Equality and Diversity Information and Objectives

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Equality Information & Objectives

1. Mission

As an Academy, our mission is simple: we celebrate diversity and relentlessly focus on the highest standards of student achievement.

In order to achieve our mission, we focus on three key drivers: Mastery, which is the urge to get better and better at something that matters; Autonomy, or our desire to direct our own lives; and Purpose, which is our yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves. Our practice is thoroughly rooted in this approach and in the following three core values:

1. **Excellence**

   Striving for 100% in everything we do, demonstrated through hard work, grit and determination.

2. **Positivity**

   Approaching each day with a can – do attitude, tackling every challenge as an opportunity to grow and develop and fully contributing to a joyful school culture for all.

3. **Respect**

   Ensuring all members of the community feel valued through treating everyone around us with kindness, fairness and honesty.

At Stone Soup Academy, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff and families receiving services from the academy, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the academy feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in academy life.

The achievement of students will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Stone Soup Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

2. Mainstreaming Equality into Policy and Practice

As well as the specific objectives set out beneath this information; the academy operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways.

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

• use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of students

• monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps

• take account of the achievement of all students when planning for future learning and setting

challenging targets

• ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society

• use materials that reflect the diversity of the academy, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping

• promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice

• provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures

• seek to involve all families in supporting their students education

• encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning

• use teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole academy population, which are inclusive and reflective of our students

Admissions and suspension

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

suspensions will always be based on the academy's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor suspensions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

Recruitment

We recognise that by valuing and promoting equality and diversity for all employees and job applicants, and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services, we will be able to deliver first class education. To do this we will:

• appoint on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However, we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy reflects the diversity of our community

• review our recruitment procedures and documents regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities and documents avoid stereotyping or use of words that may discourage groups with protected characteristics from applying

• shortlisting will be completed by more than one person wherever possible

• take reasonable steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market

• ensure that applicants are not asked about a health or disability before a job offer is made, other than where necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to reasonable adjustments), to establish reasonable adjustments for fair interview andor to carry out equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process)

• ensure applicants are not asked questions about protected characteristics (see page 4)

• not make assumptions about immigration status based on appearance or apparent nationality. All

employees regardless of nationality will be required to produce specified documents before employment to satisfy current legislation

• monitor diversity data as part of recruitment to help us avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity

• consider equality aspects such as 'equality cohorts' when appointing staff to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

3. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Stone Soup Academy Academy and training and development, opportunity for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits and termination of employment. The policy covers staff working at all levels and includes Governors, Consultants, Contractors, Trainees and Agency Workers

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy reflects the diversity of our community.

Employer Duties As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

▪ Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff.

▪ Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.

▪ Monitoring of performance for pay and promotion decisions

▪ Review of conditions of service, benefits and facilities to ensure they are available to all employees and there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them

▪ Monitoring of physical features of premises to consider whether they place disabled employees or applicants at a disadvantage

▪ Redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not discriminatory

▪ Disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination whether they result in warning, dismissal or other action

▪ Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

4. Equality and the Law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006) and the Equality Act (2010).

Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a student or prospective student by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic.'

The protected characteristics are:

▪ Sex

▪ Race

▪ Disability

▪ Age

▪ Religion or belief

▪ Sexual orientation

▪ Gender reassignment

- Pregnancy or maternity

Association

It is unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated. So, for example, a school must not discriminate by refusing to admit a pupil because his parents are gay men or lesbians. It would be race discrimination to treat a white pupil less favourably because she has a black boyfriend.

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to students, and so the academy is free to arrange students in classes based on their age group with materials appropriate to them.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to all schools, including both LA maintained and Academies. The academy must have due regard to the need to:

▪ Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act.

▪ Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a prohibited characteristic and people who do not share it.

▪ Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

4a. Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

4b. Disability This section should be read in conjunction with the academy's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan. The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a

physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

▪ Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.

