

# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

**This Policy is for guidance and does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment, except if/to the extent required by law. The School may amend/change/update this Policy from time to time.**

## 1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

- 1.1. The School is committed to providing equal opportunities for all and encouraging diversity. The School is determined to ensure that the workplace is free from any unlawful discrimination and that we have a diverse workforce at all levels.
- 1.2. You should be aware of the importance which the School attaches to its Equal Opportunities Policy Statement. The School expects all members of staff to ensure that they do not directly or indirectly (even unintentionally) discriminate against job applicants or fellow members of staff.
- 1.3. The School does not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**protected characteristics**).
- 1.4. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat pupils, visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former staff members.
- 1.5. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.
- 1.6. The School will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities. Please see the following for specific information on the School's approach to these issues: Staff Development Policy; Recruitment, Selection, Disclosure Policy and Procedure; Flexible Working Policy.

### **Forms of discrimination**

- 1.7. Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- 1.8. **Direct discrimination** occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.
- 1.9. **Indirect discrimination** occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater

childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

- 1.10. **Harassment** related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
- 1.11. **Victimisation** is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.
- 1.12. **Disability discrimination** also extends to any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of the disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

#### **Termination of employment**

- 1.13. The School will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- 1.14. The School will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

#### **Disability discrimination**

- 1.15. If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- 1.16. If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 1.17. The School will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

#### **Fixed-term employees and agency workers**

- 1.18. The School monitors the use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

#### **Immigration status**

- 1.19. We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearances or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

**Part-time work**

- 1.20. The School monitors the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the School's Flexible Working Policy.

**Breaches of the policy**

- 1.21. If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy. If you are uncertain which applies or need advice on how to proceed you should speak to the Head.
- 1.22. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.
- 1.23. Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

The Bursar is responsible for reviewing this policy.

(August 2018)