Morton Academy
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Equality Policy
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Introduction

This policy sets out the Morton Academy approach to promoting equality, as defined within the Equality Act (2010). We understand equality to mean treating everyone with equal dignity and worth valuing their particular characteristics such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic circumstances. We further understand that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but are differentiated, as appropriate to take account of differences (of life-experience, outlook, background and the barriers and disadvantages which people may face), in order to ensure equal opportunity for all.

We recognise that inequality can be experienced in a variety of ways such as through outcomes, access to services, the degree of independence needed to make decisions affecting lives and inequality of treatment, including in relation to employment, through direct or indirect discrimination or disadvantage imposed by other individuals, groups, institutions or systems, intentionally or inadvertently.

The Equality Act's provisions cover all aspects of school life such as the treatment of:

- students and prospective students
- parents and carers
- employees and governors
- local community
- visitors

The Equality Act 2010 has simplified anti-discrimination laws by having a single Equality Act. This makes it easier for people to understand and comply with the law. The 2010 Act has also strengthened protection in some situations.

The act covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

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

The Equality Act makes it unlawful to treat someone differently, both through direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation and by failing to make reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

Since 6 April 2011 all public bodies including local authorities, schools, colleges and other state-funded educational settings including academies have been bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Age applies to a school as an employer but not with regard to the treatment of students and prospective students.

We are bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations

The general duty is supported by specific duties, these are to:

- Publish information which demonstrates our compliance with the duty to have due regard for the three aims of the general duty and to annually repeat this.
- Prepare and publish our specific and measurable objectives to achieve the three aims of the duty and undertake this no later than in four years' time.

Aims and Values

The school aims to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards.

The core values on which the policy is based include:

- Overcoming economic and social disadvantage
- A culture of respect for others
- Promoting equality by recognising and celebrating differences between people
- A community where students are well prepared for life in a diverse society

Roles and Responsibilities

Within our school all staff and governors at the school are responsible for ensuring the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

School Governors are responsible for:

- making sure the school complies with current equality legislation
- making sure this policy and the single equality scheme are properly implemented
- making sure related procedures are followed

The Principal is responsible for:

- making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it
- making sure its procedures are followed
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working

- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.
- All school staff are responsible for:
    - promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom
    - modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
    - promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone
    - keep up to date with the law on discrimination and take training and learning opportunities.

Students are responsible for:

- supporting the school's equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff
- keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- supporting the schools equality ethos
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff

Visitors are responsible for:

- following our expectations regarding equality.

A Cohesive Community

The schools seeks to:

- promote understanding and engagement between communities
- encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- understand and respond to the needs and hopes of all our communities
- tackle discrimination
- increase life opportunities for all
- ensure that learning, teaching and the curriculum explore and address issues of diversity

Procurement and Contractors

The Academy will take steps to ensure that when we buy services from another organisation, that organisation will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in selection during any tendering process. We will also ensure that any equipment we procure will comply with equality legislation. Any contractors visiting the Academy will be made aware of this Equality Statement on arrival and will be required to operate within the requirements.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

The School's Equality Policy is supported by a Single Equality Scheme and includes targets for promoting equality. The policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.

The Principal will provide monitoring reports for review by the Governing Body annually.

This policy links to other policies and in general the principles of equality will apply to all other school policies.

Concerns or Complaints

In the first instance a senior member of staff should be contacted. If issues or concerns remain unresolved these should be raised in accordance with the Academy's Complaints Policy.