



GENDER POLICY

Approved and signed by the Board of Trustees

14.12.22

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I POLICY STATEMENT

Gender is a complex and evolving topic, and our understanding is moving on all the time. Gender is an important part of an individual's identity and developing a positive sense of gender identity is part of growing up. Gender is a spectrum which is wider than just boy/man or girl/woman.

One of our Trust values is 'Inclusive' and as part of a Mentally Healthy Organisation (TISUK) we hope to ensure that every child, parent/carer and staff member feels included within our schools. This will therefore eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

This Policy seeks to provide a broad overview of the needs of transgender staff, children and their families.

When considering gender each individual's circumstances must be considered when responding to preferences and considering the appropriate support to put in place. Everyone is different and gender does not fit into a homogeneous group.

2 LEGISLATION

Equality Act 2010: Gender reassignment is a 'protective characteristic' - You must not discriminate (directly or indirectly) against trans individuals, no matter what age they are. A pupil does not need to be undertaking a medical procedure to change their sex. They can be at any stage in a full or partial process of reassigning their sex by 'changing physiological or other gender attributes'- whether proposing to undergo the process, undergoing it, or having it completed.

Public Sector Equality Duty: You must have due regard to the need to-

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity (between those who share a certain protected characteristic and those who don't)
- Foster good relations (between those who share a certain protected characteristic and those who don't)

UK General Data Protection Regulation

Under UK GDPR, gender isn't considered 'special category' data. However, information about someone's gender identity could reveal or concern other special category data such as data relating to health, sex life or sexual orientation. Therefore, data relating to someone's transgender history needs to be treated with extra care.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Discovery MAT ensure pupils are given the right to:

Express their own views freely in all matters affecting them (Article 12)

Freedom of expression through any media of the pupil's choice and freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 13 and 14)

This policy should be read and followed in conjunction with the following policies: SMSC, PSHE, Safeguarding, Mental Health & Wellbeing, Relationship, Relationships & Sex Education, SEND & Inclusion.

3 PRINCIPLES

In developing practice to support trans children, Discovery MAT follows the below principles:

- Listen to the child, their parents, carers and siblings. Wherever possible follow their lead and preferences.
- No child should be made to feel that they are not equal to others.
- Avoid where possible gender segregated activities and where this cannot be avoided. Allow the child to access the activity that corresponds to their gender identity.
- Challenge bullying and discrimination.
- Promote positive attitudes to gender diversity.

4 EARLY HELP PROCESS

Communication is vital and although some children may not want any individual support it is important that views and information is proactively sought. Information should be shared with who the child and family want it to be shared with to avoid repetition. Particular attention should be paid to emotional health and wellbeing, family and social relationships. If necessary a support plan may need to be put in place to address these issues. The lead professional should be someone who has a good relationship with the child e.g. InCo, HUT staff etc. During this initial meeting topics such as – toileting, uniform, pronouns should be discussed.

5 TERMINOLOGY AND LANGUAGE

The correct terminology and language should be used and in order to do this there may need to be some education to staff and pupils around sexual orientation and gender. It is important that the correct gender, name and pronouns are used correctly to address pupils. Some children may wish to change their names to match their gender identity. Although they may not have changed their name legally, individuals have the right to choose the name by which they wish to be known. This should be done in communication with parents and carers.

6 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

If there are any medical appointments or the child is accessing support externally this should be recorded as a medical appointment. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times when complying with absence procedures. More information can be found in the Trust Attendance Policy.

7 CHANGING AND TOILETING

Facilities for transgender pupils will be sensitive to their needs and sensitivities of other students. This should be discussed with the child and families at the initial meeting.

8 SWIMMING LESSONS

Facilities for transgender pupils will be sensitive to their needs and sensitivities of other students. This should be discussed with the child and families at the initial meeting. There may need to be communication with the Leisure Centre to ensure the child is adhering to their health and safety procedures.

9 SCHOOL UNIFORM

Children will be expected to follow the School Uniform Policy. There is a broad range of uniform for both genders. If possible this should be discussed and agreed at the initial meeting.

10 RESIDENTIAL TRIP

At no point should a child be excluded from a residential trip. However, sleeping arrangements and facilities will need to be considered and agreed with the child and family. Reasonable adjustments should be made to allow the child to participate.

Discovery Multi-Academy Trust will review this policy every year and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout each of the schools. The CEO, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Trustees will monitor this policy.

11 SAFEGUARDING

Being transgender does not in itself constitute a safeguarding risk, however KCSIE recognises that gender-based violence is a specific safeguarding issue and this can include violence towards transgender people.

Students should know that they can talk to members of staff about their gender identity in confidence through appropriate pastoral staff within our schools, and the counselling services that are available to all students.

Staff should treat student transgender issues with sensitivity. If a member of staff considers that a student is in immediate danger or at risk of harm referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Please see the school's Safeguarding Policy for further details on the formal process for referral where this is appropriate.

Website with advice:

Intercom Trust- An LGBT+ led charity, proudly working with 1000's of people each year to improve wellbeing and inclusion across the region.

The Gender Policy was shared with parents of trans-children at Discovery MAT Autumn 2022 for feedback.