NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL
Focus · Learn · Achieve

Equal Opportunity Statement

Status	**Statutory**
Responsible Governors' Committee	**Full Governing Body**
Date last approved by GB	**November 2025**
Responsible Person	**Co-Headteachers**
Review Date	**November 2026**
Last Amended Date	**October 2020**

As New Heights School is a Local Authority maintained school, it has adopted Liverpool City Council's policy.

General Statement

Vision, aims and objectives

The City Council vision is to ***"to build and safeguard a fair, prosperous and open city where no-one is in poverty; where our citizens are well educated and take part in the decisions that affect them and where the cultural and religious differences between people are valued and celebrated***."

The City Council has established '*providing services equitably across the community'* as a high level priority in its Corporate Performance Plan and has given a commitment to work to eradicate discrimination and prejudice to create equality of opportunity both in its role as a major employer and in providing services that *'recognise and promote peoples individual qualities irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, religious and cultural beliefs and sexual orientation'*.

The key objectives of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy support this vision, aims and values by setting out our commitment to;

- promoting equality of opportunity
- promoting good relations between people with diverse backgrounds and needs
- eliminating harassment, unlawful and institutional discrimination and victimisation

The City Council recognises that groups can experience inequalities in their lives, including;

- black people and people from other minority groups
- disabled people
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people
- women
- social class
- religious beliefs
- cultural practices
- HIV status.

The City Council acknowledges that institutional structures, practices and procedures can be discriminatory. The City Council is committed to complying with all United Kingdom anti-discriminatory legislation which can help the fight against disadvantage and discrimination. The City Council will examine the effects of Legislation and Directives to assess any impact on groups.

The City Council will not tolerate; harassment, discrimination or victimisation on any grounds.

Service Delivery, Performance Management and the Corporate Equality Plan

The City Council continues to transform the quality of its services it delivers to its customers. This is set out as "striving to put customers at the heart of the organisation to achieve excellence". Central to this transformation is a rigorous and systematic performance management approach. In 2004, the City Council launched its first performance focused Corporate Equality Plan – '***Excellence through equity'***. This is a three year (high level) overarching strategic plan which set clear equality targets to ensure that all customers benefit from improving services. This plan rolls forward each year as part of the Corporate Performance Plan. This Plan is supported by a range of Corporate and Portfolio equality plans including; Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme; and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Action Plan.

The City Council also uses the discipline of 'annual service plans' and 'service equality action plans' to ensure corporate priorities drive service delivery and improvement. Each Portfolio is required to assess how its services and facilities meet the requirements of its customers (within the context of the corporate equality plan and the equal opportunities policy). Performance against these action plans is monitored monthly and reported to Councillors on a quarterly cycle.

The Corporate Equality Plan is available on the City Council Website www.liverpool.gov.uk by selecting equal opportunities from the A-Z of services.

Employment and Staffing

Elected Members and all staff accept their personal responsibility in the practical application of this Policy.

All staff appointments are carried out in accordance with the 'City Council's Fair Recruitment and Selection Procedures' and those involved in staff recruitment are appropriately trained.

All relevant aspects affecting the composition of the workforce including applications, short-listing, interviews, appointments, promotions, departures or dismissals are monitored and the information obtained is actively used to devise action plans, positive action training and other steps to promote greater equality throughout the City Council's workforce.

Disciplinary cases and grievances are carried out in accordance with the Councils Employment Code of Practice and those staff involved in hearing such cases are appropriately trained and/or experienced.

Discriminatory language and behaviour which offends or threatens colleagues or customers is not tolerated. Where it is necessary, action to deal with such instances will be taken under the City Council's harassment and discrimination policies and procedures.

The City Council does not tolerate inappropriate language, behaviour or violence to staff by service users and again will take appropriate action to protect staff if such incidents occur.

Training

The City Council recognises the importance of developing staff to meet the needs of a diverse range of customers and to contribute fully to our corporate priorities. The '*Liverpool Way*' (the 'brand name' given to a whole set of projects and initiatives intended to support staff to adapt to and benefit from changes in the organisation) is about providing the infrastructure for staff to support such an ambitious transformational agenda. Equal opportunities, diversity and cultural awareness are integral to the '***Liverpool Way'.*** A wide variety of training programmes are available to staff and elected members.

Relations with Outside Organisations/Contractors

The City Council promotes its values on equality of opportunity in its dealings with partner and other outside organisations, contractors, suppliers, as part of any contract for local government services and with any agencies that the Council endorses or funds (within existing legislation). In this way the City Council can demonstrate that the greatest impact on eradicating discrimination and the creation of real equality of opportunity for all will be made through the determination and actions of central and local government, other public and private sector agencies, together with organisations from the voluntary and faith sectors.

Communication

The City Council will continue to make facilities available to enable elected members and staff at all levels to communicate effectively with (for example, those people whose first language is not English, people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment, those who are blind or visually impaired). The City Council will provide access to services in community locations using its comprehensive network of One

Stop Shops, on street kiosks and using other electronic means.

Consultation

Individuals and groups who represent the needs of all groups will be consulted throughout the decision making process on issues which affect them in order for us to maintain up to date awareness of their needs and requirements. To this extent the City Council has developed a Corporate Consultation Strategy which emphasises consultation priorities for all 'hard to reach groups' in all of its major policies, strategies and action plans.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Equal Opportunities Policy will continue to be monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is kept relevant and up to date. Key information on important aspects of employment and service delivery will continue to be collated and analysed to obtain a detailed understanding of how policies and practices are working towards creating equality of opportunity. Particular attention will be given to the level to which a service provides for all client groups. In order to establish this, the City Council will continue to monitor; use of services, participation, staffing and community engagement. Action will be taken to deal with any disparities that are identified.

Definitions

The City Council derives the following definitions which appear in its policy statement from the relevant equal opportunities legislation; it is these conditions that the equal opportunities policy and the Corporate Equality Plan are designed to overcome:

> **Direct discrimination**; when a person or group is treated less favourably directly because of a personal characteristic, such as race, gender, disability, religion, age or sexual orientation. Direct discrimination is unlawful.

Indirect discrimination: where a criterion, policy, procedure, practice or condition which applies equally to everyone has the effect of disadvantaging people from a particular group and cannot be justified. Indirect discrimination is unlawful.

Institutional discrimination: is where, for example, an organisations processes, procedures, attitudes, behaviours or organisational structures, through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping, amount to less favourable treatment. Institutional discrimination is unlawful.

Harassment: is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment having regard to all the circumstances and the perception of the victim; harassment can include behaviour that is offensive, frightening or in any way distressing. It may be intentional bullying which is obvious or violent, but it can also be unintentional or subtle and insidious. It may involve behaviour which may not be intended to be malicious but nevertheless is upsetting. It may be about the individual's personal identity or it may be about the identity of those with whom the individual associates. It may not be targeted at an individual(s) but consist of a general culture. Harassment is unlawful.

Victimisation: is when an individual is treated detrimentally because they have made a complaint or intend to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment or have given evidence or intend to give evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination or harassment. Victimisation is unlawful. If victimisation happens or if organisations fail to take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening, they may be liable and may be ordered to pay compensation.