Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Colleagues

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1. Purpose

1.1 At Futura we are committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse and equitable workplace where every colleague has the opportunity to 'flourish' and contribute their unique perspective without fear of discrimination or exclusion.

We commit to embracing and celebrating diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences to create a dynamic environment where innovation and creativity thrive.

1.2 This policy sets out the legal framework, roles and responsibilities and initiatives that embrace and support our vision for an inclusive, diverse and equitable workplace. The Trust recognises that each employee, and their circumstances, are different and this policy provides a framework for expectations and support in line with the Trust's values of Respect, Opportunity, Collaboration and Aspiration.

1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

2. Scope

2.1 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is an integral part of Futura's culture. We intentionally embrace and promote diversity in all its forms, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, and abilities.

2.2 All colleagues including ITT students, casual workers, Trustees, Governors, volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors, and visitors are covered by this policy, and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion.

2.3 It covers discrimination on the basis of the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex or sexual orientation as set out in the Equality Act (2010)

2.4 The Trust's commitment to diversity and equity extends to all aspects of the working relationship including but not exclusively:

- Recruitment and selection procedures
- Terms and conditions of employment, including pay and benefits
- Training, appraisal, career development and promotion; work practices, conduct issues, discipline, grievances and allocation of work.
- Termination of employment and post-employment matters, including references.

3. Legal Framework

3.1 The Trust's legal obligations and duties include those defined by the Equality Act 2010 in relation to discrimination and social inclusion.

The Equality Act 2010 provides further guidance Equality Act 2010.

3.2 The Trust is also committed to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires us to give due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advancing equity of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 All stakeholders have responsibility for fostering an inclusive, diverse and equitable workplace where every colleague has the opportunity to 'flourish'.

4.2 Employer responsibilities

The Trust commits to maintaining a culture of transparency, where our policies, practices, and resources align with our equity, diversity and inclusion priorities. We hold ourselves to account for creating an environment that upholds our legal responsibilities and supports the wellbeing of our colleagues.

The Trust is committed to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.3 Senior Leaders/Headteachers/Line Managers responsibilities:

Our leadership team are expected to lead by example in line with Trust values and behaviours set out in the Futura Way.

Trust leaders/line managers have a responsibility to ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion is an ongoing priority embedded in trust culture and day to day management practice. Trust leaders/line managers are all role models and their commitment to leading by example is critical to creating an inclusive culture.

Day to day responsibilities:

- Lead by example by adopting practices that proactively support equity, diversity and inclusion.

- Understand that discrimination and harassment are unlawful and totally unacceptable and are expected to challenge any inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour.
- Participate in relevant training.
- Ensure that opportunities for promotion and learning and development are accessible to all colleagues and are available on a fair and equitable basis.
- Ensure new colleagues undertake an appropriate induction which covers diversity and equity.
- Understand responsibilities under the relevant policies such as; wellbeing, health & safety, and dignity at work policies.

4.3 Employee responsibilities

All employees have a responsibility to promote EDI.

Colleagues are responsible for contributing positively to the workplace by managing and communicating their own needs at the earliest opportunity.

Day to day responsibilities:

- Understand responsibilities under the relevant policies such as; wellbeing, health & safety, and dignity at work policies.
- Expected to take an active part in promoting diversity and equity at work and treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Challenge inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour where they feel confident to do so or report concerns to a manager.
- Inform your line manager/ the Trust at the earliest opportunity if you are aware of any issues such as any disabilities so the Trust is able to consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.
- All employees are required to take part in EDI training appropriate to their role with new employees required to take EDI training as part of their induction.
- Demonstrate at all times the Trusts values and behaviours as outlined in the "Futura Way".

4.4 HR responsibilities

- Identify and develop Trust-wide initiatives to embed the Trust culture of wellbeing.
- Provide support and guidance on the proactive implementation of wellbeing initiatives and practices as well as the consistent application of this policy.
- Coach and develop line managers to ensure they have the skills to support their team members.

- Continually review and promote the Trust's health and wellbeing resources and initiatives ensuring easy access for all colleagues.
- Encourage and support employee engagement through regular engagement surveys.
- The HR Advisory Team are available to provide guidance on the consistent application of this policy.

5. Forms of Discrimination

Colleagues must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former colleagues, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts, and on work-related trips or events including social events).

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

5.1 Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out in the scope section above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not 'fit in' would be direct discrimination.

