



## **EQUALITY ACT STATEMENT**

The Willow Learning Trust is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in line with the Equality Act 2010. We aim to reduce disadvantages, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity, and promote diversity in terms of our pupils, our workforce and the community in which we work.

All people who work and study in the Trust have the right to be respected and valued within a safe and secure environment and not to be discriminated against on the grounds of age, class, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief. The Trust endeavours to prepare all young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life and to promote community cohesion and integration by fostering better relationships between diverse communities.

### **Definitions**

The term 'disabled people' includes disabled children, young people and adults, as well as pupils, employees, governors, parents and carers and other members of the wider community that might use school premises for leisure or other activities.

The definition of disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments, for example: cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, HIV, multiple sclerosis, long term physical or mental health conditions, hearing or sight impairments, mobility difficulties or learning difficulties/disabilities such as dyslexia, ADHD or ASD.

Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **Promoting Equality and Diversity**

We will not discriminate on any of the grounds listed below (known as the Protected Characteristics) save where such discrimination is permitted by law. Examples of permitted discrimination are:

1. A school may arrange pupils in classes based on age.
2. A school may take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils of one racial group if this is a proportionate means of dealing with the issue.

The Protected Characteristics that apply to schools are:

- Age (in relation to staff only);
- Disability;
- Gender re-assignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership (in relation to staff only);
- Pregnancy and Maternity;
- Race;
- Religion Faith or Belief;
- Sex; and

- Sexual orientation.

As an Academy Trust and employer we will also not accept any of the following:

- Direct or Indirect Discrimination;
- Harassment; and
- Victimisation.

We will comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty giving due regard to that duty when making decisions, taking actions and developing policies. In line with its specific duties under the Equality Act 2010, we will publish our equality objectives and will publish information about how it is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Equality Objectives:

- We promote our policy by promoting equality of opportunity and emphasising to all staff and pupils that we live, learn and work in a diverse, multi-faceted, multi-cultural and multi-faith community.
- To create a sense of belonging for all staff and pupils within the school community and to value and appreciate the diversity of people's backgrounds.
- To take a pro-active approach to equality, promoting positive attitudes in staff and pupils by celebrating our multi-cultural, multi-faith society and the contributions and achievements of different groups to our society and way of life.
- To meet the needs of all our pupils and value the different contributions they make to the school and encourage their participation in public life.
- To equip our pupils to contribute to and feel part of the local, national and global community by understanding human rights and gaining an international perspective.
- To identify and eliminate barriers to access and participation in learning and to wider activities.
- To equip everyone with the confidence to question and challenge attitudes and prejudices which result in the unfair treatment of any member of the school community and to be proactive in acting upon the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- We expect all members of the school; irrespective of age, class, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief to be treated with courtesy and respect (see Code of Conduct). We aim to ensure prompt and effective follow-up if they experience racial or homophobic abuse or are harassed or ridiculed because of a disability or belief or discriminated against in any other way. Any incident that is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person will be investigated and dealt with
- To exercise our duty in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 and any other equality or diversity legislation currently in force in order to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between people of different groups.

**Reviewed: November 2018**

**Next Review Date: November 2019**