MacIntyre Academies

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy

Version:	Changes/Updates	Responsibility:	Date:
V5	-Addition of inclusion and belonging in policy title and content updated to reflect this, including new sections on: Public Sector Equality Duty Roles and Responsibilities Fostering Good Relations Positive Action Reasonable Adjustments Reporting Concerns & Incidents Inclusive communication -Person responsible updated throughout -References to Endeavour House removed throughout	CEO (or equivalent)	April 2026

Person Responsible: CEO (or equivalent)
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Date of staff consultation:
Date adopted by the Trust Board: September 2016
Date of implementation: September 2016
Date reviewed: April 2026
Date of next review: April 2029

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out MacIntyre Academies' commitment to providing equality and fairness for all and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment. This policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of both MacIntyre Academies and its employees in accordance with relevant employment legislation and best practice.

2. Definitions

The terms equality, inclusion, diversity, and equity are at the heart of this policy.

'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination.

'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution.

'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce.

'Equity' means recognising barriers and that some groups are more advantaged than others, and putting measures in place to eliminate these barriers, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

'Belonging' means ensuring that all staff feel valued, respected, included and able to contribute openly without fear of exclusion.

We will actively support diversity, equity and inclusion, and ensure that our workforce is valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in our business to reach their potential.

3. Scope

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles, and circumstances. This policy applies to all employees of MacIntyre Academies Trust ('MAT' or 'MacIntyre Academies') in either a permanent, fixed term, relief, or temporary post. It also covers all consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored, and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct, or indirect, overt, or latent exists. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following MAT policies: 'Recruitment, 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' 'Grievance,' 'Disciplinary,' 'Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment,' 'Pay' and 'Appraisal.'

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and may be amended from time to time.

4. Public Sector Equality Duty

As a public body, the Trust must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics.

This policy supports the Trust's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Specific Duties Regulations.

5. Schedule of Responsibilities

The CEO (or equivalent) of MacIntyre Academies Trust takes overall responsibility for the implementation of policies and procedures and to provide reports as appropriate to Trustees in relation to this policy. Principals of MacIntyre Academies and their Senior Leadership Teams will take active steps to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example, and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. They will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. Senior Leadership Teams have particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination. This will include identifying training needs, ensuring competence in those staff who are responsible for and involved in the operation of this policy.

All employees, workers, or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the MAT.

All employees are required to cooperate fully and positively with the requirements of the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy. They should ensure they know the standards of expected of them in relation the policy, seeking clarification where required and undertake any training recommended by their line manager.

MacIntyre Academies Human Resources are responsible for providing advice and training under this policy and reviewing and updating the policy as required, ensuring continuing relevance and effectiveness in line with any developments in employment legislation, good employment practice and other MacIntyre Academies policies. The HR Manager is responsible for collating data for regular Trust Board HR reports and where appropriate, providing confidential reports as required by the CEO (or equivalent) and MacIntyre Academies Trust Board on individual cases. HR is responsible for reviewing and updating the policy

6. Roles & Responsibilities

Trust Board:

- Ensure compliance with equality legislation and this policy
- Review annual equality data and actions.

Executive Leaders and Principals:

- Ensure staff awareness and training
- Promote an inclusive culture
- Take action where discrimination or harassment occurs.

Managers:

- Apply the policy consistently
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are considered and implemented.

All Employees:

- Treat colleagues with dignity and respect
- Report concerns promptly
- Participate in training and development.

7. Introduction

MacIntyre Academies is an Equal Opportunities Employer and is committed to positively promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination, and encouraging diversity among the workforce.

MacIntyre Academies' Equality Objectives are published on the MAT website and reviewed annually in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Statements for each MacIntyre Academy can also be found on the MAT website.

8. Policy Statement

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in MAT as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with the Trust Leadership Group and Senior Leadership Teams, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of everyone to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality and equity throughout MAT. MacIntyre Academies will not tolerate unfair or unlawful discrimination or harassment or bullying in any form, and any breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice. The essential principles of this policy are:

- A positive working environment in which individual differences and contributions of all employees are recognised and valued will be actively promoted and all employees and prospective employees will be treated with dignity and respect

- Creating a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated

- Training will be compulsory for employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers covering the prevention of discrimination. Information relating to Equal Opportunities will be contained within the Induction Programme for new employees

- Training, development and progression opportunities will be made available to all employees. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of performance and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation

- Standard working practices and processes and procedures in place will be regularly reviewed to ensure the prevention of unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline, dismissal and selection for redundancy

- Taking steps to ensure equity amongst our workforce and ensuring there are no unlawful barriers to accessing our employment opportunities, training, progression opportunities, benefits, and facilities

- Breaches of equality will be challenged and thoroughly investigated and where relevant will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures for employees.

