



SARUM HALL SCHOOL

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Date: March 2024
Next Review Due: March 2025
Reviewed by: Alison Reilly

INTRODUCTION

Sarum Hall School is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to ensuring within the framework of the law that our workplaces are free from unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as “Protected Characteristics”).

We value diversity and are committed to promoting diversity within the workplace by seeking to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly with dignity and respect and by recognising and encouraging individual contribution within the organisation.

We aim to ensure that our staff achieve their full potential and that all employment decisions are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. We have adopted the Sarum Hall School Equality and Diversity Policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

We are committed to ensuring that all our staff and all applicants for employment are protected from unlawful discrimination in the workplace. We endeavour not to discriminate in the areas of recruitment and selection; promotion, transfer, and training opportunities; access to benefits and terms and conditions of employment; grievance and disciplinary procedures; termination of employment including redundancies; and conduct at work. It is also our policy that all employees should be allowed to work in an environment free from harassment, bullying or unsolicited or unwelcome comments or overtures on discriminatory grounds.

In recognition of the principle of equality of opportunity, we recognise that all staff should receive equal pay for the same work, work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value. We recognise that in order to achieve equal pay for employees doing equal work, we should operate a fair pay system based on objective criteria and free from bias.

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Direct discrimination occurs where:

- (i) Someone is treated less favourably because of one or more Protected Characteristics. For example, rejecting an applicant because they would not “fit in” because of their race or sexual orientation would be direct discrimination.
- (ii) Someone is less favourably treated because of their association with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. For example, an employee may be treated less favourably because they have a disabled child.
- (iii) Someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic. For example, an employee may be treated less favourably because they are believed to be homosexual.

Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to a provision, criterion or practice, applied to a group of people, which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a Protected Characteristic, and it cannot be objectively justified. An example might be a minimum height requirement for a job. This is likely to eliminate proportionally more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified, because it is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, then it will be indirectly discriminate on the grounds of sex.

Victimisation and harassment: Discrimination also includes victimisation (suffering a detriment because of action the employee has taken or may take to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard (called a **Protected Act**) and harassment (see the School's Harassment and Bullying Policy for a more detailed explanation of "harassment").

Disability discrimination occurs where an individual is unjustifiably disadvantaged in employment/recruitment for a reason connected with his/her disability unless the discrimination cannot be avoided by making reasonable adjustments. *Examples:*

- A requirement for staff to hold a valid driving licence for a job which involves little travelling.
- Failure to recruit a wheelchair user without first considering whether the working arrangements cannot be avoided by making reasonable adjustments.

We are committed to ensuring that all our staff and applicants for employment are protected from unlawful discrimination in employment.

IMPLEMENTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Our selection procedures are reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are appropriate for achieving our objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.

The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that whatever possible reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with us. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff participate fully in the workplace.

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements which are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Interviews will be conducted on an objective basis and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

In accordance with recommended practice the ethnic, gender, religious, sexual orientation and age composition of our staff and applicants for jobs will be monitored [on an anonymous basis] at all levels. We will follow the safeguards outlined in Data Protection legislation concerning the collation of such sensitive data.

Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff to implement and uphold our commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity.

Working patterns will be reviewed so as to enable us to offer flexible working to staff with carer or childcare responsibilities where possible. Where necessary, special provision will be made for training for staff returning to work following a break for domestic reasons.

Consideration will be given to developing action programmes to promote equality of opportunity. This will include, where appropriate, a programme of positive action to encourage the development of those who are comparatively underrepresented in certain positions so that they can benefit from employment opportunities on equal terms.

All staff have a right to equality of opportunity and dignity at work and a duty to implement this policy. Breach of the equal opportunity and diversity policy is potentially a serious disciplinary matter. Anyone who believes that he or she may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is encouraged to refer to the Employment Manual and is entitled to raise the matter through the Schools grievance procedure.

