**Emil Dale Academy Equality and Diversity Policy**

**1. Introduction**

Emil Dale Academy is committed to creating an inclusive, diverse, and respectful environment for all of its students, staff, and stakeholders. As a musical theatre college that nurtures creativity, talent, and academic excellence, we value the contributions of individuals from all backgrounds, identities, and perspectives. This Equality and Diversity Policy ensures that all students, staff, and visitors are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, belief, or socio-economic background.

**2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

* Promote equality and diversity within Emil Dale Academy on the full time course (6th Form, Degree and Cert-HE).
* Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
* Ensure all students and staff have equal access to opportunities.
* Foster an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and supportive for everyone.
* Comply with relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

**3. Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity**

Emil Dale Academy is committed to ensuring that all individuals can thrive and succeed in an environment that respects and values diversity. Our policy is built on the following principles:

* **Equality of Opportunity:** We will provide equal opportunities for all students and staff, ensuring that no one is treated less favourably because of their race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.
* **Inclusivity:** We aim to foster a learning and working environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to participate fully. We recognize and celebrate the diversity of our community and are dedicated to making sure that everyone has the support they need to succeed.
* **Respect for Differences:** We encourage students and staff to embrace diversity, promoting mutual respect and understanding. Differences in culture, identity, and perspective are seen as strengths that contribute to the richness of the learning experience.
* **Zero Tolerance for Discrimination and Harassment:** We have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. This includes discrimination based on race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic. Any incidents will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate action will be taken.

**4. Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to:

* All students, staff, and visitors of Emil Dale Academy.
* All educational activities, including lectures, rehearsals, performances, workshops, and extracurricular events.
* Recruitment, selection, and admission processes for students and staff.
* All interactions between students and staff, including in-person and online communication.

EDA cannot regulate or be held accountable for views shared on social media or shared by students or staff on personal accounts not related to EDA, with the only link being the person is student or staff. EDA cannot reasonably regulate or discipline students where incidences of discrimination happen outside of college hours or during school holidays.

**5. Legal Framework**

Emil Dale Academy recognizes and complies with the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination on the grounds of:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender reassignment
* Marriage and civil partnership
* Pregnancy and maternity
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation

In addition, we adhere to all relevant local and national legislation designed to protect individuals from unfair treatment and ensure equality of opportunity.

**6. Roles and Responsibilities**

* **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** The SLT is responsible for ensuring the overall implementation of this policy, ensuring that equality and diversity objectives are embedded in the Academy’s strategic goals, and providing appropriate resources and training to staff.
* **Staff:** All staff, including academic and support staff, are responsible for promoting equality and diversity in their teaching, interactions with students, and within the Academy. They must actively engage in training and development regarding equality and diversity matters.
* **Students:** Students are expected to embrace diversity, respect others' differences, and contribute to an inclusive environment. They should report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying and assist in creating a positive and supportive learning environment.
* **Equality and Diversity Officer:** The Equality and Diversity Officer is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, providing guidance, monitoring progress, and ensuring compliance with legal requirements.

**7. Key Areas of Focus**

* **Admissions and Recruitment:** The Academy will ensure that its admissions process is free from discrimination and that equal opportunities are provided to all applicants. We encourage applications from individuals of diverse backgrounds and aim to eliminate any barriers that might prevent people from applying.
* **Curriculum and Learning Environment:** We will ensure that the curriculum reflects diverse perspectives, experiences, and voices. Teaching materials and resources will be selected to promote inclusion, cultural awareness, and respect for diversity.
* **Support Services:** The Academy will provide appropriate support services to students with disabilities and those requiring additional support, ensuring that all students have equal access to learning opportunities.
* **Training and Development:** We will provide training to staff and students on equality, diversity, and inclusion to raise awareness and develop strategies to address unconscious bias, discrimination, and harassment.
* **Monitoring and Reporting:** We will regularly monitor equality and diversity within the Academy, collecting data where appropriate to assess progress. Any incidents of discrimination or harassment will be reported, investigated, and addressed promptly.

**8. Procedures for Reporting and Addressing Discrimination and Harassment**

* **Reporting:** Any student or staff member who believes they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or bullying should report the incident to the Equality and Diversity Officer or a member of the SLT. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process.
* **Investigation:** All reports will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate action will be taken. This may include mediation, counselling, disciplinary action, or other remedies as deemed appropriate.
* **Support:** Victims of discrimination or harassment will be offered appropriate support, including access to counselling services or academic assistance, to ensure they can continue their studies in a safe and supportive environment.

**9. Commitment to Continuous Improvement**

Emil Dale Academy is committed to continuously reviewing and improving its approach to equality and diversity. We will regularly assess the effectiveness of this policy and consult with staff and students to identify areas for improvement. Feedback from all members of the Academy community is encouraged and valued.

**10. Conclusion**

By adhering to this Equality and Diversity Policy, Emil Dale Academy ensures that all individuals—students, staff, and visitors—are treated fairly and respectfully, and that opportunities for success are available to everyone, regardless of background, identity, or circumstance. We strive to create an environment that fosters creativity, talent, and inclusivity, and we are committed to the ongoing promotion of equality and diversity in all aspects of Academy life.

11. Document History

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| Date | Author | Review Date | Notes/ Changes |
| 11th September 2023 | Sarah Moore | July 2024 | 1st Draft |
| 26th July 2024 | Sarah Moore | July 2025 | Summarised and made document more succinct.  Added Cert-HE qualification |