



THE PRIORY
LEARNING TRUST

Equal Opportunities Policy

Policies approved by the Board of Trustees

Signed:

Name: Barry Wratten

Date: 1st September 2020

Chair of Board of Trustees

Authorised for Issue

Signed:

Name: Neville Coles

Date: 1st September 2020

Chief Executive Officer

History of Policy Changes

Date	Version	Author	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, change in legislation	Changed by
September 2017	1	FRL	Creation of policy	
May 2018	2		GDPR	DL
February 2019	3		Following consultation with Somerset Unions	DL
June 2019	4		Annual Review	DL
May 2020	5		Review of policy	LH

This policy applies to The Priory Learning Trust and all its academies.

Date policy adopted	September 2020
Review cycle	Annual
Review date	May 2021

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1. Equal opportunities statement

The Priory Learning Trust (the Trust) is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. You and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**Protected Characteristics**).

2. About this policy

- 2.1 This policy sets out the Trust's approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with the Trust, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 2.2 The Principal is responsible for the implementation and operation of this policy and the arrangement of any necessary training on equality and diversity at their academy. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for its implementation in respect of the Central Team.
- 2.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the Trust may be amended it at any time.

3. Discrimination

- 3.1 You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts or when wearing a work uniform), and on work-related trips or events including social events.
- 3.2 The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
 - (a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
 - (b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

- (c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- (d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- (e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

4. Recruitment and selection

- 4.1 Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person.
- 4.2 Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.
- 4.3 Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.
- 4.4 Job applicants will be asked, in accordance with the Trust's statutory obligation under Keeping Children Safe in Education and The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended) about their medical fitness for employment (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.
- 4.5 The Trust's **Recruitment and Selection Policy & Procedure** provides details of statutory safer recruitment obligations and in particular the effect of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended) on the recruitment process and decision making.
- 4.6 The Trust are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the HR Team or the Gov.uk website.

5. Disabilities

- 5.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, you are encouraged to tell the Trust about your condition so that consideration can be made as to what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.
- 5.2 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact the HR Team to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The HR Team may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser/occupational health about possible adjustments. The Trust will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If the Trust consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable the Trust will explain the reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 5.3 The Trust will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, the Trust will take reasonable steps to improve access.

6. Part-time and fixed-term work

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

7. Breaches of this policy

- 7.1 The Trust take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.
- 7.2 If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through the Trust Grievance Procedure or Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
- 7.3 You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure.

8. Review of this policy

- 8.1 This policy is reviewed and amended annually. The Trust will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.