



SO 105 Safe Opportunities – Equality, diversity and inclusion Policy

Safe Opportunities is committed to ensuring the fair treatment of all young people within its provision.

Signed by:

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Company Director

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Statement of intent

Safe Opportunities recognises that certain groups in society have historically been disadvantaged because of unlawful discrimination they have faced due to their race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age.

This policy will put in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the Safe Opportunity community and workforce.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

This policy also has due regard for non-statutory guidance, including the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Admissions Statement
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Data Protection Policy

The Equality Act 2010 provides a modern, single legal framework with three broad duties:

- Eliminate discrimination harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

For the purpose of this policy, the Equality Act 2010 will be referred to as 'the Act'. Safe Opportunities fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. Protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student:

- In relation to admissions.
- In the way it provides education for students.
- In the way it provides students access to any benefit, facility or service.
- By excluding a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Safe Opportunities' liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a student has left Safe Opportunities but will apply to subsequent actions connected to the previous relationship between Safe Opportunities and students, such as the provision of references on former students or access to follow on activities.

Safe Opportunities will promote equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will work in line with the Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy.

2. Principles and aims

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents, as of equal value, regardless of any protected characteristic. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to any protected characteristic.

Safe Opportunities will:

- Promote **race equality** and have due regard to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.
- Promote **disability equality**, ensuring equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment and encouraging participation by disabled people in public life.
- Promote **gender equality** by eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote the equality of opportunity amongst individuals of all genders.

Transgender people are explicitly covered by the PSED. For the purposes of this policy, the term '**transgender**' refers to an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from that traditionally associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Safe Opportunities will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within the community.

Safe Opportunities is opposed to all forms of prejudice and recognises that young people who experience any form of prejudice-related discrimination may fare less well in the education system. Safe Opportunities will ensure that all staff comply with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations. Safe Opportunities' Admissions statement and systems will not discriminate against any protected characteristic in any way.

Safe Opportunities will:

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities, given necessary training and support, and report progress to the governing board.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, a shared sense of cohesion and belonging, and ensure this is promoted in our policies, procedures and activities.
- Observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development, and ensure that all policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees regardless of any protected characteristic, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- Reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.
- Engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy, procedure or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- Ensure that policies, procedures and activities benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in the public life of everyone, regardless of any protected characteristic.
- Engage with the local community with our vulnerable learners' groups which are held three times a year, these help to promote equal opportunities for all vulnerable people.
- Ensure staff promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in Safe Opportunities, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, and showing appropriate support for students with additional needs, maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equality.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Company Director will:

- Ensure that Safe Opportunities complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the PSED to:
 - Publish equality objectives at least every four years commencing on the date of the last publication.
 - Update and publish information every year to demonstrate school compliance with the PSED.
- Ensure that Safe Opportunities' policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the Safe Opportunities' Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, and staff training.
- Proactively recruit high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.

- Ensure that the policy is being followed.
- Implement this policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members receive the appropriate equality and diversity training as part of their induction and ongoing training.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the provisions of this policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with DfE guidance.

Employees will:

- Be mindful of any incidents of harassment or bullying in the school.
- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying and report any major breaches of the policy to the company director.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.
- Monitor students' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up-to-date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Students will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other student or staff member.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to the head of year or to another member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's equality and diversity policies, procedures and codes.

This policy will be made available for Ofsted inspections and review by the chief inspector, upon request.

4. Equality objectives

Safe Opportunities is committed to promoting the welfare and equality of all its staff, students and other members of the school community.

To achieve this, Safe Opportunities has established the following objectives:

- Monitor changes to the curriculum to ensure they result in good outcomes for students in all vulnerable groups, and to review the offer considering new performance measures.
- Offer appropriate qualifications in English and maths for Step16 students.
- Implement effective strategies to support students in all vulnerable groups.
- Improve the quality of support for students in all vulnerable groups in the training sessions.

- Continue to explore the use of new technologies to support students in all vulnerable groups in accessing their learning.

Safe Opportunities will regularly review the steps being taken and the progress made towards the achievement of these objectives and, in line with the specific duties of the PSED, publish this information on our website every year. Safe Opportunities will update and publish its equality objectives at least every four years.

5. Collecting and using information

In accordance with the requirements outlined in the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data will be lawfully collected and processed in line with the principles and practices outlined in the Data Protection Policy and only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, e.g. to comply with the school's legal obligations.