The Head will have ultimate responsibility for implementation of this policy. The Head will co-ordinate the policy's implementation and can deal with any queries relating to it.

MANAGING EQUALITY

The School does not permit race, culture, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or nationality to be used as criteria.

All forms of discrimination by any person within the School's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing are forbidden in School.

Equality of opportunity and inclusion permeates the whole curriculum and is reviewed regularly.

PUPILS

Our aim is to equip pupils with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference. This will be achieved by adherence to the following principles:

- Discrimination on the basis of race, culture, ethnic origin, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age or ability is not acceptable.
- The objective of the School will be to educate, develop and prepare all our pupils for life whatever their race, culture, ethnic origin, religion, nationality, gender or ability.
- Pupils and teachers will further this by contributing towards a happy and caring environment and by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

PROMOTING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The School is committed to challenging attitudes that promote discrimination, ensuring respect for all and preparing all pupils for life in a culturally diverse society.

Our commitment will be demonstrated through:

- Fostering respect for all groups and individuals within the context of human rights.
- Promoting positive non-discriminatory behaviour.
- Ensuring appropriate support for isolated individuals within the School.
- Ensuring high expectations of all.
- Encouraging links with the wider community.
- Encouraging representation of a wide range of heritages within our curriculum and community.

Every member of our School is responsible for ensuring that this ethos is actively and consistently reflected in practice. We will assess, evaluate and review the impact of our School policies on the life, attitudes and

achievement of all groups amongst our pupils and staff. This will enable pupils and staff to develop a critical awareness of diversity and equality, and to have the confidence and skills to challenge instances of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination.

All pupils and staff will:

- Be equipped to understand the reason, logic and have the sensitivity to find ways of resolving arguments and conflicts.
- Learn from different cultures, backgrounds, faiths and beliefs.
- Recognise the importance of language to a person's identity and belonging.
- Take account of the personal and cultural needs of specific individuals.
- Ensure that pupils have the skills to communicate and defend their own opinions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

This School ensures that:

- Teaching methods and styles take account of the needs of pupils' background experiences.
- Teaching methods encourage positive attitudes to differences in cultural diversity and racial equality.
- Staff receive training (if appropriate) on strategies for helping pupils who have English as an additional language, additionally, learning support is available.
- Mutual trust and respect are fostered amongst pupils and staff so that all in the School community feel valued and safe.
- Classrooms and other common spaces in the School where work is displayed present positive and challenging images that are non-stereotypical and reflect the multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural society.
- Learning is a collaborative and co-operative enterprise.

The School recognises the right of pupils to take time off for religious/cultural observance and action is taken to minimise any disruption to the education of pupils who are absent for religious/cultural observance.

Incidents relating to any protected characteristic will be handled equally seriously and promptly.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria. No job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of his or her race, sex or disability and no applicant or employee is placed at a disadvantage because of their race, age, sex or disability that is not justifiable in Law under the Race, Sex or Disability Discrimination Act.

The School recognises the value of diversity in School Staff and Governors and will ensure that its recruitment policy:

- Does not discriminate against minority ethnic groups
- Takes steps to ensure that cultural bias is removed from recruitment and selection of candidates and that all involved in recruitment and selection understand how to ensure equality

- Does not discriminate on the basis of race, culture, ethnic origin, religion, nationality, gender or sexual orientation

If the Head is notified that any candidate has a disability then reasonable adjustments will be made.

STAFF CAREER STRUCTURE

All staff are encouraged to apply for positions at all levels in the School irrespective of race, culture, ethnic origin, religion, nationality, gender or sexual orientation.

All staff have access to professional development opportunities as appropriate to career progression.

The School recognises:

- The vulnerability of any isolated minority staff and ensures that appropriate support and opportunities are available.
- The awareness of issues related to cultural diversity and staff effectiveness in dealing with issues of race, religion, nationality, gender and sexual orientation is directly addressed in staff induction, training sessions and performance management meetings as appropriate. The School strives for consistency of approach and effective practice.