▪ Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.

▪ Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.

▪ Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.

▪ Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

▪ prepare and publish equality information and objectives which cover the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them

▪ review and revise this Scheme every three years

4c. Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2007 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

▪ eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment

▪ promote equality between men and women Under our specific duty we will:

▪ prepare and publish equality information and objectives which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them

▪ review and revise this Scheme every three years

4d. Sexual Orientation The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

4e. **Community Cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002,

introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths, beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

The duty to prevent extremism became law in 2015 following the Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015.

5. Consultation and Involvement

It is a requirement that the development of this information and the objectives within it have been informed by the input of staff, students and families. As a relatively new Academy, this plan was created with the first cohort of staff, students and families. The Academy regularly gains stakeholders views through surveys, family engagement sessions and other events.

Consultation includes:

▪ Feedback from the parent/student questionnaire, celebration evening, student council, meetings or governors' meetings.

▪ Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings INSET.

▪ Feedback from the academy leadership team and (PSHE) lessons.

▪ Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans, mentoring and support.

▪ Feedback at governing body meetings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Governors:

• The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this document and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the academy is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on protected characteristics.

• The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our academy on grounds of protected characteristics.

• The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the academy environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make academy communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and students.

• The governors welcome all applications to join the academy, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.

• The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our academy on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief or the fact that they are pregnant or are undergoing gender reassignment.

The role of the Principal:

• It is the Principal's role to implement the academy's equality objectives and he is supported by the governing body in doing so.

• It is the Principal's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the equality objectives, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

• The Principal ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to the equality information and objectives, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

• The Principal promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.

• The Principal treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff (teaching and non-teaching):

• All staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the academy's equality information and objectives.

• All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.

• All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Principal.

• Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

7. Tackling Discrimination

Harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a student's individual circumstances. Staff and governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is genuine occupational requirement. This must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic. Perceptive discrimination is

where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that a person has a protected characteristic irrespective of whether they do (this does not include marriage civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity). Third party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed in relation to a protected characteristic (other than marriage civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity) by third parties such as parents/carers, clients or customers. Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher Principal where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Principal and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident? Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done (“a prohibited act”) in connection with the Act. For example, making an allegation of discrimination. Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

• Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.

• Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.

• Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.

• Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.

• Bringing discriminatory material into the academy.

• Verbal abuse and threats.

• Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to the victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

• Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.

• Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.

• Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc.

• Refusal to cooperate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

Responding to and reporting incidents It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non- teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole academy. Our procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:

• Incident

• Member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately

• Response to victim and family

• Response to perpetrator and family

• Incident form to be completed and filed

• Incidents to be reported to governing body on a termly basis

• Action taken to address the issue with year group academy if necessary e.g. through advisory DEAR time assembly

As a member of staff, if you believe that you have been discriminated against, you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance procedure. If you are uncertain or need advice on how you should proceed, you should speak to a member of the senior leadership team.

8. Review of Progress and Impact

In line with all policy documentation, we review statutory policies annually and others at least every three years or when there are changes to legislation or practice. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our equality objectives annually and review the entire information and objectives on a three-year cycle.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

9. Publishing the Objectives and Demonstrating Compliance

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to prepare and publish objectives, we will.

▪ Publish our information and objectives on the academy website.

▪ Raise awareness of the objectives through the academy newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

▪ Make sure hard copies are available.

Equality Objective 1: To increase the representation of teachers from all different backgrounds over a four- year period (Sept 2021 to Sept 2025), so that this group increases to at least 20% of the teaching and non-teaching staff workforce (currently 40% for 2024/2025).

