

## Future Schools Trust Gender Pay Gap Action Plan

### What is Gender Pay Gap?

In 2015 and 2016, the government carried out three consultations on proposals to increase transparency around the differences in pay between men and women. The Equality Act 2010: 'Gender Pay Gap Information' and 'Specific Duties and Public Authorities' Regulations 2017 came into force on 31 March 2017. The regulations enforce a duty to publish annual gender pay gap reports of public sector employers with over 250 employees. Multi-academy trusts are likely to have the required number of employees to trigger the duty and Future Schools Trust had 348 employees on the 31 March 2018 (the Snapshot day for the most recent report published on 30 March 2019).

The objective of the Equality Act 2010 is to ensure that consideration of equality issues forms part of the routine day-to-day decision making and operational delivery of public authorities. The aim is to ensure better performance of the public sector equality duty as well as increasing transparency and providing authorities with the data needed to target action more effectively.

Whilst both equal pay and the gender gap deal with the disparity of pay women receive in the workplace, they are two different issues:

1. Equal pay means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
2. The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation and it is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

In the Education Sector, there is a current overall gender pay gap of 25.9%. Future Schools Trust's most recent gender pay gap reports ours to be currently at 14.1% which is under the national average. We are required to publish a 'snapshot' of pay information which includes:

- Difference between the average hourly rate of pay paid to male and female employees
- Difference between the average bonus paid to male and female employees
- Proportions of male and female employees who receive bonuses
- Relative proportions of male and female employees in each quartile pay band of the workforce.

A report needs to be published in a way that is accessible to the public by no later than 30 March each year (with the snapshot date being 31 March of the previous year), and we publish ours on the Trust website. Future Schools Trusts most recent Gender Pay Gap Report can be accessed by following:

<https://www.futureschoolstrust.com/site/data/files/docs/AC3D2799F6A5AE5E161A4B73D23D6335.pdf>

We published our first report on 30 March 2018 and we will continue to do so by the 30 March each subsequent year.

### Why does the Gender Pay Gap in our organisation exist?

The Government Equalities Office recently presented a webinar on the Gender Pay Gap in the Education Sector which suggested that the main reasons for what causes the gender pay gap are:

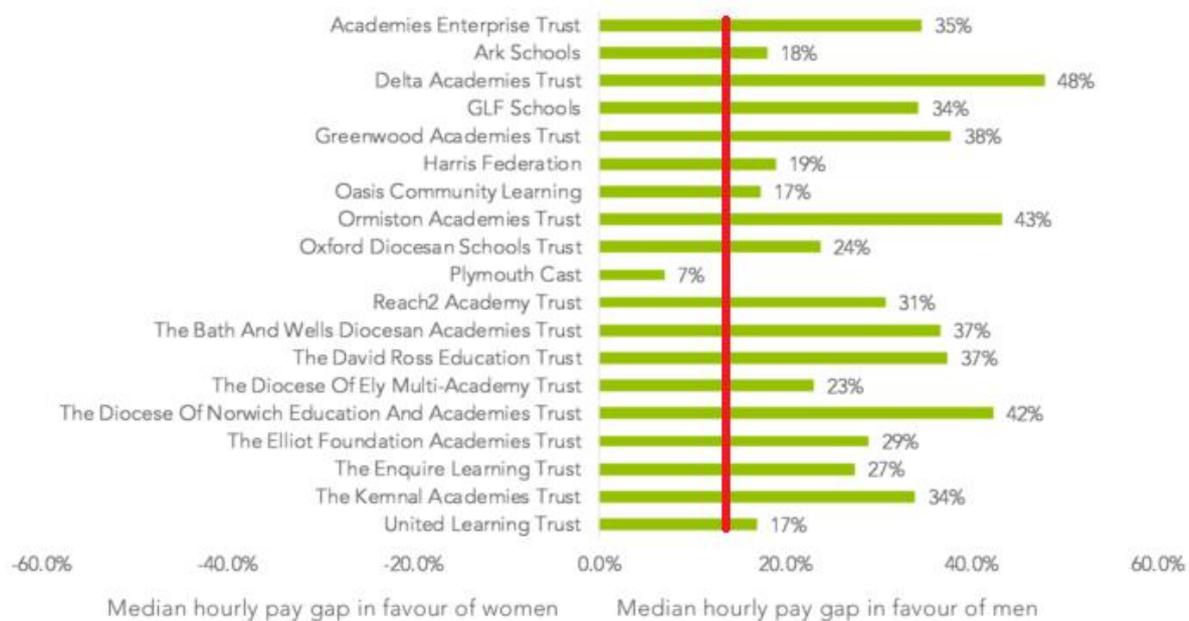
- Fewer women are employed as senior managers
- Women can be concentrated in lower paying roles, for example support staff, catering staff and administration staff, which also tend to be part-time jobs
- Women are much more likely than men to take time out to start a family, look after children or other family members

