



BPET Equal Opportunities for Staff Policy

Signed:	
Chair of Trust Board:	Claire Delaney
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1.0 Bellevue Place Education Trust – Our commitment

Learn. Enjoy. Succeed.

Three words that mean the world to us.

Three words that have been with us from the day we started Bellevue Place Education Trust.

Three words that govern all that we do.

As a parent you can expect excellence, both in how we teach and nurture your child. We foster a positive attitude to life, encouraging a 'be interested and be interesting' attitude by providing a rich learning environment full of arts, drama, sport, music and academic rigour.

Bellevue Place children are happy, confident, successful 'all rounders' who expect to win and achieve in an inclusive setting where children, parents and school staff work together to provide the best. Our commitment to you and your child is that we will teach them to learn, enjoy and succeed both in their school career and beyond.

Staff in BPET are central to delivering the vision of the Trust. We are committed to recruiting the best staff, providing attractive development and retention packages and ensuring that every member of staff receives focused training. Teachers are all leaders and will be developed so their career is supported to help them to achieve their aspirations. Our goal is that at least half of our future senior leaders of BPET schools will come from current BPET staff.

2.0 General

Diversity, tolerance and equality are at the heart of every activity undertaken by BPET, where young people of all races, faiths and cultures learn together. BPET is committed to ensuring that all employees have the opportunity to maximize their potential and enhance their self-development and their contribution to the organisation. As a learning organisation BPET is committed to developing an open workplace culture in which everyone feels valued and can add value. It is our policy and practice to ensure that all individuals associated with our Schools are treated fairly regardless of their race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religious belief, age or disability.

Our commitment to operating equal opportunity principles is key in all our dealings with employees, pupils, parents, contractors and any other School associates. We believe there is an implicit business case to take action to remove all forms of discrimination. Discrimination is wasteful of talent and harmful to both individuals and the organisation. It has the effect of reducing employment prospects and preventing full consideration of abilities, potential and experience. We believe that those organisations failing to tackle discrimination will be at a disadvantage in the recruitment and retention of talented employees.

We therefore have a recruitment policy, which sets out to ensure that we recruit the best person for the job and have a workforce, which reflects the diversity of the local community.

We also seek to maximise the potential of all employees, as it makes good business sense.

We believe the effective and efficient use of people's skills requires employment decisions to be based on competencies, qualifications, skills, potential and objective job related criteria, obtained by careful analysis of job requirements and job performance. We intend to develop the talents of all our employees to be successful in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

As part of this overall equal opportunities policy we are working hard also to encourage and develop other employment practices, which address all types of discrimination, based on adopting good practice principles in recruitment, selection for promotion, training and development and redundancy. Before introducing important new policies or measures, we will carefully assess their potential impact on equalities, positive or negative, and keeps a record of the analysis and judgments that it makes. This also applies to changes in School policies relating to students such as admissions, curriculum, school activities, extended school provisions etc. Our schools will develop equality objectives to meet our duties under the Equalities Act 2010.

We seek to provide services and employment within an environment free from discrimination. We value diversity and will treat individuals with dignity and respect. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful discrimination of any kind as it recognises that discrimination and bullying adversely affects the working lives of individuals.

The Headteacher and Leadership team working together are firmly committed to the success of this policy and all steps taken towards its achievement. We will ensure it is implemented and monitored throughout the School's operations.

Failure to follow this policy could result in disciplinary action.

Everyone associated with BPET has a responsibility to treat one another fairly and with respect and to actively participate in any measures required to ensure equality and non-discrimination. We will all be encouraged to take part in developing equality through the policies and practices in which we are involved. All managers have a particular responsibility for implementing equal opportunity policies and practices.

We will continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and treat any breaches seriously.

This policy helps to protect the organisation against liability for the behaviour of individuals if they have taken all reasonable steps to prevent hostile conduct and also helps to ensure that the statutory responsibilities and obligations are met for equal opportunities under the Equality Act 2010.

3.0 The Equality Act 2010

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation.

Under this act it is unlawful in a number of circumstances including employment and training to:

- Discriminate directly against anyone.
- Discriminate indirectly against anyone.
- Subject someone to harassment.
- Victimise someone because they have made or intend to make a complaint or give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination;
- Instruct someone to discriminate on behalf of the School;
- Discriminate against someone after the working relationship has ended.

It is also unlawful to discriminate against staff who work part time or are on fixed term contracts.

