

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

April 2025

Date	April 2025
Review Frequency	Three Years
Date for Next Review	April 2028

Title	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Summary	This policy sets out our commitment and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Purpose	To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of this policy and its application in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion for all pupils and staff.
Date	March 2022
Frequency of Review	Every 3 Years
Date Approved by Board of Trustees	

1. Introduction

Steel River Academy Trust is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We recognise the value of diverse environments and strive to promote a culture in which all pupils, staff and members of the school community are welcomed and supported to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background or personal characteristics.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination and promoting equality and fairness as it protects people on the grounds of specified 'Protected Characteristics (**Age, Sex, Disability and caring responsibilities, Gender assignment (Transgender), sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity leave, Religion, belief or faith, Race or ethnicity, Marital status or civil partnership**).

We also recognise that one of the main factors that contribute to inequality is poverty. Indeed, poverty can often have a disproportionate impact on protected groups. We have therefore broadened the scope of our equality work to encompass social class, income or housing circumstances. Within our Trust, we will use the Free School Meals indicator along with IDACI (deprivation Index) report to analyse our work in this area.

Steel River Academy Trust is an inclusive group of schools who focus on the well-being and progress of all our children and young people and where all members of our school communities are of equal worth.

We are committed to an ethos and culture of inclusion in our schools for all pupils, irrespective of race, religion/belief, political views, disability, SEN status, gender, gender identity (e.g. transgender) and/or sexual orientation (LGBTIQ+).

We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength that enriches our lives. We take account of differences and strive to remove any barriers to learning and development.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, bullying and harassment and will take swift action to address any incidents which occur. As a Trust community, we recognise the need to champion equality and ensure inclusion for all pupils in the full life of our schools where appropriate making necessary adjustments to enable everyone's participation.

Steel River Academy Trust believes that education (both formal and informal learning) is fundamental to equality of opportunity. It prepares young people for life and is a powerful influence on access to and advancement in employment. All young people should be able to learn and develop fully in a truly diverse and inclusive environment.

All our policies and practices are fully inclusive and supportive of a welcoming culture for our communities; this is evidenced in our practices and procedures.

2. Mission and Values

Steel River Academy Trust aims to create a safe, happy, nurturing and respectful environment that allows all our children to flourish, overcoming any barriers that may stand in their way. We will challenge everyone's mind-set to foster a love of learning, curiosity and belief in possibilities, developing independent, resilient and self-motivated learners who are aspirational. We will ensure that children are exposed to a wide range of experiences to explore their interests, talents and passions and become well informed, confident and well-rounded young people who are responsible citizens.

3. Equality and Inclusion – School Policies

Through this policy, and the wider practices within Steel River Academy Trust, we seek to empower our young people to embrace diversity and challenge discrimination. We equip our Governors and staff to fulfil their legal responsibilities, ensure that our schools' safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and inclusive and enable robust monitoring of our progress as a Trust.

As part of our overall Trust/school policy development there are a number of policies that we must have in place and regularly review to ensure our schools are addressing their statutory responsibilities. These include Anti-bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Curriculum Policies, Positive Behaviour Policy, SEND Policy and Admissions Policy. Any arising incident will be dealt with by the appropriate policy. There should never be any grey areas when it comes to young people's safety and well-being.

This is supplemented by a range of other policies that as a Trust we feel are important to have for our whole school communities. These include Relationships Education, PSHE, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Staff Wellbeing and Welfare, Exclusion and Code of Conduct policies. It is our belief that equality, diversity and inclusion is central to **all** of our policies and that we maintain an ethos that welcomes diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all, ensuring all our pupils and their families feel valued and supported and making sure that equality and inclusion is evident in everyday school life.