Why we have chosen this objective:

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to all schools, including both LA maintained and Academies. It requires that the academy must have due regard to the need to:

▪ Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act. Nottingham has a diverse population, with 34% from a minority ethnic background (According to the latest 2021 census). We believe that the ethnicity of our workforce should be more reflective of the population served:

a. Teachers of all different backgrounds serve as role models for minority students.

b. Teachers of all different backgrounds may have a greater opportunity to improve the academic *success and positive school experiences of minority students. This objective was revised after discussion with some middle and senior leaders. Currently 40% of staff are from different ethnic backgrounds.*

To achieve this objective we plan to:

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we will be concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the academy reflects the diversity of our community.

We will ensure that our recruitment evenings and promotional videos include significant contributions from our teachers from minority ethnic communities.

The Principal will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to the equality information and objectives, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities. The Principal will check all shortlisting procedures done by others to ensure short listed candidates get to interview on merit. The academy will keep a record of all decision making and notes from interviews and short listing for evaluation.

Progress we are making towards achieving this objective: Progress towards the objective:

Currently 40% of staff from different ethnic backgrounds

Equality Objective 2: To close the achievement gap by ensuring there is no significant difference in the progress made by different groups of learners.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Achieving our mission will not be easy, but our research has shown that it can be achieved if we continue to:

• Operate strict routines and protocols.

• Have an unwavering focus on results.

• Offer the very best teaching and support. Using the Pupil Premium effectively is a key part of our strategy for closing the gaps (see academy website for details of our Pupil Premium allocation, spend and impact).

All disadvantaged students and most able students will receive mentoring, at least once per cycle.

Specific groups of learners, including disadvantaged, SEND and most able, will continue to be targeted through activating prevention and intervention plans, completed each cycle.

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Interventions are overseen by the Vice Principal for Behaviour and Learning who quality assures them, ensuring the right students are targeted to maximise progress. Interventions take place before, during and after school.

Continue to ensure 100% of SEND profiles have academic well-being targets which are reviewed every cycle and shared with parents.

Progress we are making towards achieving this objective:

Equality Objective 3: To ensure 100% of students participate in, at least, one extra-curricular activity throughout their entire time at Stone Soup Academy Academy.

Why we have chosen this objective:

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to all schools, including both LA maintained and Academies. It requires that the academy must have due regard to the need to:

▪ Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Approximately 59.77% of our students are from low-income families and qualify for the pupil premium. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. We want to ensure that every child at Stone Soup Academy regularly participates in at least one extra-curricular activity.

Research indicates that participating in after school programmes improves performance on measures of academic achievement. There is also evidence that there are wider benefits for low- income students in terms of attendance at school, behaviour and relationships with peers.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

The range of co-curricular and electives is truly diverse, with activities such as textiles and table tennis. Popular choices have been cooking and football. In addition, some enrichment offers students opportunities to have experiences outside of the academy. We will continue to ensure that co-curricular activities are planned into the academy day and a wide range of activities and options are available to students.

Progress we are making towards achieving this objective:

Feedback from key stakeholders, including teachers, middle leaders and students.

Equality Objective 1

Staff feedback:

▪ “I agree with this objective.”

▪ “I have no issue with this being our objective.”

Equality Objective 2

student feedback:

▪ “Teachers choose boys a lot in lessons.”

▪ “I think the behaviour of boys isn’t as good as girls.”

▪ “In order to help us, there should be Catch Up in other subjects, like geography.”

▪ “I think trips will help us learn.”

Staff feedback:

▪ “As Head of Year, I see that boys get more corrections than girls. To tackle this, we use pastoral intervention plans and behaviour support plans. Mentoring through SLT links is also useful.”

Equality Objective 3

student feedback:

▪ “We should be able to change our co-curricular options”

▪ “I like the variety of sports.”

▪ “One co-curricular per week is manageable because we have lots to do at home.”

▪ “I have learned new things and made new friends in my elective.”

Staff feedback:

▪ “It’s important for all students to do something, but asking students to do more than one co- curricular a week could increase pressure”.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The governing board and Principal will update the equality information we publish, at least every year.

This document will be reviewed by the governing board and the Principal at least every 4 years.

This document will be approved by the governing board & Principal.