Diversity within the workforce will be regularly monitored to ensure equal opportunities throughout MAT. Where appropriate, measures will be taken to identify and remove unnecessary obstacles and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

The Trust recognises that discrimination can occur directly, indirectly, by association, or by perception, consistent with the Equality Act 2010.

9. Fostering Good Relations

The Trust will:

- Encourage open and respectful dialogue across all groups
- Challenge prejudice, stereotypes or discriminatory attitudes
- Promote activities that celebrate diversity
- Ensure workplace materials and communications reflect a diverse community
- Provide opportunities for staff to build understanding of different identities and experiences.

10. Recruitment

Robust recruitment and selection procedures in place will be regularly reviewed to eliminate discrimination with the recruitment process and ensure fairness. A Person Specification and Job Description is required for each vacancy, the content of which must be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the role. Shortlisting must be carried out independently by a panel of at least two persons (at least one of whom has undergone mandatory recruitment training detailing the prevention of discrimination) and must be objective and competency-based. Reasonable adjustments will be implemented for candidates where required. Equal opportunity data disclosed by potential candidates at the application stage is only accessible by Human Resources and is not made available to the recruitment panel.

Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the role and using the MacIntyre Academies' competency-based framework. Pre-commencement questionnaires detailing any health conditions the candidate may have will not be required to be completed by applicants until an offer of employment has been made. Thereafter, MacIntyre Academies' will work with the applicant to implement any required reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

11. Positive Action

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Trust may take proportionate positive action to support underrepresented groups where lawful. This is not positive discrimination but targeted support to improve equality of opportunity.

12. Training, Development and Progression Opportunities

Training, development and progression opportunities will be made available to all employees. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation. Equality, diversity and Inclusion training is mandatory.

13. Reasonable Adjustments

The Trust is committed to making reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and applicants to support equal access to employment, progression, facilities and training.

14. Pay and Reward

Opportunities to undertake additional responsibilities that merit (or may merit) additional remuneration will be published within the school and open to all employees. The principles of equal pay for work of equal value will be applied. Salaries for new starters are calculated using the MacIntyre Academies pay scale framework, based on competencies, qualifications and experience. Pay progression along the MacIntyre Academies pay scale is reviewed annually for all staff and is based upon performance criteria as detailed in the Appraisal Policy. Salaries and pay progression decisions will not be influenced by any protected characteristic and will follow equal pay principles.

Employees will not be the subject of unfair discrimination in decisions on pay, promotion and remuneration. Pay levels, enhancements and promotions will be determined within an equal opportunities context, having regard to the Equality Act, 2010 and relevant legislation.

15. Reporting Concerns & Incidents

Employees who witness or experience discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation should report concerns to:

- Their line manager; or
- Head of Operations; or
- Another senior leader if appropriate.

Formal complaints will be managed through the Grievance; Bullying, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment; or Disciplinary policies. Complaints from external parties will be managed through the Trust Complaints Policy.

All reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly, and appropriate action taken.

16. Training

All employees receive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion e-learning as part of their induction and are required to repeat this annually thereafter.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion face-to-face training is also rolled out across the Trust for all employees, with a bespoke session for leadership teams also.

Appointing Officer training is provided for employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers. This mandatory training is delivered by the HR Team and includes an overview of the protected characteristics as covered under the Equality Act, 2010. It also covers prevention of discrimination throughout the recruitment process including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination by association and discrimination by perception.

17. Monitoring

Data relating to the ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion/beliefs and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion) will be monitored and analysed on a regular basis. MacIntyre Academies will put into place an appropriate action plan to address any areas of concern identified as a result of the monitoring process.

Any information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.

18. Inclusive Communication

The Trust will ensure communications and materials use inclusive language and positively represent the diverse community it serves.

19. Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this policy by employees will be treated as misconduct, or in the case of serious breaches, gross misconduct. Where appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken, which could, in serious cases, lead to dismissal with or without notice.

Where an employee feels they have been discriminated against, they may raise a complaint informally with their line manager or with the Head of Operations. Complaints, which are not resolved informally will be managed within the formal MAT Grievance or Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment procedures. Complaints by external person(s) or job applicants should be referred via the MAT Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Changes at previous reviews:

Version Number	Purpose/ Change		Responsibility	Date
2	Job title change from HR & Recruitment Manager to Head of Support Services (Section 11)		CEO	11.12.19
4	All	Updated roles as required Policy name updated to reflect best practice	Group Director	March 2023
	1,2,3,5	Updated to reflect best practice		

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Protected characteristics: A protected characteristic is a group which is protected from discrimination under equality legislation. The Equality Act 2010 covers nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Direct discrimination
Where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination
Where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Discrimination by Association
Where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by Perception
Where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Harassment
Where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Victimisation
Occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare his/her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments, and is then systematically excluded from all meetings, such behaviour could amount to victimisation.