



# Equality Consultative Group – Meeting Report

**Date:** Thursday 25th March 2021  
**Time:** 9.30 – 11.30  
**Location:** Teams

**In attendance:**

Paul Stone – Trust Leader  
 Louise Barber – Operations Director  
 Beena Chohan – HR Manager  
 Kathie Wade - Headteacher  
 Halil Tamgumus - Headteacher  
 Karen Ludden – Executive Assistant  
 Helen Stockill – Head of Governance  
 Olga Brownlow - Teacher  
 Naadia Begum – HR Assistant  
 Jenny Blewitt – Advisory Board Member

**Apologies:**

Muhammad Patel – Attendance Officer  
 Emma Turner – Research & CPD Lead  
 Ravinder Saund – Advisory Board Member  
 Chantal Harrison – Learning Support Assistant

We were delighted to hold the inaugural meeting of the ECG in March 2021. As a first meeting we wanted to learn more about each other and our motivations for getting involved. We also feel it is important that representatives are visible in the Trust and so pen profiles and contact details will be published later in the summer term.

The aim of the meeting was also to clarify the purpose of the group, roles and responsibilities and set out expectations for our work.

The group reviewed and agreed the terms of reference which sets out how meetings will operate. Attendance at meetings is crucial as we need a diversity of views and discussion and so members were asked to provide apologies well in advance. The group was asked to consider chairing arrangements from September and in the meantime, Helen Stockill agreed to chair.

**Inclusive Allies**

Each nominated representative has taken on an inclusive ally role for one or more of the protected characteristics. The roles will actively promote and seek to advance the culture of inclusion. Allies are expected to take time to educate themselves and seek to understand the issues and experiences that affect those who share a protected characteristic. Further guidance to support the role will be developed over time.

Protected Characteristic	Lead	Steering Group Support
Age	Olga Brownlow	Helen Stockill
Disability	Karen Ludden	Paul Stone
Gender Reassignment / Sexual Orientation	Chantal Harrison	Kathie Wade
Marriage & Civil Partnership / Pregnancy & Maternity	Emma Turner	Louise Barber
Race	Ravi Saund	Kathie Wade
Religion & Belief	Naadia Begum	Halil Tamgumus

Sex	Jenny Blewitt	Beena Chohan
Social Disadvantage	Muhammed Patel	Paul Stone

### Building Diversity in Schools

The group discussed their reflections of the ‘Building diversity in schools’ training session led by Bennie Kara. The training had been excellent and raised the importance of inclusive language. Talking about language might seem small, but changing our language is an easy way to create productive workplace cultures which are inclusive of everyone.

It can be difficult to ‘walk in somebody else’s shoes’ and understand why they may feel excluded by particular words and phrases. This is particularly the case for those of us who have not experienced exclusion. This means we are less likely to recognise words, phrases and incidents that involve bias, stereotyping or exclusion.

The group agreed an ‘inclusive language’ guide should be developed. Each representative was tasked with researching terminology relevant to their protected characteristic for the next meeting.

Having the guide will help employees feel confident in talking about diversity. However, we must also build confidence to ‘call it out’ when we hear non-inclusive language. This is more difficult to do, especially when it comes from a leader or someone of influence. When we confront someone about their language, not only are they less likely to do it again, they are also more likely to change their views on what is appropriate behaviour – as are any bystanders. This is something the group would like to return to.

### Equality strategy and objectives

The group reviewed the strategy and objectives which sets out a commitment and a roadmap for our equality work. As a ‘living’ document it will be updated to reflect the development of our work and emerging national and local issues. The strategy and objectives are available on the Discovery website [here](#).

### Global Equality Collective (GEC)

The group heard about a new tool being introduced to schools to support their understanding of where they are on the path to equality, diversity & inclusion. The GEC have created an app-based equality and inclusion assessment and suite of eLearning resources to support leaders pin-point and address gaps. Schools are very much at the start of their journey using the app and it will be interesting to follow this as it progresses.

### Trust Values



The group discussed the new values with the aim of developing a short description for each. It is important that the values are considered through the lens of equality as they define what we believe as an organisation and the behaviours we agree to live by every day. The group debated ‘altruism’ as a value and felt that ‘inclusion’ should be more explicit. As a result of the discussion, Paul Stone agreed to go back to the Board of Trustees to propose replacing altruism with inclusion. The values descriptors will be refined over the coming weeks before being published.

### And finally

As we have developed our strategy and thinking around our priorities, we have realised the scale of our ambition. However, we also realise that equality, diversity and inclusion is a journey not a destination and are excited by the challenge and embrace the opportunity to learn more.

Helen Stockill – Interim Chair