



# TRUST ACADEMY

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## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

### 1 Introduction

1.1 The College: Trust Academy College (College) is an independent mainstream boarding and day College for girls and boys aged from 11 to 18 years. The College is a registered charity with a Christian ethos and welcomes staff, workers, volunteers, students, parents, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. The term College Community includes staff, governors, students, parents, visitors and volunteers.

1.2 **College's position:** The College recognises the benefits of having a diverse College Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Students will be taught to value and respect others. The College is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the College Community. In the provision of equal opportunities, the College recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief (including where an individual does not subscribe to a particular religion or belief)
- gender
- sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the College Community)
- marital or civil partnership status and age.

These are called the Protected Characteristics. The College also opposes all bullying and



# TRUST ACADEMY

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unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need (SEN) or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The College aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunities. The College will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, through the supportive College culture and through the College's policies.

1.3 Related policies: This Equal Opportunities Policy is consistent with all the College's policies, including the Admissions Policy, Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Exclusions, the College Guidelines, Uniform Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Disability Policy, Accessibility Plan and the Special Educational Needs Policy.

## 2 Policy statement

2.1 Scope: This policy applies to all members of the current and prospective College Community.

There is a separate Equal Opportunities Policy for Staff in the Staff Handbook.

2.2 Policy aims: Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2022

- communicate the commitment of the College to the promotion of equal opportunities
- promote equal treatment within the College for all members of the College Community
- create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination
- foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the College
- remove or help to overcome barriers for students where they already exist



# TRUST ACADEMY

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- ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any person on any ground listed at paragraph 1.1
- make it clear that, and ensure, that all discriminatory words, behaviour and images are treated as unacceptable
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments' duty).

## 3 Forms of discrimination

3.1 Types: Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

3.2 Direct discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as set out in paragraph 1.1 above. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in" on the grounds of their race would be direct discrimination.

Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a student is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that student.

3.3 Indirect discrimination: Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with gender, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of gender.

3.4 Discrimination arising from disability: Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a



# TRUST ACADEMY

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legitimate aim. For example, where a student with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend a College trip because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

## **4 Harassment**

4.1 There are three types of harassment that are unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2021

4.1.1 Harassment related to a relevant protected characteristic: The relevant protected characteristics are disability, race and sex. Harassment occurs when a person engages in unwanted behaviour which is relevant to one of the relevant protected characteristics and which has the purpose or effect of:

- (a) violating a student's dignity; or
- (b) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the student.

4.1.2 Sexual harassment: This occurs when a person engages in unwanted behaviour which is of a sexual nature and which has the purpose or effect of:

- (a) violating a student's dignity; or
- (b) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the student.

4.1.3 Less favourable treatment of a student because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex.

## **5 Victimisation**

5.1 Victimisation means treating someone badly because they have done a "protected act" (or because the College believes that a person has done or is going to do a protected act).



# TRUST ACADEMY

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Treating a student less favourably because they have taken such an action will be unlawful victimisation.

5.2 A "protected act" is:

5.2.1 making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act 2010 as set out above)

5.2.2 helping someone else to make such a claim by giving evidence or information

5.2.3 making an allegation that the College or someone else has breached the Equality Act 2010

5.2.4 doing anything else in connection with the Equality Act 2010.

## **6 Admission**

6.1 Applicants: The College accepts applications from, and admits students irrespective of their Protected Characteristics and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered, subject to section 10, below. The College will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way.

6.2 Selection: Every application will be considered on its merits within the College's criteria for selection on grounds of the student's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way  
Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2022

of excluding students with a disability or special educational needs, subject to section 10 below.

6.3 Admissions Policy: The College's Admissions Policy reflects the College's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this policy.

## **7 Education and associated services**

7.1 Equal access: The College will afford all students equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare, paragraph 10 and section 4,



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below.

7.2 Positive action: The College may afford students of a particular racial group, or students with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the students in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

7.3 Exclusions: The College will not discriminate against any student by excluding him or her from the College, or by subjecting him or her to any other detriment, on the grounds of his or her gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, or special educational needs, subject to section 10 of this Policy.

7.4 Teaching and College materials: Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the College's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

7.5 Student interaction: All students are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other students, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the College, and students will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

7.6 Bullying: The College will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason.

The College's Anti-bullying Policy contains more details about the College's anti-bullying practices.

## **8 College uniform**

8.1 The College Uniform Policy is consistent with this policy. The same College Uniform Policy applies equally to all students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the College will consider



# TRUST ACADEMY

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reasonable requests to alter the College Uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled Students.

Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2022

8.2 Symbols of faith: Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by students when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the College's existing College Uniform Policy principles (in regard to, for example, the College colours). Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the student or his or her parents to the Principal, whose decision will be final, subject to the Complaints procedure.

