



The Ecclesbourne School
“Learning together for the future”

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

April 2022

1. Aim of the Policy:

The Ecclesbourne School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff, students and job applicants. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make the best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit only.

We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/belief, sexual orientation, maternity, pregnancy, age or race. (Equality Act 2010)

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat students, parents, governors, third party organisations and former staff members.

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy so that they always treat colleagues with dignity, and do not discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.

2. The Legal Framework:

This policy is consistent with:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

3. Links to other school policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Complaints Policy
- Staff Discipline and Grievance Policy

4. Who is responsible for this policy?

The Governing Body has the responsibility for ensuring that the school operates within the legal framework for equality and for implementing the policy throughout the school. In addition, each member of the school community is responsible for preventing unfair discrimination, harassment or victimisation which it is within their control to prevent; and for challenging or reporting such inappropriate behaviour if it occurs.

All members of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. SLT are trained in equal opportunities recruitment and selection.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the school complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Meet its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish equality objectives.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans.
- Ensure that the recording and reporting of equality and diversity data is sufficiently scrutinised.
- Ensure that the school's Admissions Policy does not discriminate in any way.
- Ensure equal opportunities in its staff recruitment and promotion practices, professional development programmes and in membership of the Governing Body.
- Provide information in appropriate and accessible formats.
- Ensure that the necessary disciplinary measures are in place to enforce this policy.

The Head teacher will:

- Implement the policy and its procedures.
- Ensure that all staff members have appropriate knowledge on diversity to be able to fulfil their role.
- Ensure that all parents, visitors and contractors are aware of and are in compliance with the provisions of this policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any case of discriminatory practice.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record and report prejudice-related incidents.
- Address any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with the school's policy.
- Produce a report to the Governing Body on the progress of implementing the provisions of this Policy every three years.

Employees will:

- Address any minor issues of harassment or bullying in the school and report any major breaches of the Policy to the Head Teacher.
- Record and report prejudice-related incidents.
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and the school's culture.
- Promote equality and good relations, and not harass or discriminate in any way.

- Monitor students' progress and academic needs to ensure the appropriate support is in place.
- Keep up to date with equality legislation and its application by attending the appropriate training.

Students will:

- Not discriminate or harass any other member of the school community.
- Actively encourage equality and diversity in the school by contributing their cultural experiences and values.
- Report any incidences of bullying or harassment, whether to themselves or to others, to a member of staff.
- Abide by all the school's policies, procedures and expectations.

6. Our Equality Objectives

The school has stated its equality objectives on its website, and these will be updated yearly to ensure the needs of all stakeholders are met. The following objectives have been set for 2021/2023:

- To ensure that staff and governors are aware of current legislation surrounding equality and diversity and understand the school's responsibility.
- To promote cultural understanding and awareness of tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups in our school community.
- To promote mental health awareness and develop appropriate interventions where necessary.
- Actively close gaps in achievement between students for all groups of students, especially students eligible for pupil premium, students with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and students from minority ethnic groups.
- Continue to improve accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities including access to specialist teaching areas.
- Monitor the incidence of the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by students in our school.
- To ensure the curriculum represents a diverse culture and society and encourages tolerance and respect.

5. Recruitment and Staffing

The School will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for its recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.

The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

The School will maintain a neutral working environment in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated.

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equal opportunity policy. We will endeavour to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not unlawfully discriminate in making these decisions.

Job descriptions will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunity policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications and appointments will be made on suitability to meet the personnel specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

Short listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person where possible. Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job.

We will not disqualify any applicant because they are unable to complete an application form unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other staff. The interview panel should, whenever possible, have a mix of members by gender. Promotion and advancement will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

We are required by law to ensure that all staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, will be expected to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Border Agency.

Staff training needs will be identified through the performance management process. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made based on merit.

Workforce composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Staff responsible for appointments will receive training as necessary in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

6. Breaches of this policy

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Staff Discipline and Grievance Policy. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter with your direct line manager or SLT link.

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 our Disciplinary Procedure.

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. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

7. Parents/Carers

The School's commitment to equal opportunities and gender equality will be made explicit to parents via the school website and forms part of the Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy.

8. Curriculum

The Ecclesbourne School will strive to ensure the curriculum is equally available to all students. Further, the curriculum will be presented in such a way as to ensure that positive images of all groups are presented to students as appropriate.

Equality of opportunity does not mean that all students will study all subjects on offer, but rather, that all students should have an equal chance to study any subject. Continuous care will be taken in the structuring of the timetable to ensure that this choice remains real.

The school shall ensure that written, audible and visual material is equally suitable and accessible for use by all students. This policy will be adhered to throughout all subject areas.

9. Discipline

The School will continue to ensure that it does not exhibit differential expectations or employ differential sanctions or rewards regarding behaviour considered acceptable.

Students will be given the opportunity to understand how issues of equality relate to them, appropriate to age and ability and be expected to act in accordance with the policy.

10. Monitor and Review

We will review our objectives in relation to any changes in legislation or our school profile at least every four years.