



inspiring the journey for
independence together

Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed Yearly

Signed:  (Chair of the Trust)

Date of Review: November 2025

Date of Next Review: November 2026

Rivermead Inclusive Trust (RIT) is committed to ensuring equal opportunities, fairness of treatment, dignity, diversity, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the workplace for all staff and job applicants. RIT aims to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit. This policy has been developed with the EDI team to ensure that these aims are achieved.

It is essential that this policy is read in conjunction with the Sexual Harassment Policy to ensure a comprehensive understanding of Rivermead Inclusive Trust's commitment to fostering a safe and respectful environment for all pupils and staff. The Sexual Harassment Policy outlines specific procedures and guidelines for addressing incidents of sexual harassment, ensuring that all staff, pupils, and parents are aware of their rights and responsibilities. By integrating these policies, we reinforce our dedication to preventing and responding to incidents of sexual violence and harassment, promoting a culture of respect, and ensuring that all members of our school community feel safe and supported. This alignment also facilitates a cohesive approach to safeguarding and behaviour management, enabling effective responses to any concerns that may arise.

1. Equality

- 1.1. Rivermead Inclusive Trust aims to provide a working environment in which people feel comfortable and confident that they will be treated with respect and dignity.

RIT believes that all workers and job applicants should be treated equally and fairly irrespective of their sex, marital status, civil partnership status, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, national origin, culture, religion, age, or disability ("protected characteristics" as defined in the Equality Act 2010).

- 1.2. Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favorably because of one or more of the protected characteristics. Direct discrimination may occur even when unintentional. It may also, in some cases, occur by association - i.e., where a person is put at a disadvantage due to a characteristic of another person. Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
- 1.3. Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is unacceptable.
- 1.4. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat visitors, students, parents, and former staff members.

- 1.5. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, to treat colleagues with dignity at all times and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.
- 1.6. The Trust is also committed to ensuring that no policy, procedure, provision, rule, requirement, condition or criterion will be imposed on any worker or job applicant without justification, if it would be likely to put that person at a disadvantage on any of the above grounds.

This policy applies to all stages of the recruitment and selection process, as well as throughout an individual's employment. Staff have the opportunity to attend awareness training in equality and the avoidance of discrimination and utilise National College training to support equal opportunities within the recruitment and selection process.

- 1.7. Overall responsibility for this policy and training lies with the HR manager for the Trust. However, the SLT of each school is responsible for ensuring its application at each of the individual schools.
- 1.8. RIT will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure that it is achieving its objectives and, as part of this process, will monitor the composition of job applicants and the benefits and career progression of staff.

2. Driving Diversity

- 2.1. By accessing, recruiting, and developing talent from the widest possible talent pool, we believe that we can build a stronger workforce that demonstrates to our students the importance of equality and diversity and reflects the community of the school.
- 2.2. We will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed.
- 2.3. Our aim is that the diversity of the communities we serve is reflected at all levels within our workforce.
- 2.4. To drive diversity, the Trust will:
 - 2.4.1. challenge gender stereotypes wherever they occur.
 - 2.4.2. support employees in balancing their life at work and at home - with a strong emphasis on well-being.
 - 2.4.3. support employees who become pregnant and take active steps to facilitate their return to work after maternity leave.
 - 2.4.4. take positive steps to support trans-gender individuals and to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect throughout their employment.
 - 2.4.5. challenge racial stereotypes where they occur.
 - 2.4.6. understand, respect and value different racial and cultural backgrounds and

perspectives.

- 2.4.7. focus on what people can do, rather than on what they cannot because of their disability.
- 2.4.8. challenge stereotypes about people with disabilities.
- 2.4.9. make appropriate adjustments in the workplace to help people with disabilities achieve their full career potential.

- 2.4.10. challenge age stereotyping and recognise the benefits of a mixed age workforce.
- 2.4.11. treat people fairly in the workplace, irrespective of their religious beliefs and practices or political opinions, by recognising individuals' freedom of belief and right to protection from intolerance and persecution.
- 2.4.12. treat people fairly in the workplace, irrespective of their sexuality, and challenge negative stereotypical views.