



Gender Equality Policy

CONTEXT

The schools in the Leek Federation are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for staff, students, parents/carers and all those served by the Federation. Our commitment to gender equality and identity is rooted in our ethos of promoting equalities and valuing the individuality of every person in the Leek Federation community of schools. The Federation is determined to challenge gender discrimination in all forms.

The Gender Equality Policy enables our schools to meet their statutory obligations. The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). Within this Act a Gender Equality Duty (April 2007) was established for the public sector. This Duty gives our schools the legal responsibility to recognise and meet the different needs of both men and women and to eliminate sexual harassment and discrimination.

The Federation welcomes the opportunity to review its practice and take a more strategic approach. Our commitment covers all aspects of life in our schools.

AIMS

1. To promote equality of opportunity for both women/girls and men within the federation's schools.
2. To understand, challenge and overcome gender stereotyping.
3. To eliminate unlawful discrimination
4. To eliminate sexual harassment

RESPONSIBILITIES

Promoting gender equality is the responsibility of the whole community of schools. Different members of this community have specific responsibilities which are outlined below:

a) **Governing Body**

- The Governing Body is responsible for making sure the schools adhere to the Gender Equality Duty (April 2007)
- Making sure procedures are in place to implement the federation's Gender Equality policy.
- Monitoring the impact of the policy

b) **Executive Headteacher**

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the Gender Equality Policy meets statutory requirements and its procedures are followed.

c) Associate Headteachers

The Associate Headteachers are responsible for:

- Making sure the Gender Equality Policy is readily available and that the Local Governing Body, staff, students and visitors to the school know about it.
- Producing information for staff and members of the Local Governing Body on the policy and its impact.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support to develop an ethos which promotes gender equality.
- Take appropriate action in cases of sexual harassment and sexual discrimination, in accordance with agreed disciplinary procedures.

d) All staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Respecting and valuing others irrespective of gender.
- Promoting equality and recognising and challenging gender stereotypes and bias.
- Dealing with and reporting incidents of sexual discrimination and harassment.
- Keeping up to date with the relevant policies and procedures.

e) Named member of staff

An Assistant Headteacher has responsibility for reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the Gender Equality Policy.

f) Students

Students have a responsibility to:

- Respect and value others irrespective of gender.
- Understand and act in accordance with the gender equality policy.
- Report any incidents of gender discrimination or harassment/bullying that they experience or witness.

g) Visitors are responsible for:

Respecting and valuing all members of the school community in accordance with the federation's Gender Equality Policy.

STANDARDS

The Gender Equality Policy permeates all aspects of the life of federation schools including:

Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- A broad range of courses are offered which do not promote gender stereotyping or restrict access to Post-16 opportunities.
- Opportunities are taken to teach about gender equality in the curriculum.
- Active steps are taken to ensure strategies and resources promote gender equality and help students to develop skills to challenge gender stereotypes.
- Teaching resources, including displays, are free from gender discrimination.
- We create an environment where all students feel safe, respected and valued and can contribute fully.

- The schools endeavour to use assessment materials that are free from gender bias and best suit the needs of our students.

Attainment and Progress

- Progress data at all Key Stages is collected and analysed against national performance data to identify any potential areas of underachievement and gender inequalities.
- All students are offered the support and guidance they need to reach their potential.

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

- Procedures are in place to deal with incidents of sexist, sexual, homophobic and transphobic harassment.
- Procedures are in place to deal with discrimination based on gender equality and/or gender identity.
- Incidents of gender discrimination or harassment will be dealt with in accordance with the federation's Behaviour Policy or disciplinary procedures for staff.
- Support is available to victims of gender harassment and discrimination.
- Links are established where necessary with outside organisations dealing with sexual discrimination and harassment.
- Immediate action is taken to remove offensive graffiti of a discriminatory nature from federation property.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions

- Staff and students should be aware of the Gender Equality Policy and procedures. Breaches of this will be dealt with in accordance with federation disciplinary procedures.
- Exclusions will be based on the Behaviour Policy and will be monitored for breaches of the policy.

Student Personal Development and Pastoral Care

- In KS4 options, careers and post 16 choices, students are supported in making informed decisions regardless of gender bias.
- The schools will challenge gender stereotyping in careers advice and post 16 choices.
- Work experience placements are monitored so as to provide opportunities to all students regardless of gender bias.
- Option choices/exam entries are monitored to identify any gender stereotyping.
- Steps are taken to ensure that students on work experience/school visits are not subject to sexual discrimination and harassment.
- All students in federation schools are entitled to pastoral support regardless of their sexual or gender orientation.

Admissions and Attendance

- Federation schools will take steps to address poor attendance where it may be linked to gender issues.

Partnership with Parents/Carers and the Community

- We treat all parents/carers equally, irrespective of gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, and encourage their full involvement and participation in their child's education and the life of our schools.
- We use interpreters and translate materials where appropriate to ensure that all parents/carers have access to school information and meetings.
- We encourage community groups and individuals, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, to contribute their knowledge and skills to each school's community.
- We take steps to ensure that our schools' premises and facilities do not discriminate on the grounds of gender and are fully accessible and welcoming to all visitors e.g. Displays, access for pushchairs
- The procedures for becoming a member of the Full Governing Body or a Local Governing Body are fair and equitable to all.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- Recruitment and selection procedures are consistent with the Gender Equality legislation and operate within the framework agreed by the federation.
- Those involved in recruitment and selection follow federation procedures to ensure it is free from bias.
- The staffing structures in all of our schools and opportunities for promotion are fair and transparent and free from gender bias.
- The federation adheres to statutory requirements for pay and conditions for all staff and does not discriminate on the grounds of gender.
- The federation monitors the employment and professional development of staff by gender.
- The federation takes active steps to ensure that selection for redundancy, should it arise, is fair and equitable and does not discriminate on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation.
- Requests from employees for part-time working are considered according to federation guidelines regardless of gender.
- The training needs of individuals are identified, supported and monitored.

