

27th February 2020

Gender Pay Gap Action Plan

Introduction

Swift Academies aims to attract and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the community that we serve. To support this, our approach to pay is gender neutral by design. As an organisation we believe in fairness, equality and inclusion, and are committed to reducing our gender pay gap and improving gender equality.

New efforts to improve transparency include a requirement for UK companies with over 250 employees to report publicly on their gender pay gap.

Education employers must take steps to stop and reverse the gender pay gap. They must ensure that women have fair access to pay progression and promotion. This can be achieved by:

- ensuring that recruitment panellists have equality and diversity training;
- making sure gender bias plays no part in pay progression and promotion decisions;
- being open to flexible working and job-sharing in schools, including for promoted posts;
- ending discrimination in pay decisions, such as refusing pay progression to teachers who have been on maternity leave;
- monitoring and regulating pay decisions, particularly at academy CEO and headship levels;

In analysing and understanding our organisations gender pay data we have been able to identify the necessary actions to develop a meaningful action plan that will have a real impact on closing the gender pay gap. Stakeholder involvement will help to deliver a plan that will be innovative, fit for purpose and well supported. We will monitor and evaluate our action plan, changing and adapting as required in order to drive forward a plan that can be embedded into daily working practices.

Action Plan

- Support employees returning to work and with young families
- A trust wide Flexible Working Policy that reinforces our commitment to equality of opportunity and improves workplace flexibility for men and women.
- We consider the most diverse shortlists for recruitment and promotion; the Trust is committed to ensuring that the best talents are sought regardless of gender.
- Talent management; it is recognised that there may be a number of good, qualified people taking lower paid positions to suit their hours and needs; we will continue to ensure that we utilise the data we have on employee skills and qualifications to ensure that we draw on existing talent within the organisation, with a view to creating opportunities that reduce the gender pay gap.

Success will inspire future triumphs

- We utilise skill-based assessment tasks in recruitment rather than relying only on interviews; we ask candidates to perform tasks they would be expected to perform in the role they are applying for and use their performance in these tasks to assess their suitability for the role. *Standardised tasks and scoring ensures fairness across candidates.*
- The use of structured interviews for recruitment and promotions; all candidates are asked the same questions in a predetermined order and format that are graded using pre-specified, standardised criteria. *Structured and unstructured interviews both have strengths and weaknesses, but unstructured interviews are more likely to allow unfair bias to creep in and influence decisions.*
- Transparency to promotion and pay processes; we ensure that we are open about processes, policies and criteria for decision making. This means employees are clear on what is involved, and that managers understand that their decisions need to be objective and evidence-based because those decisions can be reviewed by others. *Having transparency to promotion and pay and reward processes can reduce pay inequalities.*
- Senior leaders as “diversity managers”; we ensure that we monitor talent management processes (such as recruitment or promotions) and diversity within the organisation. *This can reduce biased decisions in recruitment and promotion because people who make decisions know that their decision may be reviewed. This accountability can improve the representation of women in our organisation.*
- Shared Parental Leave; we inform future fathers of their legal right to request this leave and provide guidance to understand the scheme. *The gender pay gap widens dramatically after women have children, but this can be reduced if men and women are able to share childcare more equally.*
- As an employer in education, we endeavour to remove gender bias, work harder to retain talented teaching professionals and demonstrate to women in the sector that they are valued. *The national picture within the education sector is that of a pyramid, with lower paid women at the bottom supporting a small number of male senior employees at the top.* NB. This is not the case within Swift Academies.



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