



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT POLICY & GUIDELINES

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Person responsible for this policy: CEO/Board

VERSION 1.0

Introduction

Venn Academy Trust is fully committed to equality and diversity in employment. Venn Academy Trust believes that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect and seeks to ensure that the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity underpin all its policies, procedures and practices.

Scope

This Policy applies to all employees and casual workers of Venn Academy Trust.

Aim of the policy

The Policy aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee will be treated less favourably or disadvantaged, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or any other unjustifiable reason.

Policy Objective

Venn Academy Trust believes that an Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy is a means of maximising the effective use of human resources in the Trust and is in the best interests of both employees and Venn Academy Trust. All employees will be made aware of the provisions of this Policy.

Policies and procedures in respect of recruitment, training and promotion will relate only to the requirements of the job. No job applicant or employee will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. Venn Academy Trust will not discriminate unfairly in the provision of general employee facilities and benefits.

Any employee or applicant for a job may raise with the Headteacher their concerns about any act of alleged discrimination. Venn Academy Trust has procedures for investigating complaints and will ensure that all complaints are investigated fully and fairly.

Any alleged breach of this Policy by an employee will be investigated under the disciplinary procedure and appropriate action will be taken under that procedure where necessary.

Monitoring and Review

Venn Academy Trust will monitor the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy and review all personnel policies and procedures, following consultation with the appropriate Trade Unions, to ensure that they continue to meet equal opportunity and other legislative requirements.

The monitoring information and statistics will also be used to develop models of best practice in employment. Positive Action and other initiatives will be considered in order to create a more inclusive workforce and one which reflects the diversity of the community we serve.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES

Introduction

The Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy seeks to promote and maintain high standards of professionalism in employment matters, in Venn Academy Trust. Separate policies deal more fully with Disability, Dignity at Work, HIV and AIDS.

Scope

Within the Policy, Venn Academy Trust includes all employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term or casual, or any person who acts as an agent on behalf of Venn Academy Trust in employment matters which affect employees of Venn Academy Trust.

Attitudes

It is essential that employers are aware of the protected characteristics of discrimination as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010. Decisions are based on assumptions that people are less suitable for employment, because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or any other unjustifiable reason should be guarded against.

Recruitment and Selection

Headteachers must ensure that all employees who are responsible for recruiting and appointing new and existing employees are made fully aware of the requirements of Venn Academy Trust's Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy and that they follow the policies, procedures and guidance on recruitment and selection. The requirements of the policy must also be included in the induction programme for new employees.

To ensure that selection is made on a fair and unbiased basis and in accordance with this policy, all staff involved in the recruitment process must have undertaken and completed recruitment and selection training, approved by the Venn Academy Trust and Human Resource provider. They must also give a commitment to update their knowledge and skills every three years.

Applicants for employment will be given clear and accurate information about the post through advertisements and during interviews. In addition, job descriptions and person specifications will be sent to all applicants with the application form.

All interviews will be thorough, conducted on an objective basis and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job and ability to fulfil the requirements of the job in accordance with Venn Academy Trust's policy on recruitment and selection.

The reasons for acceptance or rejection of all candidates must be recorded and the records must be kept by the appropriate personnel section for a minimum of six months from the date of appointment.

Unsuccessful candidates must be offered feedback on their applications/interviews. A contact name and telephone number for feedback must be provided. Feedback can be in writing, by telephone or by personal interview.

If candidates seek information about recruitment and selection policies and procedures, this information must also be made available upon request.

Advertising

All applicants will be informed that Venn Academy Trust operates an Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy. The following statement is to be included in composite advertisements:-

“Venn Academy Trust is committed to achieving fairness and equality in employment and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. No job applicant or employee will be treated less favourably or disadvantaged, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation or any other unjustifiable reason”.

The following short statement is to be used as a minimum in all other advertisements:

“Venn Academy Trust is committed to achieving fairness and equality in employment and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.”

Encouragement in the form of positive action may be given in some circumstances to under-represented groups. However, after encouraging such applications, candidates must be considered on their own merits and suitability for the post.

Information about vacancies will be prominently displayed and circulated widely and promptly to employees so as not to disadvantage any potential applicant.

