



Beech House
Greenfield Crescent
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 3BE

T: 07921756426
E: enquiries@worknlearn.org.uk

Equality and Diversity Policy 2024/25

Policy Overview

WorknLearn will adhere to all equality's legislation, including the three duties outlined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- To eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- To foster good relations across all characteristics.

The way in which we seek to do this is explained below.

The service WorknLearn offers and how it is monitored

WNL is by nature a collaborative organisation. We are a part-time provision specialising in providing and monitoring long-term work placements. The whole process from referral to successful placement require us to work in tandem with a whole range of organisations and specialists: the referring agency, the student, parents/ carers, specialists from any involved outside agencies and staff at the allocated work place, are all partners who need to work together to produce a successful outcome for the student. In addition, all of our students will be spending part of their week in other educational establishments and their performance in that environment also reflects upon the success of our work.

We understand that anyone who employs our services needs to be able to ascertain that that their student is safe and making an agreed level of progress, and that the service is providing value for money. To meet these requirements we recognise the necessity for, and value of, joint consultations to assess whether six KPI's are being met.

We have in place monitoring tools for student progress which collect data on:

- ✓ Attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Social relationships
- ✓ Independence skills
- ✓ Ability to work in a team
- ✓ Ability to work under own initiative
- ✓ Behaviour management and responsibility skills

- ✓ Academic progress in core subjects or vocational option subjects.
- ✓ Post-16 progression and retention

Input from the student, supervisors in the workplace and our own key worker are central to amassing and recording this information. This contributes to a flow of information into student records kept on our database which is accessible or transferrable to any LA system and is, therefore, readily available for joint meetings at any time interval or schedule required.

A different, more enjoyable, more rewarding and more future-focused educational experience is the focus of our energy. The exploration of ways to improve the service we offer is, therefore, important. Any required progress by clients we work for on a given timescale is important for us to achieve.

Principles of our approach

Understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for those young people who have protected characteristics, while celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all young people that we work with is the key to our approach. Those people with protected characteristics are defined as those who may be susceptible to discrimination because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, less able or socio-economic background. These include young people, teaching and support staff, parents, carers, governors and multi-agency staff linked with whom we work. We value diversity and believe that equality should permeate all aspects of our interaction with young people and is the responsibility of every member of our team and wider community. All of our clients should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

It is the responsibility of WNL's management team to ensure compliance with and implementation of the policy by all of those with whom we work as well as eliminating all unlawful discrimination.

Our responsibilities include the monitoring and reporting of racist, disability and homophobic incidents to the leadership team, evaluation of progress towards these objectives, monitoring the operation of the policy and reporting back through our management structure.

A range of stakeholders have been consulted in drawing up this policy which will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis with the continued help of the young people themselves, parents, carers, proprietor, the community and staff.

We also ensure that all our policies are reviewed enabling them to conform with the Equality and Diversity policy and amended when necessary.

Promoting Equality and Diversity at WorknLearn

We aim to provide all young people referred to us the opportunity to succeed, and reach the highest level of personal achievement they can. To achieve this we endeavour to:

- Ensure equality of access to the educational experiences that we offer for all young people referred to us and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes, values and skills that challenge discriminatory behaviour;

- Provide opportunities that allow young people to appreciate their own culture, religion and beliefs and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Develop young peoples' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, and challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality;
- Prepare young people for living in a multicultural society and promote good relations between different racial groups;
- Celebrate diversity and promote (where appropriate) the positive contribution of different ethnic minority groups to the educational and vocational environment;
- Celebrate what we have in common;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Identify resources that support staff development and allow them to introduce these ideas in their planning for inclusion and equality.