The presentation also stated that that the general workforce makeup in the Education sector comprises of:

- almost 75% female teaching staff
- 80% female staff overall
- an 82% female support staff workforce
- a 67% female rate of head teachers in state funded schools with 35-40% of these from secondary schools

Below is a diagram of the Gender Pay Gap in some of England’s biggest MATs. The Red line shows the Gender Pay Gap for Future Schools Trust on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018:

## Gender pay gaps in England’s largest academy trusts



Source: The Education Lab

### What is the key to reducing the gender pay gap in the Education Sector and Future Schools Trust and how we will work towards reducing our gender pay gap?

Educational establishments must take steps in order to reverse the Gender Pay Gap. We must ensure that women have fair access to pay progression and promotion opportunities. We can achieve this by:

- 1. Ensuring gender equality through the recruitment process**  
 This will involve short-listing of equal male and female candidates and a mixed gender selection or interview panel where possible for roles. We will also continue to establish gender neutral language in job advertisements.
- 2. Ensuring that gender bias plays no part in any pay progression and promotion decisions and be more open to flexible working and job share requests, particularly for roles that are promotions if possible**  
 This can be done by making sure that our workforce is aware of gender bias and how this could affect their decision making in terms of the performance management process and supporting support women who want to apply for more senior roles. An increasing number of

staff want to be able to work flexibly with the majority of those being women returning from a maternity leave or a career break. Therefore, where possible, we should use our Flexible Working Policy to help to recruit, retain and motivate employees and think creatively about how work is organised and think about the different potential arrangements and if and when we are able to offer part-time working/job sharing or compressed hours for particular roles. If at all possible, we will also look at considering flexible working for new roles.

**3. Establishing a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in pay decisions, continue to have transparent criteria on which to base such decisions and not refusing pay progression to staff who have been on maternity leave**

This transparency means being open about processes, policies and criteria for decision-making. This means employees are clear what is involved, and that managers understand that their decisions must be objective and evidence-based. Introducing transparency to promotion, pay and reward processes can reduce pay inequalities. A 2017 survey on pay progression carried out by the NEU found that a third of teachers eligible for progression were denied. This was because they had been absent for all or part of that particular school year due to pregnancy or maternity leave. Not only is this not in line with best practise and ethics, if denied on this basis, it's illegal discrimination.

**4. More rigorous monitoring of pay decisions, particularly at senior levels**

We will seek to incorporate a stringent review process of all pay decisions at the end of each performance management cycle in order to review any gender discrepancies or anomalies within leadership teams in order to ensure parity for similar roles across all schools within the Trust.

**5. Focusing on staff retention**

There is evidence that women leave Future Schools Trust at a slightly higher rate than men, although we do employ a higher percentage of women to men so naturally this number may be higher. We need to analyse the roles of the women who leave to see whether there are any structural issues and reasons for them leaving and their reasons in general. If any trends are identified, for example women tending to leave more senior roles, we will look into why this is happening and seek to resolve any issues that may be highlighted.

Each of these five approaches will be evaluated in March 2021 to measure their impact and levels of success at improving the Future Schools Trust Gender Pay Gap.

Sarah Harrington  
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