

Student Equality and Diversity Policy

This procedure is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

STUDENT EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1 Smart Vision School is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different background and experiences can bring valuable insights to the teaching and learning environment and enhance the way we deliver our services to our students. We aim to be an inclusive community where diversity is valued, respected and built upon, with the ability to recruit and retain a diverse student body. Within this framework Smart Vision School specifically refers to measures it has in place to provide equality of opportunity and the facilities that it can provide to its diverse student body and prospective students.

1.2 Smart Vision School is also committed to compliance with relevant equality legislation, the Equality Act 2010, Codes of Practice and relevant best practice guidance. This policy pursues and builds on the statutory position to ensure effective policies and practice of promoting equality.

1.3 Smart Vision School aims to pro-actively tackle discrimination or disadvantage and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to accessing its services.

1.4 However, we are also mindful of the provision in discrimination law for the rare circumstances when an organisation may need to justify discrimination rather than have a disproportionate effect. This could be, for instance, where there is a conflict with other legislation that we have to comply with or between service needs. In such circumstances the school is committed to following the required proper assessment and objective justification of any decision in order to demonstrate that the provision, criterion or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

2. THE DEFINITION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

2.1 Equality can be described as breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups both in employment and in the supply of goods and services, the basis of which is supported and protected by legislation.

2.2 Diversity can be described as celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions which is beneficial not only for the individual but for the School.

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2.3 Equality and Diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed and taken account of.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This policy applies to students of the school and all those applying to study with us.

3.2 Where our services are provided by external contractors or third parties on the basis of a specification set by the school, these contractors or third parties are responsible for adhering to our Equality and Diversity Policy whilst providing services on behalf of the Academy.

3.3 This policy also applies to sub-contractors and the school will monitor the performance of contractors and/or third parties and take all necessary steps to ensure good performance and compliance with appropriate behaviours. However, if any issues become apparent with regards to diversity or equality in relation to any contractor or third party, these will be taken very seriously by the school and raised in the strongest possible terms with the contractor or third party.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 We are committed to ensuring

- that students and prospective students are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination
- all student-related policies, practices and procedures are applied impartially and objectively;
- equality of opportunity to all and to provide students with the opportunity to develop and realise their full potential;
- that SVSI for Learning and Development works towards achieving a diverse student body
- that all students of SVS can learn and study in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

4.2 The Equality and Diversity policy provides a clear framework for translating our policy into action. It outlines the responsibilities of the senior academic staff and teaching and administration staff to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and expresses our strong commitment to its full and active implementation.

4.3 We will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amounts to direct discrimination, associative discrimination, discrimination by perception indirect discrimination including harassment (harassment by a third party) or victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.

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4.4 We recognise the importance of monitoring, reviewing and reporting on its equality and diversity policy and practice and to measure progress in meeting our policy statement.

5. PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

5.1 As a teaching provider committed to diversity and equality Smart Vision School recognises its success depends on creating a teaching and learning environment which supports the diverse make-up of its staff and students with supporting policies and procedures to create a framework of assistance and support.

6. SMART VISION SCHOOL POLICIES

6.1 All of our policies are designed to promote equal opportunity and protection against discrimination for all students.

7. REVIEW AND MONITORING

7.1 Smart Vision School will undertake monitoring that not only meets statutory requirements but also aims for best practice. This is used to inform and improve our employment and recruitment practices. If through monitoring any discrimination is identified Smart Vision School will take corrective action to eliminate it.

7.2 Such monitoring will be carried out using appropriate statistical analysis and would normally deal with areas such as race, disability, gender and age and ensure compliance with legislation.

8. TRAINING

8.1 Smart Vision School is committed to ensuring its staff and managers are trained in equality and diversity and aims to ensure that adequate training is provided so that managers are able to operate this policy.

8.2 Diversity and equality forms an integral part of our induction package. Administration staff and Teaching staff will ensure that all new students are made aware of our Equality and Diversity Policy

9. COMMUNICATION

9.1 Please contact Administration if you require a copy in for those policies.

9.2 The details of this policy will be proactively communicated and promoted to all current staff and new starters.

10. DISCRIMINATION

10.1 Discrimination may take seven main forms and is defined in law along with the protective characteristics associated with each provision: -

- **Direct discrimination** occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic. Relevant protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.
- **Associative discrimination** occurs when someone is discriminated against because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. Relevant protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- **Discrimination by perception** occurs when someone discriminates against an individual because they think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic. Relevant protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs when a seemingly neutral provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone places a group who share a characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Indirect discrimination may be justified if it can be shown that the provision, criterion or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- **Dual Discrimination** occurs when someone is treated less favourably because of a combination of two relevant protected characteristics. Relevant protected characteristic include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- **Detriment arising from a disability** arises when a person with a disability is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability. This type of discrimination is unlawful where the employer or education provider or other person acting for them knows, or could reasonably expected to know, that the person had a disability. This type of discrimination is only lawful if the action can be justified and the employer or education provider can show that is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim arising from a disability.

- **Victimisation** occurs when a student is treated unfavourably, disadvantaged or subjected to a detriment because they have made or supported a complaint of discrimination or raised a grievance under the Equality Act, this policy or because they are suspected of doing so. (However, a student is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint).

11. COMPLAINTS AND DISCRIMINATION

11.1 Smart Vision School takes all claims of discrimination very seriously and will take appropriate action against those concerned. Discrimination occurs when someone directly or indirectly treats a person or a group of people unfavourably because of a protected characteristic of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. This covers all behaviour - including remarks and insinuation, both verbal and non-verbal - which cause offence.

12. RESPONSIBILITY

12.1 All staff have a responsibility to guard against any form of discrimination and avoid any action which goes against the spirit of this policy. Staff at all levels must ensure that there is no discrimination in any of their decisions or behaviour. This includes the provision that all staff must:

- report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices;
- not induce or attempt to induce others to practice unlawful discrimination;
- co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equality of opportunity;
- not victimise anyone as a result of them having complained about, reported or provided evidence of discrimination;
- not harass abuse or intimidate others.

12.2 All staff have a collective responsibility to ensure this policy is successfully implemented.

The Principal and some other staff senior are responsible for:

- Providing leadership on the equality and diversity strategy and policy, acting as overall champions to ensure the policy is implemented;
- Communicating the strategy and policy, internally and externally;

Teaching staff and administrators at all levels are responsible for:

- Implementing the policy as part of their day-to-day management and in applying policies and practices in a fair and equitable way
- Ensuring equality and diversity issues are addressed in performance.
- Ensuring all staff and students act in accordance with the equality and diversity policy providing necessary support and direction;
- Effectively manage and deal promptly when investigating issues relating to potential discrimination,

Each member of staff at Smart Vision School is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy in their day-to-day work and their dealings with students
- Ensuring their behaviour is appropriate to the policy and that they treat students with respect and dignity;
- Not discriminating against students
- Notifying their line manager of any concerns with regard to the conduct of other employees, service users, the public or third parties.
- The Principal and some other staff senior are responsible for:
- Developing policy and strategy on equality and diversity;
- Providing guidance to teaching and operations staff;
- Supporting staff in investigating issues relating to potential discrimination,
- Monitoring student policies and practices;
- Facilitating training and development initiatives on equality and diversity,

12.3 Non- Compliance with Policy – We will not tolerate any behaviour from staff or students which breaches our equality and diversity policy. Any such breaches will be regarded as misconduct except for serious offences such as discrimination on protected grounds; serious offences including harassment, bullying, or victimisation will be treated as gross misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal from employment without notice or in the case of a student, dismissal from Smart Vision School.