Learning Environment

There are consistently high expectations for all the young people referred to WNL regardless of age, gender, race, disability, ability, social background and sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes for them, we recognise the importance of:

- Staff commitment, expertise and enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results.
- All adults with whom we work providing good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality and diversity.
- Placing a high priority on the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Creating an environment where they are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning;
- Encouraging young people and parents to create an appropriate learning environment at home and providing them with advice about how to do this;

Ethos and Atmosphere

We are aware that those involved in the leadership of WNL are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of our team and those with whom we partner. To this end:

- There is an 'openness' of atmosphere and mutual respect which welcomes everyone to the school;
- Our young people are encouraged to greet visitors and adults within the workplace, with friendliness and courtesy;
- Our central office has displays of a high quality which reflect diversity across all aspects of educational and working life.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within WNL is a high priority. These resources will:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society;
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints;
- Show positive images of different ethnic groups, males and females in society, and people with disabilities;
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context;
- Include materials to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues;
- Not promote, explicitly or implicitly, racist, anti-disability, sexist, homophobic or ageist views.

Language

AT WNL we recognise that it is important for everyone to use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;
- Does not intentionally offend;
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document;
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem;
- Recognises the individuality and background of all members of the school community, with everyone endeavouring to spell and pronounce names correctly;
- Uses appropriate terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals.

Provision for Bilingual/Multilingual Pupils

We will make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual young people to ensure their access to the opportunities that we offer. These groups may include:

- Traveller and Gypsy Romany children;
- Those from refugee families;
- Asylum seekers;
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language;
- Pupils who are new to the United Kingdom.

Harassment and Bullying

It is our duty to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour. We address this duty in a number of different ways, e.g.: Incidents where there are unwanted attentions (verbal or physical) will be tackled. Our Anti-Bullying Policy has clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender);

- Bullying related to those with protected characteristics will be referred to an appropriate member of our safeguarding team and be dealt with as a serious incident – and will be recorded and investigated thoroughly;
- Incidents involving those with protected characteristics – specifically incidents relating to race, disability or homophobia – will be highlighted in behaviour logs in order to ensure effective monitoring.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers, referrers, outside agencies and vocational partners to help all our young people achieve their potential. For example:

- All parents/carers are present when their child is referred to us and are expected to have an ongoing interest/input into the programme for the young person.
- Encouraging parents/carers to contact us if they have any concerns about equality and diversity issues – the first point of contact should be with a member of our small senior team with whom they will have had prior contact.
- Assessing our work based learning opportunities to ensure that they comply with our principles concerning equality and diversity and that they have appropriate policies/procedures of their own in place.
- Encouraging employers to engage with our young people and offer them extended work placement opportunities based purely on the particular young person's interests and abilities.

Staffing and Staff Development

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.
- We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised internally and externally.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice which takes account of equalities through the recruitment and selection process.
- We encourage applicants from all sections of the community.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Responsibility for the Policy

At WNL all members of our community have a responsibility towards supporting the equality agenda. The Proprietor and Directors have specific responsibility for:

- ❖ Ensuring compliance with all equalities legislation relevant to the work of the company;
- ❖ WNL's Equality and Diversity policy is maintained and updated regularly;
- ❖ That procedures and strategies related to the policy are monitored, reviewed and implemented.
- ❖ Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and its associated duties;
- ❖ Co-ordinating the activities related to equality and evaluating impact;
- ❖ Ensuring that all adults that we work with are aware of, and comply with, the Equality and Diversity Policy;

- ❖ Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support;
- ❖ Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- ❖ Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping;
- ❖ Not discriminating on grounds of any protected characteristic.
- ❖ Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the school or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

Monitoring and Review

This will be carried out by the Proprietor who will then report back through the WNL management structure. The results of this dialogue will then also be fed into the WNL Improvement Plan evaluation. Amendments may be made to the policy and action plans in the light of the monitoring and review. The group will consider feedback from a range of sources including:

- Analysis of attendance and truancy figures;
- Analysis of exclusions;
- Incidents of racism, homophobia and sexism and all forms of bullying;
- Feedback from Parents, and students
- Any other information related to the Equality Act.