, members of the public or other individuals they may encounter at work. Whilst these issues are referred to within this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment policy and procedure, the detailed descriptions and processes to follow to address claims of discrimination, bullying or harassment are given in that separate document.

2.3 Transgender

A separate Transgender policy and procedure exists to ensure appropriate support is provided and that barriers to the recruitment, promotion and retention of transgender employees are removed. That policy and procedure seeks to provide a working environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of gender identity.

3. Equalities and support

3.1 The Head of School will ensure that all reasonable adjustments or supportive measures are considered to allow equality of access and opportunity regardless of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation.

3.2 Through the implementation of this policy, the Governing Board will be mindful of their obligation to seek to maintain and protect the mental health and wellbeing of all employees as far as is reasonably practicable.

3.3 According to ACAS it is estimated one in seven people are neurodivergent, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information uniquely. Where an employee discloses neurodiversity, the Governing Board understands the employee may require extra support in relation to the application of this policy. Where reasonable adjustments are necessary and can be accommodated, the Head of School will support these.

4. Principles

4.1 We believe that a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion not only benefits our organisation but supports wellbeing and enables employees to work better because they can be themselves and feel that they belong.

4.2 We are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust and respect, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

4.3 We ensure that our recruitment, promotion and retention procedures do not treat people less favourably because of their:

- disability,
- gender, gender identity or gender reassignment status,
- marital or civil partnership status,
- race, racial group, ethnic or national origin, or nationality,
- religion or belief,
- sexual orientation,
- age,
- pregnancy or maternity,
- paternity,
- caring responsibilities,
- part-time status or
- fixed-term status,

unless by virtue of legislation or occupational requirement.

5. Employee responsibilities

5.1 We expect every member of our workforce to take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting and applying this policy. Our culture is made in the day-to-day working interactions between us so creating the right environment is a responsibility that we all share.

5.2 Cultivating this culture does not happen by accident but requires ongoing commitment and nurturing. The reality is that we live in a world where areas of difference (whether gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or others) often translate to biases, challenges and barriers that may not be faced by others and the more areas of difference a person brings, the more this effect can be compounded. In this way, the experiences of a black woman with a disability may be very different to the experiences of a black woman without a disability and also very different from the experiences of a white woman. This way of looking at diversity and inclusion is known as "intersectionality".

5.3 We expect employees to treat their colleagues and third parties (including customers, suppliers, contractors, agency staff and consultants) fairly and with dignity, trust and respect. Sometimes, this may mean allowing for different views and viewpoints and making space for others to contribute.

5.4 By embedding such values and constructively challenging inappropriate comments or ways of working, every employee can help us achieve and maintain a truly inclusive workplace culture.

5.5 Any dealings an employee has with colleagues or third parties must be free from any form of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.

5.6 If any individual is found to have committed, authorised or condoned an act of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying, appropriate action will be taken against them. For employees this would involve action under the Disciplinary procedure.

5.7 Each employee should be aware that they can be personally liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment against fellow employees, pupils, parents, suppliers and the public. All employees must therefore ensure that they do not discriminate against, or harass other employees, pupils, parents or suppliers at any time during the course of their employment. See Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment policy P308 for further information.

6. Equality of opportunity

6.1 Recruitment

We take reasonable and appropriate steps to encourage job applications from as diverse a range of people as possible.

Anyone making a decision about recruitment must not discriminate in any way and will ideally have attended appropriate diversity and inclusion training.

Every decision-maker should challenge themselves, and other members of the recruitment selection panel, to make sure that any stereotypes, unconscious bias or prejudice do not play any part in recruitment decisions.

6.2 Career development

Any decision made relating to an employee's promotion or career development must be free from discrimination.

We ensure that selection criteria and processes for recruitment and promotion are reviewed on a regular basis so that there is no discriminatory impact on a certain group.

6.3 Wider people management

In other areas of our people management work, we aim to avoid unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all, for example in performance management, redundancy selection, and training provision.

7. Public Sector Equality Duty

7.1 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and academy trusts, and extends to certain protected characteristics - race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. This combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7.2 Through this policy and any linked policies, the Governing Board demonstrates its commitment to delivering its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Comprehensive information on the duty and what schools and academies must do to comply can be found at Chapter 5 of The Equality Act 2010: advice for schools document on gov.uk.

8. Monitoring and review

8.1 This policy will be monitored periodically by the Governing Board and will be updated with any changes in the law. We undertake to ensure that the adopted equal opportunities policies are effective.

8.2 In support of this, we will:

- monitor the employment activities to which the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment policy applies.
- review on a regular basis, all employment policies and procedures to ensure they reflect legal and policy obligations and are effectively delivered. This will include consultation with employees and unions.
- undertake regular audits of recruitment and selection processes, and undertake analysis of those people applying for, being shortlisted and appointed to particular posts and also of the workforce as a whole.
- provide advice and guidance to recruiters and other key employees so that they are aware of the legal requirements and their responsibilities under this policy.
- ensure employees with disabilities are provided with an opportunity, at least on an annual basis, to discuss with their manager their developmental needs, including any reasonable adjustments which might be required, to enable them to perform to their full potential in the workplace.

9. Data Protection

9.1 Personal data collected and processed for the purpose of this policy and procedure will be handled in accordance with the data protection policy and applicable statutory obligations. Any personal data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of employee management or to comply with statutory reporting obligations. Inappropriate access to, or disclosure of, employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported without delay, in accordance with the data protection policy. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence in which case it would be dealt with under the disciplinary policy and procedure.

Appendix 1 – Table of changes

Date of change	Paragraphs affected	Summary of update
22/07/2025	All	Document name change, review of whole document and terminology to ensure consistency across all policies and procedures. Clear separation of disability and transgender into individual documents.
16/11/2021	Equal Opportunities	Additional paragraph to include consideration for employees with mental health issues.
14/05/2019	3, 7.6, 8, 15	References to Dignity at work policy updated to Bullying and Harassment policy.
18/05/2018	All	New policy added to HR InfoSpace