8.3 Disabled students: Reasonable adjustments may be required to the College System for disabled students who require them. The student or his or her parents should refer the matter to the Principal to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the student.

## **9 Religious belief**

9.1 Religion: The College's religious ethos, services and College timetable are set in accordance with the Christian tradition, but the College respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith.

## **10 Disability and special educational needs**

10.1 Our approach: We are an inclusive College which welcomes members of the College Community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the College and we will not treat a member of the College Community less favourably on these grounds without justification. We will do all that is



# TRUST ACADEMY

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reasonable to ensure that the College's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our Disability Policy and Policy on Special Educational Needs are consistent with this policy. For a copy of these policies, please contact the Head of Department.

10.2 Definitions: Students have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a "substantial and long term adverse effect" on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010). For further clarification, please refer to the policies mentioned in paragraph 10.1 above.

10.3 Reasonable adjustments: The College has an on-going duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled students and students with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other students. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of College life, for example:

- the curriculum
- classroom organisation and timetabling
- access to College facilities
- clubs and visits
- College sports and

Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2022

- College policies.

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- deciding for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam





# TRUST ACADEMY

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- providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment
- rearranging the timetable to allow a student to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

10.4 The College is not legally required to make adjustments which include physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, or a new library.

In making 'reasonable adjustments' the College is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled students. The College will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

10.5 Informing the College: In accordance with the College's terms and conditions, parents of students must notify the Head Master in writing if they are aware or suspect that the student (or prospective student) has a disability or if they (either parent), the student (or prospective student), or immediate family have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty.

The registration form enables prospective parents to give details of their child's disability when applying for a place at the College. Parents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the College with such information will enable the College to support the student as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis where it is necessary for members of staff to be informed of any particular vulnerability of a student. The College will have due regard to any request by a parent or student (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

10.6 Admission of Students with special educational needs and / or a disability: Applications for a place at the College will be considered on the basis that reasonable adjustments (see definition above) have been made by the College in order to cater for the child's special



# TRUST ACADEMY

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educational needs and / or disability. The College will not offer a place if, after reasonable adjustments have been made, the College will not be able to provide adequately for the student's physical and educational needs. The College shall inform the parents of their decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or give reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

10.7 Existing students: Where the College becomes aware of a disability or special educational need of an existing student, the College will do all that is reasonable to assist the student whilst at the College, which may include making reasonable adjustments. If in the professional judgement of the Principal, and after consultation with the parents and the student (where appropriate), the College cannot provide adequately for the student's physical and educational needs after all reasonable adjustments have been made, parents will be asked to withdraw the student, without being charged fees in lieu of notice and with Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2022

10.7 The acceptance deposit returned. The College will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

10.8 Access: The College will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the College will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The College has an Accessibility Plan, which is kept under review and revised as necessary. The Plan is available on request from the Head of Department.

10.9 SENCo: The College has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

## **11 Students with statements of special educational needs**

11.1 The College's Policy on Special Educational Needs includes details about the welfare and



# TRUST ACADEMY

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educational provision for students with Statements of Special Educational Needs.

## **12 Students with English as an additional language**

12.1 Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) will receive additional learning support if necessary. The College will consult with the student and the parents as appropriate. The College has appropriate welfare support for all such students through the supportive House culture.

## **13 Provision for students with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs**

13.1 The College will make individual provision for such students where necessary and in accordance with this policy.

## **14 Responsibilities**

14.1 All members of the College Community are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with dignity always.

14.2 Overall responsibility: The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the College's Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Governors has delegated to the Bursar day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

## **15 Monitoring and review**

15.1 Monitoring: To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admission and selection, the College monitors applicants' gender, race, disability and religion or belief

Trust Academy College

Equal Opportunities Policy – September 2022

confidentially as part of the Admissions procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy.

15.2 Review: The Head of Department is responsible for the ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data monitored under paragraph 15.1 above and under paragraph 16.5 below and will



# TRUST ACADEMY

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arrange for the taking of appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination where necessary. The Head of Department is also responsible for reviewing whether the aims of this Policy are carried out throughout all areas of the College and taking appropriate action where necessary. This policy is reviewed by the Head of Department and recommendations for any amendments are reported to the Governing Body.

## **16 Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination**

16.1 Questions about this policy: If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Head of Department.

16.2 Complaints: If you believe that you have received less favorable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed in paragraph 1.1 above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the College's formal Complaints Procedure. For a copy of the College's Concerns and Complaints Policy, please contact the Head of Department. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

16.3 Reports: If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint under paragraph 0 above, please contact the Head of Department.

16.4 Enforcement: We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the College Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

16.5 Record: All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded, and this record will be reviewed annually by the Head of Department.

## **17 Publication**

17.1 This policy will be available on the College's website and on request from the Head of Department.

Authorized Compliance and Risk Committee:

Date: 22 September 2022