5.2 Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally but adversely affects people with a particular protected characteristic more than others who do not have the protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless there is a justifiable reason i.e. is any applied provision, criterion or practice a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

5.3 Harassment

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership are not protected directly under the harassment provisions. However, pregnancy and maternity harassment would amount to harassment related to sex, and harassment related to civil partnership would amount to harassment related to sexual orientation. Harassment is dealt with further in the Trust's dignity at work policy.

5.4 **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as a denied training opportunity or promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance or are suspected of doing so about discrimination or harassment. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they gave false evidence or information, or made a false allegation, in bad faith.

If any employee makes a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith, this will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

6. Termination of employment and warnings

6.1 We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

6.2 We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

7. Disability Discrimination

Disability discrimination includes direct or indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate the effects caused by a disability.

7.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

7.2 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact the Headteacher/Line Manager initially to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty.

The Trust will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

7.3 The Trust will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled employees or job applicants at a substantial disadvantage compared to other employees. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for employees who have a disability.

8. Recruitment and Selection

We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities.

All applicants will be provided with a copy of our Recruitment Privacy Notice which sets out how we will gather, process and hold personal data of individuals during the recruitment process. Our recruitment processes are set out in our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

8.1 Job selection criteria as set out in the person specification will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job. Short listing of applicants should be done by more than one person wherever possible and will be carried out objectively against the requirements of the job.

8.2 Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.

8.3 We will take reasonable steps, where appropriate depending on the situation, to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our Trust.

8.4 Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, other than where it is necessary to;

- establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- establish if any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable an applicant to have a fair interview or assessment.
- carry out equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

8.5 Job offers will be conditional upon a satisfactory medical check in accordance with our obligation under Keeping Children Safe in Education, where a school must verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities in accordance with the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

8.6 Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy or gender identity or history. Applicants will not be asked about matters which may suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a protected characteristic.

8.7 We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance, name or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original specified documents before employment starts to satisfy current immigration legislation.

8.8 To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our Trust, we monitor Diversity data as part of the recruitment process and as set out in our Recruitment Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's success at recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before short listing and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

9. Breaches of this Policy

9.1 If you believe that you may have been discriminated against or you have witnessed discrimination you are encouraged to raise the matter through the Trust grievance policy.

If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the Trust dignity at work policy

If you are uncertain which policy applies or need advice on how to proceed contact HR at hradvisory@futuralearning.co.uk.

9.2 Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

Employees who complain in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result.

False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy.

9.3 Any colleague who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The Trust takes a strict approach to breaches of this policy.

10. Key Related Trust Policies

- Dignity at Work Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

- Family Friendly Policies
- Recruitment and Selection Policy

This is not an exhaustive list.

11. Equality Impact Assessments and Monitoring

10.1 We will carry out equality impact assessments as required on policies and processes in order to ensure that we are not discriminating or placing at a disadvantage any group or individuals.

10.2 We will also monitor and review the process and outcomes of any complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation to ensure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised.

Appendix A – Equity Impact Assessment

Title of the policy	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
New Policy or policy review	Policy review
Name of school (if applicable)	Trust Policy
Date	January 2025
EIA carried out by	HR Advisory Team
Who has been consulted	
EIA approved by	

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/ activity/event being assessed	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/event	Please see section 2 of policy attached.
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? *(e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)*	Policy is subject to scheduled review, consultation through Heads working group, Trade Unions and HR Committee.
4. Who is affected by the policy/event?	All Trust Colleagues
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/event?	Inclusion on Trust Governance review of policies. Taking place every 3 years as per schedule, or as required should legislation change, or as required following feedback received.

Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact? If so what?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability	No existing concerns identified		
Gender reassignment	No existing concerns identified		
Marriage or civil partnership	No existing concerns identified		
Pregnancy and maternity	No existing concerns identified		
Race	No existing concerns identified		
Religion or belief	No existing concerns identified		
Sexual orientation	No existing concerns identified		
Sex (gender)	No existing concerns identified		
Age	No existing concerns identified		

Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	No – reasonable adjustments in order for the policy to be followed would be advised on a case by case basis.	
Final Decision:	**Tick the relevant box**	**Include any explanation / justification required**
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will **proceed**.		
2. You can decide to **stop** the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can **adapt or change** the policy in a way which you think will address the bias		
4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to **proceed with caution** with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

Where will this EIA be published?	Attached as an appendix to Policy and on share point
Date completed:	
Review date (if applicable):	

Change log

Name	Date	Version	Change