



THE NORTON
KNATCHBULL
SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY AND EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Reviewed by	Headteacher
Approved by Education Committee	4 th March 2020
Review Date	January 2023

Scope and Purpose of this Policy

The School is committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity for all stakeholders including students, parents, staff, governors, visitors, and job applicants.

The School aims to create an environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for everyone
- demonstrate that, in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, the School is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and does not provide less favourable facilities or treatment on the basis of the following protected characteristics
 - gender
 - sexual orientation
 - marital or civil partner
 - status
 - pregnancy or maternity
 - gender reassignment
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - disability
 - age

The School is committed to:

- encouraging equality and diversity
- creating an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued
- taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by students, employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the school's activities. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.
- making opportunities to help and encourage staff and students to develop their potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised
- taking decisions based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act)
- reviewing practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law
- monitoring the make-up of the workforce to ensure it meets the aims and commitments set out in the equality policy.
- considering views expressed by all stakeholders and/or their representatives, including trade unions.

Our Commitment as Employers

As employers, the School opposes and avoids all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

We are committed to providing equality and fairness to everyone. All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.

This policy:

- does not form part of any employee's terms and conditions of employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. It is provided for guidance to all members of staff at the School who are required to familiarise themselves and comply with its contents. The School reserves the right to amend its content at any time.
- applies to the School's employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not employees but who work at the School (collectively referred to as "Staff" in this policy).

All staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the School's aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities.

This policy applies to all aspects of the School's relationship with Staff and to relations between Staff members at all levels. This includes:

- job advertisements;
- recruitment and selection;
- training and development;
- opportunities for promotion;
- conditions of service;
- pay and benefits;
- conduct at work;
- disciplinary and grievance procedures; and
- termination of employment.

The School will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.

Recruitment and Selection

The School aims to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics listed previously. The School's recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate.

Job advertisements will avoid using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. A short policy statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy shall be sent on request to those who enquire about vacancies.

The School will take steps to ensure that its vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in the School.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which the School may use, for example:

- questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments);
- questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment;
- positive action to recruit disabled persons;
- equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning the protected characteristics without first considering whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account.

The School is required by law to ensure that all members of Staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective members of Staff, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. A list of acceptable documents is available from the PA to the Headteacher.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in the School, the School will monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be removed from applications before shortlisting and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us to take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

The School is an organisation that uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess candidates' suitability for positions of trust working in an environment with children and young people. The School complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all candidates fairly.

The School undertakes not to discriminate unlawfully against any candidate who is required to provide information (a check) through this process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily

prevent a candidate from working with the School. Whether or not it does will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

The School's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders will be made available to all candidates at the outset of the recruitment process. The School will ensure that it makes any candidate who is subject to check aware of the DBS Code of Practice and will provide a copy of the Code on request.

As a check is part of the School's recruitment process, the School encourages all candidates called to interview to provide details of any criminal record (except cautions, convictions, reprimands or warnings which are "protected" as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013) at an early stage of the application process. The School requests that this information is sent under separate confidential cover to a designated person with the School who may vary in case to case depending on the nature of the post being recruited. The School guarantees that only those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process will see this information.

The School will ensure that it discusses with the candidate the relevance of any offence to the job in question. A candidate's failure to reveal information directly relevant to the job could result in withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Staff training, promotions and conditions of service

Staff training needs will be identified through informal and formal staff appraisals.

All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the School and all promotion decisions will be on the basis of merit.

The composition and movement of staff at different levels will be reviewed from time to time to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation.

Where appropriate the School will take steps to identify and remove unnecessary or unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or under-represented groups.

The School's conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Termination of employment

The School will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

The School will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties applied are without discrimination, and are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

Disability Discrimination

If a member of staff is disabled, or becomes disabled, in the course of their employment with the School, he or she is encouraged to tell us about their condition. This is to enable us to support the member of staff as much as possible.

If a member of staff experiences difficulties at work because of their disability, he or she may wish to contact their Line Manager/Head of Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments to their working conditions or duties which he or she considers to be reasonable and necessary, or which would assist in the performance of their duties. The Line Manager/Head of Department may wish to consult with the member of staff and their medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where reasonable, practicable and proportionate in all the circumstances of the case.

Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it would not be reasonable for the School to accommodate a particular adjustment and in such circumstances it will ensure that it provides the member of staff with its reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they place disabled staff, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonably practicable and proportionate the School will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

Part-Time Workers, Fixed-Term Employees and Agency/Temporary Workers

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

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body.

Any member of staff who considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, victimised or harassed within the meaning of this policy should discuss the matter in the first instance with their Line Manager/Head of Department or, if inappropriate under the circumstances of the case, with the Headteacher. In some cases it may be possible to resolve the matter informally and reach a satisfactory resolution.

If a member of staff wishes to make a formal complaint then he or she should follow the School's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

If an employee is accused of unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment, the School will investigate the matter fully. In the course of the investigation the employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation for their actions.

If the School concludes that the claim is false or malicious then the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

If on the other hand the School concludes that the employee's action amounts to unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment he or she may be subject to disciplinary action under the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

Equality Objectives:

Objective 1: The school will ensure all vacancies are filled using the principles of Equal Opportunities and safer recruitment.

Why we have chosen this objective:

- To ensure that the school's recruitment process is legal, fair and objective
- to ensure that all job applicants and employees receive equal treatment and are not disadvantaged by unnecessary conditions and requirements
- to ensure the School meets its commitments to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- monitor and evaluate applications and appointments and produce an annual summary for governors.
- ensure at least one member of each recruitment panel has received relevant training

Progress we are making towards this objective:

- All job applicants are asked to anonymously complete an equality and diversity monitoring form
- During the academic year 2018-19 all Senior leaders completed safer recruitment training

Objective 2: The School will monitor and evaluate the attainment and progress of all pupils in all year groups with specific reference to significant groups including ethnicity, special educational needs, disadvantages (pupil premium) and free school meals students Why we have chosen this objective:

- To enable us to identify and take appropriate action to address any underachievement in these groups

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- Identify significant groups in each year group within the school
- Analyse the attainment and progress of these groups at each data drop
- Report on the progress of these groups to SLT and Governors
- Provide reports to the Raising Standards Lead, Inclusions Manager and Achievement Leaders to that they can take appropriate action necessary to address underachievement and remove barriers to learning .

Progress we are making towards this objective:

- The progress of all groups is regularly monitored
- Reports are provided to Senior Leaders, Raising Standards Lead and Governors

Objective 3: As part of the review of our Educational Visits and Trips Policy and procedures ensure equality and decision-making

Why we have chosen this objective:

- Whilst every school trip is planned so that it is accessible to all groups of students, the need to do this and record any action taken is not explicit in our policies and procedures

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- Review our educational visits and trips procedures

Progress we are making towards this objective:

- A working party is currently reviewing the School's visits and trips policy and procedures