



Equal Opportunities Policy for Employees

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Next Review 12-17
Approved by: Governors

This Policy applies throughout the School from EYFS to Year 6.

Aims

The School is an equal opportunities employer.

It is the School's policy to ensure equality of opportunity for all members of staff. The values of the School require a positive environment in which all staff members are respected, are provided with development and progression opportunities, and are allowed to make the most of their abilities.

All members of staff have a responsibility for implementing this Policy in all their activities. Each member should set a good example to other staff members and to other persons in promoting equal opportunities within the School.

The School regards this Policy as a commitment to making full use of the talents and resources of all members of staff and to providing a healthy environment which will encourage good and productive working relations within the School.

In order to promote an environment within which the School can call upon the widest possible range of knowledge, skill and experience, as well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we are committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which represents the population within our recruitment area in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

To this end, we shall regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion, training and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular but not only, in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, transfer & training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- Conduct at work

- Procedures ensure fair and equitable treatment in relation to admission and assessment of pupils

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff must treat visitors, pupils, parents, suppliers and former members of staff.

The School is a Catholic foundation and is registered with the Secretary of State as being of a designated religious character. This may be taken into account when recruiting teaching staff where appropriate to do so.

Implementation

The School with the assistance of the staff will:

- Break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit
- Advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job
- Promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary
- Ensure that all members of staff are fully informed and trained on this Policy
- Monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices
- Review and examine existing procedures to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation
- Use language in official communications which reflects the letter and spirit of this Policy

Recruitment and selection

The staffing process is governed by the School's principles of non-discrimination and is designed to achieve the best match between, on the one hand, the individual's knowledge and skills, experience and character and, on the other hand, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

- The capability of the individual to perform in the position will be the major selection criterion but the ability both to work with others and to be trained, coupled with individual potential will be taken into account
- All applicants will be dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible
- Carefully selected and validated skills and/or psychometric tests may be used as part of the selection process and will be administered by a trained tester
- Appointments will be confirmed on receipt of satisfactory references and DBS checks (and in the absence of prohibition orders) and/or medical report and/or satisfactory completion of a probationary period

Career development and training

Central to our Policy is that we get the best from our employees throughout their careers. We will:

- Provide the support necessary to help employees realise their potential
- Encourage employees to apply for jobs which suit their experience and skills

We will support volunteers in the roles that they are performing within the School. We will encourage them to:

- Develop their skills whilst serving with the School
- Assume responsibilities commensurate with their development

Terms and Conditions of Employment

Fairness in how people are rewarded is fundamental. We will:

- Ensure terms and conditions, including pay, are fair and equitable, taking account of responsibility, performance and contribution
- Ensure that the benefits, facilities and services available to all our employees will be clearly defined so that people are aware of them

Disability

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your Subject Co-ordinator to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your Subject Co-ordinator may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments and you may be required to give your consent to a report being produced about your state of health and ability to perform your duties. 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. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or School premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out their duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job redesign and flexible hours.

Where during the course of their employment a disabled member of staff recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work arrangements or School premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Bursar.

Dignity at Work

You should not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to harassment of another person at work. Harassment of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence and in serious instances may lead to instant dismissal.

Harassment may take the form of unwanted conduct which is related to a relevant Protected Characteristic which is perceived as affecting an employee's dignity at work. It may also take the form of unwanted conduct towards someone based on their appearance or other personal characteristics which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It is not only unwanted physical contact, assault or propositions; it includes suggestive remarks or gestures, pin-ups, graffiti, offensive comments, jokes and banter. Harassment may include bullying, intimidatory behaviour, persistent teasing or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities, or exclusion from normal work place conversation. It may be directed towards one individual or a group. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave.

