



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Reviewed	Date of Next Review	Responsibility
September 2024	September 2025	Head of HR

Our Mission:

'To enable young people to live and work without barriers'

Our Values:

- **Teamwork** – we hold ourselves and each other to account and are better when we work together
- **Compassion** – we act with trust, honesty, and kindness in everything we do
- **Inclusion** – we treat each other fairly and with respect
- **Innovation** – we encourage thoughtful, creative, and aspirational ideas
- **Pride** – we encourage each other to be proud of who we are and what we do

Fairfield Trust is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our community and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all learners, applicants, volunteers, visitors, and all staff (regardless of whether employment is temporary, part-time, or full-time).

2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- pay and benefits
- recruitment and selection processes
- terms and conditions of employment
- dealing with grievances and discipline
- dismissal
- redundancy
- requests for leave
- requests for flexible working
- selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities

All learners, staff and volunteers will support the following philosophy statement:

- all individuals have the right to live their lives free from discrimination.
- all individuals have a right to confidentiality in respect of personal information if this does not infringe the rights of other people.
- all individuals are unique and valuable, this is demonstrated by providing learning opportunities which enable young people with differing abilities to achieve their potential.
- it is important to celebrate diversity amongst learners, staff and visitors and recognise the contribution that individuals (with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences) can make to the life of FT.
- that no individual or group should receive less favourable treatment because of their age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity status, religion or belief, race, or social & economic status. These are collectively known as "Protected Characteristics".
- that no individual or group should be subjected to any type of discrimination i.e. direct discrimination, associative discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, harassment by a third party, victimisation, or discrimination by perception.

Our commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. This extends to applicants, learners, staff, volunteers, and visitors irrespective of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity status, religion or belief and race.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training managers and all other employees about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity, and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination. All staff should understand they, as well as their employer, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.
3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities. The Trust is committed to the eradication of discriminatory behaviour. Offensive racist, sexist, homophobic language, harassment, or other unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. All complaints of such behaviour will be investigated and treated seriously according to the Trust's complaints policy.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- unwanted physical contact, insulting or abusive behaviour or gestures, unwelcome advances, excessive flirting, physical threats, or assault.
- unwanted comments regarding sexuality or physical appearance or sexual jokes, patronising titles or nicknames, unwanted body touching, propositions or remarks, innuendoes, lewd comments, banter, or abusive language which refers to a person's protected characteristics.
- arranging meetings that would exclude individuals of certain protected characteristics.
- unwanted non-verbal conduct such as racially or sexually based use of language referring to an individual's characteristics or private life, abusive or offensive gestures, leering or staring, whistling, display of pornographic or suggestive literature, pictures or films/videos or inappropriate use of the network systems or mobiles for this use.
- conduct which denigrates, ridicules, intimidates or is physically abusive of an individual or a group.
- discrimination against any individual because of an instance of misconduct for which an appropriate sanction has already been applied

Our Commitments continued:

4. Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning staff based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and update policies and procedures accordingly to take account of changes in the law.

The Curriculum

The Trust promotes Equality and Diversity within the curriculum. This will be achieved by:

- promoting and progressing the understanding of Equality and Diversity throughout the curriculum in meaningful ways that are accessible for our young people.
- providing materials that are free from prejudice and stereotypes.
- reviewing practices and techniques to encourage student learning, ensuring they meet the needs of individuals and are free from bias.
- ensuring that assessment methods for qualifications and achievement do not disadvantage some groups of learners.

Staff will ensure that every reasonable step is taken to use appropriate formats in language, material, or approach in relation to a student's protected characteristics. This will be achieved by ensuring that it:

- is not offensive to members of particular groups.
- is capable of being understood by the learners.
- is not stereotyped or has biased attitudes.
- does not assume such experiences have been had by all learners.
- does not assume contexts are not equally meaningful to all learners.
- does not include terms or concepts or forms of presentation which are unfamiliar to some learners.
- does not employ techniques that are difficult for some learners to use.
- does not require activities that cannot be performed by some learners.

Equality and Diversity Monitoring

- We collect study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy and make adjustments as appropriate.
- FT will welcome suggestions from both staff and parents for improving any Equality and Diversity issues.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plans, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the Senior Leadership Team and has full agreement from the board.

Our disciplinary and grievance procedures

Details of the organisation's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be accessed via the Staff Handbook. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually HR.

Use of the organisation's grievance or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

TAMASIN JONES
HEAD OF HR

September 2024