



Academies Trust

Co-op Academies Trust School Direct ITT

Equal Opportunities Policy
2022 - 23

Working in association with Bright Futures SCITT



Equal Opportunities Policy

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Introduction

It is the goal of Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT to recruit people who are suitable to train to teach irrespective of their background and to ensure that the admission process is transparent, has minimal barriers to entry, is based on merit and potential, is fair with regard to diversity, professional in its nature and reliable.

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT are committed to promoting equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief (including a lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation ("the protected categories"). Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT places an obligation upon all staff and trainees to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Scope of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that the provisions of all equalities legislation are met in full, particularly the [Race Relations Act 1973 \(Amendment\) Regulations 2003](#), the [Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#), the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Employment Equality \(Age\) Regulations 2006](#).

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT are committed to ensuring equality in the following areas:

Staff and Mentors

- Training and professional development
- Grievance and disciplinary matters

Trainees

- Admission and access
- Trainee teacher assessment
- Guidance and support
- Teaching and learning
- Training and professional development
- Grievance and disciplinary matters

Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination occurs in the following circumstances:

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where one individual treats or would treat another individual less favourably on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief (including a lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation ("the protected categories").

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs where an institution applies a provision, criterion or practice generally which disadvantages a minority group in the community on the basis of a protected category. Indirect discrimination would also occur if an institution accepted and acted upon an indirectly discriminatory instruction from a third party.

Race

Both institutional and individual racism can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages ethnic minority people.

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT recognises its general duty under the Act to promote race equality. We will have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination and promoting good race relations in all our actions.

- We will create a positive, inclusive environment based on mutual respect and tolerance.
- We are committed to challenging and preventing racism and discrimination.
- We will monitor the treatment and progress of all candidates in terms of their recruitment, selection, levels of achievement or guidance and will take action to address any perceived or real inequalities discovered.
- We will assess the impact of our policies, practices and procedures upon all our trainees and staff.
- We will provide training or support for staff to ensure both they and the students they deal with are able to establish a positive working and learning environment.

Disability

Direct discrimination against a person occurs where, if for a reason which relates to the disabled person's disability, an individual:

Treats him/her less favourably than he/she treats, or would treat others to whom that reason does not or would not apply, and the person/s cannot show that the treatment in question is justified.

Or

If on the ground of a disabled person's disability, he/she treats the disabled person less favourably than he/she treats or would treat a person not having that particular disability, whose relevant circumstances, including his abilities, are the same as, or not materially different from, those of the disabled person.

This type of direct discrimination can never be justified.

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will not discriminate against a disabled person on the grounds of disability:

- in the arrangements i.e. application form, interview or arrangements for selection for determining to whom a place should be offered; or
- by refusing to offer, or deliberately not offering the disabled person a place for reasons connected with their disability.

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will accordingly make career opportunities available to all people with disabilities and every practical effort will be made to provide for the needs of candidates.

Wherever possible, Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will make reasonable adjustments to hallways, passages and doors in order to provide and improve means of access for disabled candidates. However, this may not always be feasible, due to circumstances creating such difficulties as to render such adjustments as being beyond what is reasonable in all the circumstances.

Gender

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will monitor gender balance on the subject courses it runs and consider appropriate action to redress any imbalances.

We will be sensitive to the needs of individuals in terms of course organisation and the support we offer, and building in flexibility within the constraints of the course, to enable an appropriate work/life balance.

Harassment

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT are committed to providing a work environment free from unlawful harassment on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, age, disability, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, political beliefs or any other basis protected by legislation is unlawful and will not be tolerated by Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT.

Examples of harassment are:

- Verbal or written conduct containing derogatory jokes or comments
- Slurs or unwanted sexual advances
- Visual conduct such as derogatory orientated posters
- Photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures which some may find offensive
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or any interference because of sex, race or any other protected category basis
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment
- It can also involve bullying linked to inequalities of status and position.

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT aims to foster a culture which is free from harassment by ensuring:

- Staff and trainees challenge all forms of harassment.
- Incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Individuals have the confidence and support to report complaints without fear of ridicule or reprisal.

Individuals take responsibility to ensure that they act in an appropriate manner.

If you believe that you have been unlawfully harassed, you should make an immediate report to the Head of ITT andy.gibson@coopacademies.co.uk followed by a written complaint as soon as possible after the incident. Your complaint should include:

- Details of the incident
- Name(s) of the individual(s) involved
- Name(s) of any witness(es)

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will undertake a thorough investigation of the allegations. If it is concluded that unlawful harassment has occurred, remedial action will be taken.

Monitoring

In order to ensure equality of treatment and opportunity for all trainees and applicants to the course, and to measure the impact of this policy, Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will collect and analyse data.

Where monitoring indicates that there are inequalities between different groups of people, Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT will undertake action aimed to reduce this. Such action may include further encouragement of applications from under-represented groups, the provision of services,

resources and facilities to meet the special needs of particular groups, targeted school placements and individual support from members of staff.

Responsibilities

The Co-op Academies Trust Head of ITT, along with Bright Futures SCITT Steering Group has ultimate responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of the equal opportunities policy although the mechanisms may be devolved to the Co-op Academies Trust Head of ITT and Bright Futures SCITT Director.

Each member of Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT, whether staff or trainee teacher, has a responsibility to support the implementation of this policy.

All partner schools are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and monitored within their own institutions, taking appropriate action on issues when necessary and reporting back to the Head of ITT.

All trainees have a responsibility to uphold the ethos of the policy and to act in an appropriate manner at all times. This policy will be reviewed by management every year.

Publication

Staff, trainee teachers and partner schools will be directed to this policy on the Co-op Academies Trust ITT website. Partner schools will receive a copy of this policy.

Complaints Procedures

Co-op Academies Trust and Bright Futures SCITT Teacher training has in place a comprehensive complaints policy and this is available upon request. Any discrimination complaint will be investigated fully.