



## Equality & Diversity Policy

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### 1. **BEC Teacher Training (BECTT) Equality and Diversity Policy Statement**

We are committed to an inclusive approach to the delivery of initial teacher training. We are working to ensure that our provision is open and accessible to all those who wish to participate in and who are capable of benefiting from our courses.

We value all those who teach, study and support our courses and are committed to implementing policies and processes, teaching and learning to tackle inequality and exclusion and promoting positive learning experiences and outcomes for all participants.

We are wholly committed to protecting people with the “protected characteristics” identified in the Equality Act 2010, which are:

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

In addition to promoting equality of opportunity and equality of access to our courses we also uphold the principle of diversity which adds another dimension by making sure that the differences between people, groups and identities are understood, valued and respected. We recognise that managing diversity is about improving how people can study or work together by recognising and valuing their similarities and differences.

We recognise our obligations and responsibilities as an employer and as a provider of teacher training, seeking to reflect our commitment to equality and diversity in all our activities and in all our dealings with staff, trainee teachers, schools, other agencies and suppliers of services and supplies.

We aim to ensure that our policies, procedures and activities should:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- promote positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- promote mutual respect and good relations between women and men and an absence of sexual harassment;
- support mature student trainee participation;
- train teachers who recognise and respond effectively to equal opportunity issues as they arise in the classroom, including challenging stereotyped views, and by challenging bullying or harassment, following relevant policies and procedures;
- promote within our policy all aspects of employment, from vacancy advertising, selection recruitment and training to conditions of agreement and reasons for termination of training agreement;
- ensure that this policy is operating effectively maintaining records of employees' and applicants' racial origins, age, gender and disability;
- monitor and undertake regular analysis of such records to provide the basis for appropriate action to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and promote equality of opportunity;
- ensure the composition of our trainee cohort reflects that of the community. Timetabled targets to be set for groups in the community that are identified as being underrepresented in the workforce;
- appoint the Strategic and Finance Board as the responsible body for the effective operation of this Equality and Diversity Policy;
- provide a copy of this Equality and Diversity Policy to all staff and trainees.

## **2. Equality and Diversity policy objectives**

We aim to:

- provide an initial teacher training programme which is truly open to all sections of the community, and in whose activities all individuals, whether staff or trainees are encouraged to participate fully and equally;
- recognise the need to challenge the patterns of inequality, which exist in our wider society;
- increase the level of participation of trainees and staff of those groups that are currently under-represented e.g. recruitment from ethnic minorities, men and people with disabilities, through programmes of legally acceptable positive action;
- ensure that we have access to the widest applicant base that secures the best trainees for the teaching profession;
- ensure that we undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information received;
- ensure that all trainees are seen as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled;
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
- whichever their gender
- ensure we recognise 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 and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:
  - disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
  - mental health challenges, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
  - ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
  - gender, so that the different needs and experiences of women, men and transgender people are recognised;
  - socio-economic status, so that everyone can participate in activities
- ensure that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment, and that, wherever possible, they are given the help they need to attain their full potential to the benefit of the teaching profession and themselves;
- to seek the commitment and involvement of all staff and trainees in the implementation of this policy;
- encourage good practice in Equality and Diversity with those external organisations who work collaboratively with us;
- achieve the policy's objectives, and to ensure we are compliant with the relevant Acts of Parliament as well as the various Codes of Practice;
- ensure recruitment, selection, training and promotion of staff is based solely on the criteria of merit and ability, and no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, marital status or domestic circumstance, e.g. sexuality, disability, political or religious belief.

### **3. Promoting disability equality**

To enable us to fulfil our mission statement we need to build an inclusive and supportive environment which meets the needs of all staff, trainees and visitors.

This includes enabling all those with a disability to participate as fully as possible and to enjoy a quality experience while studying, working or visiting us. Our aim is to provide an environment where there is equality of opportunity and where disabled people can take part in all aspects of our initial teacher training programme.

We welcome our general responsibilities under the Disability Equality Duty, having due regard to:

- promoting equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people;
- eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- eliminating harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.

Our aim is to identify and remove any barriers which exist for disabled people using our facilities and enable them to access as fully as possible all education and future employment, social and leisure opportunities. We are working towards a 'social' model of disability within our institution rather than adhering to the 'medical' model of disability. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in office/school life. Disabled trainees have an entitlement to access both the social and academic life on the programme.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for trainees and staff so they can fully participate on the course and in the workplace.

#### **4. Legal Duties**

We welcome our duties under the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010, Mental Health Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that adherence to the requirements in these six Acts of Parliament is essential for achieving the aims of our Equality and Diversity policy statement.

#### **5. Recruitment**

##### **Vacancy advertising**

- Wherever possible, all vacancies will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally. For applicants, full details of the course will be advertised on our website [www.billericayscitt.com](http://www.billericayscitt.com) and with Publish Teacher Training Courses to reach underrepresented groups.
- All vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity.
- Representation at Recruitment Fairs e.g. Train to Teach events to encourage applications from underrepresented groups featuring ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities and men.

#### **6. Selection**

- Selection criteria (job description, entry requirements) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job and for trainees to achieve the Teachers' Standards and PGCE qualification.
- We intend that our policies and procedures should benefit all trainees, potential trainees, employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:
  - whether or not they are disabled;
  - whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status;
  - whichever their gender or sexual orientation

- We comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- Where a Disclosure forms part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process.
- The Executive Director, Headteacher/Professional Mentor/Subject Mentor will be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and at least one needs to have undertaken safer recruitment training and wherever possible, women, men, minorities and disabled persons will be involved in the short listing and interviewing processes.
- Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies will be recorded.

