

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Legal Status:

- Prepared with regard to the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, Sex Discrimination Act 1986, Children's Act 1989 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Applies to:

- Whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Related Documents:

- Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding Children - Child protection
- E Safety
- First Aid
- Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and Procedures
- Risk Assessment
- Prudence Policy
- Safer Recruitment

Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.
- The Proprietor (who is also the Principal) undertakes a review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than two years from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date: September 2016

Mrs Elizabeth McConnell
Principal and Proprietor

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment. It is not contractually binding.

School's position

Pattison College has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

We welcome all applicants to join the school, whatever the background or physical disability of a child. We also seek to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. We take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities. Fundamental to its life as a school community is the belief that all individuals, regardless of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation are of equal value.

So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

The School supports the principles of equal opportunities, fairness and justice, and opposes discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, race, disability, nationality, colour, ethnic or national origins, sexual orientation, age and religious belief. We celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups. We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

Being a committed equal opportunities employer, the School will take every possible step to ensure that employees are treated equally and fairly in respect of these matters, be they staff or pupil, and the School challenges stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs. All pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school, and we are always striving to remove all forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning. All policies and practices will conform to the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline and dismissal, and redundancy.

Anti-Racism

It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident. We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of different cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. Should anyone at our school be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

Special leave for religious reasons will not be unreasonable refused by the School. Applications for such leave should be made in writing to the Principal, giving at least a month's notice. Any special leave granted will be treated as unpaid leave; part-time employees may be given the option of making up lost time if this would benefit the School.

The following are some ideas on how racism can be combated:

- Pupils' names should be pronounced correctly and nicknames should be the prerogative of the nicknamed.
- Attention should be paid to spelling names correctly at all times.
- Literature in school should include names from a wide variety of cultures.

- Racist language must be categorically rejected.
- Racial stereotypes should never be used or allowed. Those in classical literature must be made explicit to pupils and contextualised.
- Bi-lingual pupils and parents must be allowed to nominate an interpreter when necessary.
- Lack of fluency in the English language should not be used as an indication of academic potential.

Racial and Cultural Diversity

Pattison College fully acknowledges its moral duty (as related to the United Kingdom's Race Relations Act, 1976, Section 1) to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial groups and it positively welcomes any communal or educational opportunities afforded by the school's cultural and religious diversity.

All members of the School (whether of the student body, teaching or support staff) deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and with a sensitive understanding of their religious, cultural and racial differences and of the consequences thereof.

Racially abusive language by students or staff will not be tolerated. If racial, religious or cultural elements are discovered to be present in incidents of bullying, these must be acknowledged and challenged. Racially abusive language by staff or students will be a matter for disciplinary action.

Religious Diversity

Mindful of our tradition within the Christian community, we are also fully committed to the fundamental ethical principles of:

- Consideration for others
- Awareness of the importance and celebration of each and every individual within the School community
- The need to respond generously to the needs of those less fortunate than ourselves.

Just as cultural and religious diversity within the School community is to be valued, as a school with a Christian ethos, we will celebrate Christian festivals and events such as Christmas and Easter, and our assemblies will usually be based on Christianity, and the Lord's Prayer is often said.

Sex

- No pupil should be excluded from receiving the curriculum on the basis of their sex.
- No privileges must be reserved for pupils on the basis of their sex.

Class

- Assumptions should not be made about pupils' home circumstances or potential based on social class.
- Pupils must be allowed to talk in their natural dialect as and when they need to.
- Direct speech in children's work may reflect dialect, particularly in the lower school before punctuation differentiates speech in written work.

School and Classroom Organisation

School lists are organised chronologically or alphabetically, rather than by gender (unless this is required by an outside agency for a particular purpose).

Equal opportunities will be considered when grouping children for activities. This may involve special specific grouping to ensure that every child participates fully.

Each child will be given opportunities to exercise responsibility within the classroom or the school, with care taken regarding stereotyping of roles. We see boys and girls as both carers and leaders. When lining up, boys and girls are mixed (within their own class).

Unwanted behaviour: If you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised in breach of the principle of equal opportunities set out above, you are entitled to complain using the procedures set out below.

Definitions

Discrimination: treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds of their sex, marital status, race, disability, sexual orientation, age and religious belief.

Harassment: any unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can be persistent or isolated and includes behaviour which induces anger, stress, anxiety, fear or sickness on the part of the person being harassed. It can be physical, verbal, direct or indirect and can include gestures, intimidation, unwelcome remarks, suggestions, propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter. In addition, non-verbal harassment can include offensive literature, pictures, graffiti, isolation or non-co-operation and unwelcome physical conduct. The school will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying; such behaviour is totally unacceptable and the School looks to support any employee who is suffering from harassment. The School strives to provide a neutral working environment in which no-one feels threatened or intimidated.

Victimisation: treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds that that he or she has brought discrimination proceedings, given evidence or information regarding discrimination proceedings or alleged discrimination or because he or she intends to do any of these acts.

Informal resolution

Stage 1: You should speak or write to the individual concerned informing him or her that their behaviour is unwelcome.

Stage 2: If the unwanted behaviour continues, you should ask the Principal to speak to the person concerned. If the person concerned is the Principal, you should ask the Proprietors to speak to the Principal.

Stage 3: If the unwanted behaviour continues, you should keep a record of any relevant incidents and consider taking formal action as set out below.

Formal procedure

Formal Notification: If you feel that the informal procedure has not stopped the unwanted behaviour or that the behaviour is too serious to be resolved by using that procedure, you should follow the formal parts of the School's Grievance Procedure. You will be entitled to an appeal against any decision in accordance with the Grievance Procedure. Under the Grievance Procedure, any grievance will be investigated thoroughly by an impartial member of management. Where possible, the member of staff complaining of harassment or discrimination will be kept anonymous. Any mischievous, vexatious or malicious claims of harassment of any nature will be regarded as gross misconduct.

The role of the Principal

- It is the Principal's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy.
- It is the Principal's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Principal ensures that all recruitment and selection processes give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Principal promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.
- The Principal treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

The Role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child. When selecting classroom material, the class teacher should pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, History topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In Geography topics the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

All our teachers challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents in the school Behaviour Books, and draw them to the attention of the Principal.

Grievances following termination of your employment

Procedure: If you wish to raise a grievance in writing following the termination of your employment, you should follow the relevant provisions of the School's Grievance Procedure

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Principal to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities policy. The Principal monitors the progress of pupils of minority groups and compares it to the progress made by other pupils at the school, monitors the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against and takes any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils into serious consideration.