

Public Sector Equality Duty Statement 2020

This statement sets out our commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and work, to prevent any unlawful or unfair discrimination, victimisation and harassment within all schools and business units of Westcountry Schools Trust. We recognise that individual schools may have their own Equality Duty statements published on their websites and this statement is designed to support and align with these. In addition, we hold regular reviews to ensure all HR policies, practices and procedures are legislatively compliant and enable appropriate equality outcomes.

We aim to ensure that staff, students, visitors and all those associated with the Trust are treated with dignity, respect, and equity, this is inclusive of all individuals, or groups of individuals across the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation) as defined in the Equality Act (2010).

As a Trust we are determined to develop a culture of aspiration, which champions success for all equally, this includes our commitment to the principles of equal opportunities and respect for individuals in creating and maintaining an inclusive environment. We value and celebrate diversity, seeing this as critical to achieving our strategic aims and long-term success.

One of our strategic principles is that we are a schools trust which consists of two major parts; people and culture. We believe that for every school to be great we need great people and a great culture. We promote an inclusive culture where opportunities are open to everyone, and decisions are based on merit and are free from bias.

A further key principle is that WeST is determined to recruit, develop and retain the best staff possible. We want our staff to hold a passion and enjoyment for what they do and the difference they make. We have a clear and embedded set of core values and behaviours which underpin recruitment and appraisal and:

- Reflect our strengths and successes
- Support future challenges
- Promote a common culture across the Trust.

Our vision is supported through our deeply held values, one of which is that we aim to be an employer of choice – acting with integrity and providing rewarding pathways that are carefully scaffolded.

We apply due regard for advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and believe that everybody should have access to the same opportunities. One of our current objectives is to actively work to reduce the male/female pay gap as part of our commitment to gender equality.

To support our equality, diversity and inclusion values, and to meet our legal commitments, we have a number of linked policies, schemes and action plans, which support our commitment to Equality at Westcountry Schools Trust.

Directly related Trust Policies and Practices include, but is not limited to:

- Equality Impact assessments
- Modern Slavery Statement
- WeST Adoption, Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental leave Policies
- WeST Recruitment and Selection Policy
- WeST Managing Attendance Policy
- WeST Code of Conduct
- WeST Dignity at work Policy
- WeST Equal opportunities and Diversity Policy
- WeST Flexible working policy
- WeST Whistleblowing policy