Procedure

- If you consider that you have been the recipient of unwanted conduct amounting to harassment, it is open to you to try to resolve the problem informally with the other person, either face to face or in writing. If this is not appropriate or has not been successful, you may raise a grievance in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedure, a copy of which is appended hereto. All such grievances will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence as far as reasonably practicable to progress the complaint. Both during the investigation of the complaint and afterwards (whatever the outcome), consideration will be given to ensuring that you and the alleged harasser are not required to work together against your wishes
- If you consider that you have been subject to discrimination of any form, you should inform the Head or the Bursar
- The School will seek to ensure that you are not in any way penalised whether directly or indirectly for bringing a complaint and the situation will be monitored to ensure that the harassment has stopped
- False or malicious allegations will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Retaliation against a member of staff who complains of harassment can be expected to lead to disciplinary action

Recruitment of Ex-offenders

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the School undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to the Bursar and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows the School to ask questions about their entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment or termination.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Linked Policies

- Accessibility Policy
- Capability and Disciplinary Procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Computing and Acceptable Use Policy
- Continuing Professional Development Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Grievance Procedure (appended hereto)
- Maternity Leave Policy
- Professional Review Policy
- Retirement Policy
- Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy

APPENDIX

Grievance Procedure

Introduction

This Procedure does not constitute a term of the employee's contract. It should be regarded as a guideline only and may be adapted in any particular case to suit the circumstances. In particular, the time limits and processes referred to in the Procedure may be varied. Furthermore, the Procedure may be amended by the School from time to time as it considers appropriate.

What this policy covers

A grievance is any concern, problem or complaint that an employee has in relation to their employment.

Where possible, an employee should try to settle any grievance informally with a senior member of staff at the earliest opportunity. Where any grievance is unable to be resolved informally, this policy sets out the School's Grievance Procedure.

Employee responsibilities

Employees have a responsibility to raise any grievances promptly and reasonably, to assist the School, if required, in any investigation of the matters raised in a grievance, to follow the grievance procedure and to attend all meetings arranged under it.

Employees may raise grievances either informally or formally. If a grievance is raised informally first, the grievance may still be raised formally subsequently if it is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction.

The School aims to deal with all grievances promptly and impartially, and to make all reasonable efforts to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

Employees have the right to appeal against a decision the School makes in respect of a grievance raised. In these cases, the grievance appeal will be dealt with by representatives of the Governing Body.

The decision at the appeal stage is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Procedure

1. Dealing with grievances informally

If an employee has any grievance, they should discuss this with a senior member of staff in the first instance, who will then attempt to resolve the situation on an informal basis.

If attempts to resolve the matter informally do not work, it may be appropriate for an employee to raise a formal grievance under the following formal procedure.

2. Right to be accompanied at Grievance Meetings

At all formal stages of this procedure, an employee is entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or by a trade union official.

Should you wish to be accompanied, you must advise the name of your chosen companion as soon as possible.

3. Formal procedure

The School will make all reasonable efforts to deal with formal grievances in a fair and consistent manner. While the School will make every effort to settle any grievance within the time limits detailed in this procedure, this may not be possible on some occasions.

Employees must set out the nature of the grievance, and the full particulars of it, in writing. The written grievance should be submitted to a senior member of staff in the first instance. If the grievance is against the employee's line manager, the employee should submit it to another manager or a more senior member of the School.

4. Attending the Grievance Meeting

The employee will be invited to a meeting to discuss the grievance, normally within five working days of the School receiving their grievance. All reasonable steps must be taken to attend this meeting.

Prior to the meeting, the employee should ensure that they are fully prepared to present their grievance, share any supporting evidence and answer any questions relating to the incident/circumstances in question.

5. Notification of the outcome

After the Grievance Meeting, an appropriate period of time may be taken to allow for any further investigation and/or the consideration of all the facts before a decision is reached. The School will then, normally, inform the employee in writing of its decision regarding the raised grievance without unreasonable delay. The letter will also explain their right to appeal against any decision taken.

6. Appeals against grievance outcomes

If the employee is dissatisfied with a decision made regarding a grievance they have raised, they have the right of appeal. The appeal must be made in writing, stating the reasons for the appeal, to the individual identified in the decision letter.

This should be submitted no later than the end of the fifth working day after the employee received written notification. The first of these five working days is the day on which the employee received written confirmation of the decision.

The appeal will be heard by a committee of three Governors to be appointed by the Chair of Governors (the Grievance Panel).

7. The Appeal Meeting

The Grievance Panel will invite the employee to attend an Appeal Meeting. This will be arranged and held as quickly as possible, normally within five days. The employee will be given an opportunity to state their case.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend this meeting. If the employee feels that they have a legitimate reason as to why they cannot attend the meeting on the proposed date, they must contact the person named on the invitation letter to inform them of this fact immediately. The meeting may then be delayed to facilitate their attendance, if this is considered reasonable.

The Grievance Panel will advise the employee of the decision after the Appeal Meeting which will be final and binding.