Training and Development

- Staff, members of the Full Governing Body and the Local Governing Body receive training on the Gender Equality Policy.
- Staff training needs are identified and appropriate training on gender issues is provided as necessary. This could involve the use of outside agencies.
- Training is monitored and evaluated using each school's Professional Development Systems.

PUBLISHING AND PROMOTING THE POLICY

- The Gender Equality Policy will be published on the federation website.
- The policy will form part of the Equalities Statement.
- The federation will translate the Equalities Statement and make it available in special formats as necessary.
- Parents/Carers will be made aware of the policy through the federation website.

- A brief summary of the main points of the policy will be made available in age-appropriate ways to students.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Any appropriate action will be included in an Equalities Action Plan, which will be reviewed and reported on regularly.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Other Trust policies

The Gender Equality Policy fits in with the federation's core values and ethos, and with other policies. A lot of policies potentially impact on areas relating to gender, for example the anti-bullying policy and the behaviour policy. As federation policies are revised and updated, or new policies introduced, they will be reviewed to consider if there are any gender equality considerations that should be incorporated.

GLOSSARY

Gender

In the average conversation, the terms "sex" and "gender" are often used interchangeably to denote if someone is male or female. Technically, however, "sex" and "gender" are different. Sex relates to the **biological** differences between males and females. "Gender" relates to how the individual lives, as a man or woman. Gender refers to the wider **social** roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality the intention is to recognize and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.

Gender identity

Gender Identity is a person's internal sense of being a man or woman or boy or girl. For transgender people, their gender identity will not match the sex they were born with.

Homophobia

Homophobia is a hatred, intolerance, and fear of lesbian, gay and bisexual people and their culture.

Just like any form of bullying or harassment, homophobia can include verbal, physical and emotional abuse by an individual or group.

Homophobic harassment is unwanted behaviour which is offensive, causing the person affected to feel threatened, humiliated or patronised. Such behaviour can seriously interfere with a person's personal health, work performance and security, creating a threatening living or workplace environment.

Homophobic bullying or harassment can take many forms:

- unwanted physical contact
- threatened or actual physical abuse or attack
- verbal abuse such as suggestive remarks, jokes or name calling
- display or distribution of offensive material or graffiti
- non-verbal abuse such as mimicry, offensive gestures or body language

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes any unwelcome behaviour based on a person's sexuality or gender. It's not about fun or friendship but about the abuse of power. It is also worth bearing in mind that many people respond to situations in different ways. What may seem like an

innocent action or remark to one person may be deemed offensive by another and the law sides with the 'victim' not the 'perpetrator'. Since there is no single definition, the test is how the recipient feels about the behaviour. Whilst the vast majority of cases have been against women, men can also be the subject of sexual harassment. It can happen to people in any occupation, to any age group and from every community.

It can take place in many forms which can broadly be categorised in 3 groups:

Verbal

- Comments about appearance, body or clothes
- Indecent remarks
- Questions or comments about your sex life
- Requests for sexual favours
- Sexual demands made by someone of the opposite sex, or even your own sex
- Promises or threats concerning a person's employment conditions in return for sexual favours

Non-Verbal

- Looking or staring at a person's body
- Display of sexually explicit material such as calendars, pin ups or magazines

Physical

- Physically touching, pinching, hugging, caressing, kissing
- Sexual assault
- Rape

Transphobia

Transphobia refers to discrimination against transsexuality and transsexual or transgender people based on the expression of their internal gender identity. Another definition argues that Transphobia is 'treating a person who displays their gender in unconventional ways less favourably than those who may be more conventional'.

Transgender:

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term may include but is not limited to: transsexuals, cross-dressers, and other gender-variant people. Transgender people may identify as female-to-male (FTM) or male-to-female (MTF). Use the descriptive term (transgender, transsexual, cross-dresser, FTM or MTF) preferred by the individual. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

Unlawful sexual discrimination

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sex or marital status in recruitment, promotion and training.

- Direct sex discrimination occurs when a person of one sex is treated less favourably on grounds of sex than a person of the other sex would have been treated in the same circumstances.
- Indirect sex discrimination can occur where a requirement or condition is applied equally to men and women, but the proportion of one sex that can satisfy the condition is much smaller than the proportion of the other sex. Unless it can be proven that the condition is essential for the job, indirect discrimination may have taken place.

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It has also been established that discrimination against part-time workers may constitute indirect discrimination against women because nationally, and in most organizations, the majority of part-time workers are women. Restricting employment by means of age limits is another possible instance of indirect discrimination.

- The third type of discrimination covered by the Act is victimization. This occurs when an individual is discriminated against because they have exercised their rights under the Act.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if it is considered necessary.

ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNORS ON: June 2015

POLICY REVIEW DATE: June 2017