## **7. The Trainee Disability Service**

We are committed to developing an inclusive learning environment for trainees with a disability. Enquiries from trainees with dyslexia, medical or mental health conditions, sensory impairments or access difficulties are welcomed. We encourage disclosure any disability or medical condition to ensure that appropriate support is arranged and any reasonable adjustment can be discussed. This could include access, assessment and study arrangements. All information disclosed is treated as 'sensitive personal data' as defined by the Data Protection Act (1998) and will not be passed on to a third party without explicit signed consent.

Prospective trainees with a disability will be given a warm welcome and will be able to obtain informally initial information about the support available for their needs whilst on the course. For those who require a more confidential discussion a private interview can be arranged on request.

Workplace adjustments will be discussed and support provided for those who experience mental health challenges.

## **8. Training in preparation for the course or member of staff to be a mentor**

- Underrepresented groups will be encouraged to apply for training. Wherever possible, training will be provided for such groups to prepare them for the course. However, actual recruitment to the course will be strictly on merit.
- Wherever possible, efforts will be made to avoid or minimise possible negative impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of training to meet the special needs of disadvantaged and/or underrepresented groups, including disabled and non-disabled people, people of different ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds and women and men.
- Following the interview successful trainees will be advised of positive tasks to undertake before commencement of the course.
- Our programme is designed to teach our trainees about the world's racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups and to equip them with the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to share this knowledge with their pupils.
- Our programme will focus on embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum by creating learning, teaching and assessment environments and experiences that proactively eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in a manner that values, preserves and responds to diversity.

- We view linguistic diversity positively and tutors should be aware of the language or dialect spoken by trainees. Tutors and staff should be conscious of any racist or sexist connotations in language that they use.
- All forms of discrimination are to be treated seriously. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable.
- Tutors will ensure that resources used in all curriculum areas are multi-cultural and non-sexist, containing positive images of all groups.
- Trainees are trained to support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language.
- Disabled facilities are available at the course centre and at other settings and schools for lectures.
- Notification advices are available to enable access to the course for trainees with disabilities
- We will ensure appropriate support for victims of sexual harassment, hate crime, violence or online harassment, religious hate crimes
- Enhanced support will be provided to support trainees experiencing mental health challenges
- We will use data analysis, research and evidence to support continuous improvement and understanding of Equality and Diversity for all staff and trainee teachers
- Explicit attention will be given to outcomes for trainees from under-represented groups.
- We are committed to ensuring staff receive information and training to enable them to understand their obligations with regard to equality and diversity. The format, frequency and objectives of training will be tailored to reflect the needs of staff. Some training is undertaken on a voluntary basis, whereas some is compulsory to ensure staff can carry out their roles within the law.

## **9. Personnel records**

- In order to ensure the effective operation of this policy a record will be kept of all trainees' and staffs' gender, racial origins and disabilities.
- Where necessary, trainees and staff will be able to check/correct their own record of these details. Otherwise, access to this information will be strictly restricted.
- Such records will be analysed regularly, compared with regional and national statistics and published in the Annual Report – known as the Self Evaluation Document. Appropriate follow-up action will be taken.

## **10. Monitoring the Policy**

We will monitor the diversity of our trainee cohorts and staff, as well as the effects of policies and processes such as recruitment and progression. An evaluation of the programme aims, teaching and learning methods, intended learning outcomes and assessment strategies will be undertaken annually in order to identify potential barriers to the participation of disabled students in the design and review of inclusive provision.

Policies are reviewed annually. All members of staff and members of the Strategic and Finance Board have responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. Suggestions for improvement in practice should be raised at committee meetings. People applying for posts and those appointed will be monitored, wherever possible, in order to review the progress of this policy. Opportunities for professional

development will be monitored to ensure that all tutors and staff have equal access to resources.

It is incumbent on all members of staff, ie teaching and non-teaching, and members of Boards and Committees, to uphold the philosophy of the statement on Equality and Diversity in their dealings with trainees, colleagues and visitors.

## **11. Sources of help and information**

Trainees or staff who are concerned that they may be the subject of discrimination in relation to any of the nine categories of the Equality Act (2010) are encouraged to discuss their concerns with their Mentor, Headteacher, the Executive Director or Line Manager as appropriate. All our agreed policies and procedures are published on our portal.

## **12. Useful contacts:**

ACAS [www.acas.org.co.uk](http://www.acas.org.co.uk)

Equality & Human Rights Commission [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

Government Equalities Office [www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)

Equality Challenge Unit [www.ecu.ac.uk](http://www.ecu.ac.uk)

Stonewall [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

Transgender Support [www.beaumontsociety.org.uk](http://www.beaumontsociety.org.uk)

British Dyslexia Association [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Dyspraxia Foundation [admin@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](mailto:admin@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

Epilepsy Action [www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society [www.mssociety.org.uk/](http://www.mssociety.org.uk/)

National Autistic Society [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

Mental Health [www.nhshealthatwork.co.uk](http://www.nhshealthatwork.co.uk)

Embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum: a model for learning and teaching practitioners [www.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk)

## **13. Complaints**

Comments or complaints about the arrangements described herein should be addressed in writing to the Executive Director.

Trainees wishing to make a complaint about matters concerning their trainee experience should refer to the Dignity at Study policy on the portal and are encouraged to speak to their mentor/tutor.

Staff wishing to make a complaint about matters concerning their employment should contact HR Services at Compass Education Trust Ltd.