Those responsible for deciding on the placing of external job advertisements should consider whether the use of advertising media other than customary journals and publications would attract a wider range of applications. Advice is available from Employee Services Recruitment Team.

If it is felt that a ‘Genuine Occupational Requirement’ (GOR) exists and it would therefore be lawful to advertise for someone of a particular sex or race, (e.g. toilet attendant, person providing services to a black or minority ethnic group) the Headteacher must be consulted. If it is agreed that a GOR exists, this must be clearly stated in the advertisement.

Employment Policies and Practices

All Venn Academy Trust personnel policies, procedures and collective agreements will be regularly reviewed by the Headteachers to ensure they do not operate against equal opportunities.

Headteachers must notify the Human Resource Department of any instances where pressure is being applied by employees, which may result in either direct or indirect discrimination. For example, an individual employee may be experiencing pressure from other employees, in that they are refusing to work with or co-operate with him/her.

The Headteachers may bring such instances to the attention of the relevant Trade Unions in an attempt to resolve the situation informally. Failure to resolve the situation

in this way may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employees who are applying the pressure.

The provision or absence of general staff facilities e.g. a work place with toilet facilities for men only should not be allowed to cause discrimination against any group. Venn Academy Trust has a responsibility to provide adequate staff facilities.

Publicising the Policy

All employees and agents of Venn Academy Trust must be informed of the Policy and Guidelines. Guidelines and instruction must be given to ensure that discriminatory attitudes or practices are avoided in the workplace and when dealing with the public.

Induction procedures for new employees must include information about the policy.

Training

All employees involved in recruitment and selection will receive training in the application of the Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy. It is the responsibility of each Headteacher to ensure that all appropriate staff undertake Recruitment and Selection Training, approved by the Venn Academy Trust. They must also give a commitment to update their knowledge and skills every three years.

General training opportunities which are available within Venn Academy Trust must be available to all employees on an equal basis. Selection for training must be non-discriminatory and managers and supervisors should take care to give equal encouragement to all staff. Training should be based on the identification of individual training and development needs. As a minimum, the requirements of the policy must be included in the induction programme for new employees.

Managers/supervisors will meet with employees on an individual basis at least once a year to discuss their career prospects and training needs in accordance with Venn Academy Trust's Appraisal Performance and Development Process.

Positive Action measures will be taken, where appropriate, for groups who are under-represented in the workforce.

Complaints

All Equal Opportunity complaints will be dealt with by the Governors who will ensure that they are dealt with under the appropriate procedure.

No employee or member of the public who makes an Equal Opportunities complaint, or who provides information in relation to a complaint, will be victimised for their actions. It is the responsibility of all Headteachers and Governors to ensure that employees are aware of this, and that victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act of 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 protects the interests of those affected by unlawful discrimination and give them the right of complaint to an Employment Tribunal.

Monitoring

All Headteachers and their Senior Leadership teams are responsible for ensuring that the Equal Opportunities in policy and guidelines are followed. This includes monitoring how the policy is working in their school/academy/provision.

Headteachers must ensure that appraisal monitoring forms are fully completed and returned promptly to the Human Resources Department in accordance with the policies, procedures and guidance on recruitment and selection. This will ensure compliance with the Equality Act of 2010.

Other monitoring may be undertaken on occasions to ensure the effectiveness of the Policy and requests for information must be dealt with promptly by the HR team.

The Venn Academy Trust will monitor the effectiveness of the Policy with a view to removing and preventing discrimination. This will include analysis of employment statistics, training provision and take up, Equal Opportunity and any other complaints or grievances and monitoring of recruitment and selection in Service Areas.

The Venn Academy Trust will review the Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy in the light of monitoring reports received.

Communication With Employees

To further promote equal opportunities in Venn Academy Trust, Headteachers, Governors and other appropriate employee groups will ensure monitoring forms from application or appraisal forms are completed.

The aim will be to raise the awareness of all employees, potential employees and relevant agencies regarding Venn Academy Trust's commitment to equal opportunities and the employment, promotion, training and career development of all employees, particularly those from under-represented groups and their equal access to any other benefits available to employees.