4. Responsibilities

The Steel River Academy **Board of Trustees** have overall responsibility to:

‘Promote equality, good relations and diversity and to comply with education and employment legislation and anti-discrimination, human rights and equality legislation that affect its statutory duties in relation to the schools’ *‘Every school a good school – the governors role’* (Department of Education, August 2019)

The **Local Governing Boards** have overall responsibility to manage the implementation of equality and diversity in our schools.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with equality legislation;
- ensuring the school implements policies and practices in line with the principles of equality and inclusion;
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- ensuring appropriate training and awareness raising is undertaken with staff and ensuring that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities;
- ensuring that appropriate records are kept of any cases of unfair discrimination, harassment or bullying.

The **School Senior Leadership Team** are responsible for:

- putting the school’s equality and inclusion policies and codes into practice;
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- following the relevant procedures and taking action where necessary.

All School Staff (*teaching and non-teaching*) are responsible for:

- the day to day implementation of this policy and contributing to an inclusive and welcoming environment within the school.
- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom
- modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- promoting equality and avoiding discrimination against anyone
- taking up equality training and learning opportunities

Pupils/students are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions;
- following all of the relevant school policies and codes of conduct in line with the principles of equality and inclusion.

- sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- supporting the school's equality ethos
- challenging inappropriate language/behaviour
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff

5. How do we promote Equality and Inclusion?

Steel River Academy Trust promotes equality and inclusion within our school through the following activities:

School Practices

- Developing a whole school approach that is consistent across all schools within the Trust
- Having an inclusive mission statement
- Using a range of resources and teaching approaches
- Using appropriate terminology and language
- Tackling stereotypes
- Challenge homophobic, racist or any other type of bullying
- Increasing the visibility/role modelling of minority groups
- Setting clear expectations about acceptable behaviour

Policies

- In addition to the many documents referred to in section 3 of this policy, Steel River Academy Trust has in place a range of policies, procedures, strategies and guidance that play an important role in ensuring we are meeting the needs of and enhancing equality for all members of our Trust community.

Facilities

- Promoting and using interpreting services (where necessary and available)
- Using translated documents (where available)
- Have allocated accessible parking
- Having accessible toilets
- Having an accessible main entrance and building
- Having signage, displays and resources reflecting different cultures throughout the schools
- Flexible payment schemes when planning trips and extra-curricular activities
- Helping young people to access advice from support organisations including notice boards with clear and accessible information and contacts

Curriculum

- All planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas. Pupils will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- Planning themes around equality and inclusion into topics within each curriculum area
- Planning will reflect the diversity of the classroom, ensuring all children have equal access to opportunities and participation
- Ensuring that learning resources/materials do not discriminate against anyone and are adapted where necessary
- Using a variety of teaching and assessment methods
- Ensuring that staff with specific areas of responsibility consider the implications of Equality and Inclusion with their teams/subjects.
- Responding to national and global issues that are highlighted in the media
- Holding regular themed events such as inter faith weeks, cultural events, and careers/aspirations events where issues such as gender stereotyping are challenged

6. Monitoring the Success of the Equality and Inclusion Policy

The policy will be monitored via a range of methods:

- Monitoring the progress of specific groups e.g. SEND, Pupil Premium and minority groups and comparing it the progress made by other pupils in the school and across the Trust
- Number of bullying incidents by equality characteristic to be monitored/ reported and appropriate action taken
- Embedding equality and inclusion across curriculum areas to be monitored
- Number of comments and complaints in relation to equality and inclusion to be monitored and taken into serious consideration;
- a record of training / information presented to staff/ pupils to be kept
- Positive stories on equality and inclusion to be highlighted
- Feedback from pupils, staff, parents and the wider community to be sought regularly through discussions, questionnaires and invited comments
- Monitoring the Trust behaviour and exclusions policies, so those pupil minority groups are not unfairly treated

7. Complaint's Procedures

The Trust has a robust and transparent Complaints procedure. If a complaint is made regarding equality or inclusion, the Complaints process will be fairly and systematically applied. Access to the Complaints procedure can be found on both the Trust and individual school's website.

8. Review cycle of policy

The Equality and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed by the Executive Team and Trustees and, if required, updated every **three** years in line with our Trust policy review cycle.