Safe Opportunities will collect equality information for the purpose of:

- Identifying key issues, e.g. unlawful discrimination in training methods.
- Assessing performance, e.g. benchmarking against similar organisations locally or nationally.
- Taking action, e.g. adapting working practice to accommodate the needs of staff who share protected characteristics.

Safe Opportunities will build an equality profile for staff to assist with identifying any issues within their recruitment regime. Safe Opportunities will obtain the following information from their staff:

- Recruitment and promotion
- Numbers of part-time and full-time staff
- Pay and remuneration
- Training
- Return to work of women on maternity leave
- Return to work of disabled employees following sick leave relating to their disabilities
- Appraisals/ reviews
- Grievances (including about harassment)
- Disciplinary action (including for harassment)
- Dismissals and other reasons for leaving

Safe Opportunities will use the information they obtain to analyse any gaps present in their equal opportunities policy.

6. Publishing information

Safe Opportunities will retain information to demonstrate its compliance with the Act. Safe Opportunities will publish information relating to persons within the organisation who share relevant protected characteristics.

Safe Opportunities will not provide this information if:

- The employee is employed under contract personally to do work.
- The employer does not have, and it is not reasonably practicable for the employer to obtain the data.

Safe Opportunities will update its equality objectives at least every four years and publish on the school website. Safe Opportunities will publish information on the website every year which will show the progress made towards the achievement of the equality objectives.

7. Promoting equality

In order to meet our objectives, Safe Opportunities has identified the following priorities:

- Safe Opportunities will provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled student's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment.
- Safe Opportunities will ensure that all forms of prejudice-motivated bullying is taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly.
- There will be differential schemes of work designed to meet the abilities and learning styles of all students.
- There will be a clear Behavioural Policy, which will be consistently followed.
- Safe Opportunities will increase access for disabled children and young people to the programme and will take necessary steps to meet students' needs by using a variety of approaches and planning reasonable adjustments for disabled students.
- Safe Opportunities will seek the views of advisory staff, outside agencies and local schools.

Throughout the year, Safe Opportunities will be involved in local events to raise awareness of equality and diversity including via our Vulnerable learners meetings.

Any reports of bullying and prejudice will be carefully monitored and dealt with accordingly. Ongoing training will be given to all staff to ensure that they are aware of the process for reporting and following up incidents of prejudice-related bullying.

8. Addressing prejudice-related incidents

Safe Opportunities is opposed to all forms of prejudice. Safe Opportunities will ensure that students and staff are aware of the impact of prejudice. Any incidents will be addressed immediately and, where appropriate, reported to the LA.

9. Complaints procedures

Safe Opportunities aims to resolve all complaints at the earliest possible stage and is dedicated to continuing to provide the highest quality of education possible throughout the procedure. Any person, including a member of the public, is able to make a complaint about the provision of facilities or services that Safe Opportunities provides.

Safe Opportunities will adhere to the Complaints Procedures Policy to ensure a straightforward, impartial, non-adversarial process, that allows a full and fair investigation, respects confidentiality and delivers an effective response and, appropriate redress.

If a complaint has completed Safe Opportunities' process and the complainant remains dissatisfied, they have the right to appeal, as outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.

Safe Opportunities works to develop good professional relationships between colleagues; however, we understand that sometimes conflicts may arise. Through maintaining open communication, we want our employees to feel able to raise any grievances so that appropriate and effective solutions can be put in place. Grievances raised by staff members will be processed in accordance with the school's Grievance Policy.

10. Curriculum

A student's curriculum is individually planned by a Safe Opportunities staff member around the student and their needs.

All students will be entitled to access a relevant timetable and to teaching and learning opportunities which meet their needs, including extra support where this has been identified as a statutory need.

When planning the curriculum, Safe Opportunities will take every opportunity to promote and advance equality. During teaching sessions, Safe Opportunities will promote equality and will not subject individuals to discrimination. Safe Opportunities will develop an appropriate curriculum for all students in all vulnerable groups.

11. Monitoring and review

The Company Director will review this policy annually, to ensure that all procedures are up-to-date. The policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Company Director in the following ways:

- Individual attainment data
- Equal opportunities recruitment data
- Equality impact assessments
- Ofsted inspection judgements on equality and diversity
- Incident records related to harassment and bullying
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.