4.0 BPET Policies and Procedures which Support this Policy

Other BPET policies which support Equal Opportunities are:

- Staff Harassment and Bullying Policy;
- Grievance Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Disciplinary Policy; and
- Safer Recruitment Policy

All school activities will be linked back to this policy to ensure that our culture, policies and procedures endorse this policy and that it becomes an essential part of everything that we do.

5.0 Definitions

Harassment

Harassment occurs if the purpose or effect is to create an intimidating, hostile, offensive or disturbing environment. Harassment includes any unwanted verbal or physical abuse and/or advances and/or behaviour, which an employee finds offensive and which causes them to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised, distressed or harassed. Such action may also be considered harassment if it impairs an individual's job performance, undermines their job security or creates a threatening or intimidating environment. Harassment may be deliberate or unconscious, an isolated incident or repeated action. It will not necessarily be a defence that such incidents or action consist of words or behaviour, which might be claimed to be 'commonplace'.

Discrimination

Discrimination, for the purposes of this policy, is where any employee is treated less favourably than any other employee on grounds of racial origin, gender, age, disability, marital status, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is such that it would be to the detriment of a considerably larger proportion of e.g. women than men or racial group etc.

- Which cannot be justified;
- Which is detrimental to that person(s), because they cannot comply.

Victimisation

Victimisation, which is a further form of harassment, occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person, because they have referred to or have asserted their rights under the Equality Act 2010, or the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy. This would cover both those bringing cases under this legislation/policy or those witnesses in any investigation of a complaint.

A Racist Incident

Any incident, which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Bullying

The Public Order Act identifies a range of activities (intentionally causing another individual to be harassed, alarmed or distressed by the use of threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour), which can be regarded as criminal offences. For the purposes of this procedure bullying is defined as the persistent and deliberate misuse of power or position to intimidate, humiliate or undermine.

Bullying can arise through intentional misuse of power or position to criticise unreasonably or unjustifiably and condemn; humiliating and undermining an individual's skills and ability such that they become fearful, losing confidence and belief in themselves.

Bullying can take many forms e.g.:

- Physical (at worst assault);
- Verbal (shouting, swearing, public reprimands, personal insults and name calling, spreading rumours, making threats, persistent criticism);
- Non-verbal (ostracising, setting impossible objectives, persistent intrusion, withholding information; unreasonable allocation of duties, removing responsibility, allocating menial tasks, constantly changing working guidelines or even inappropriate eye-contact).

A person who is subject to bullying may suffer from physical and/or emotional symptoms, e.g. disturbed sleep, feeling sick, sweating, shaking and/or loss of confidence, lack of motivation and depression. Additionally they may suffer in other ways, e.g. loss of training and development opportunities, missed promotion.

6.0 Queries

If you have any queries or would like further discussion on any of the issues raised, please speak to your Headteacher or line manager. This policy belongs to everyone associated with BPET and therefore we welcome comments with regard to improvements to the policy or areas which you feel are currently missing or not working.

It is essential that everyone at our Schools works within the parameters of our Equal Opportunities policy. The information below is to make you aware of who is responsible for its implementation and what you should do if you have any concerns that members of staff are breaching the policy.

7.0 Implementation

The Headteacher and the Central trust team will ensure that the policy is implemented ('leading from the top') monitor the policy at school leadership team meetings, regular review meetings with the Central Trust Team and BPET Board meetings to ensure these responsibilities are met. They will assess how it is working in practice against objectives and suggest improvements encouraging their teams to do the same.

8.0 What to Do If You Feel Something Is Wrong

If there is anything that happens within your work, which you are uncomfortable with or believe is discriminatory or unfair, in any way, please raise the issue immediately. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that there is equal opportunity in all our working practices and procedures.

Whilst the policy refers to specific aspects of equal opportunities, we will not tolerate any form of unfair treatment for our staff, pupils, parents and others including bullying or harassment.

The first person you should speak to should normally be your line manager or the Headteacher. If

the complaint is against your Headteacher or they are not available, you should contact the Chief Executive.

They will treat any complaints seriously and will ensure that the individual making the complaint is fully supported. If you are not happy that your complaint has been investigated fully or dealt with properly, it will be referred for further investigation to either the Chief Executive or the Chair of the Board of Trustees via the Clerk to the Board.

If you feel that you require further independent help you may also call the Equality and Human Rights Commission Help line on 0845 604 6610.

9.0 Approval by the Bellevue Place Education Trust Board

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the BPET Board.