



Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy

Equality Policy

July 2017

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy is committed to equality of opportunity and aims to be an academy where everyone:

- is respected and respects others
- takes part in the life of the academy
- achieves to his or her potential
- develops skills essential to life
- exercises choice

We believe that no-one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of:

race, disability, physical ability, age, health, income, religion/belief, colour, ethnic origin or nationality, marital status, gender or transgender, sexuality, nationality, trade union or professional association membership.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that unlawful discrimination (either direct or indirect) and other undesirable behaviour, including harassment or victimisation, does not occur (as outlined in law under the Equality Act 2010).

In our academy, we recognise that this applies to:

- all prospective and existing employees, students and governors, girls, women and men
- people from different ethnic backgrounds, travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
- people of different religions and from different faith backgrounds or those who have no faith
- people of all sexual orientations and transgendered people
- students who have English as an additional language (EAL)
- students with special educational needs
- children in public care
- other children, such as sick children, young carers, those children from families under stress, pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers
- any student and young person who is at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

EMPLOYMENT

Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy is a converter academy in Birmingham. It is committed to fair employment policies and practices for every member of staff, including part-time, agency and supply. This also includes opportunities for professional development.

The aim is to create an environment where Governors and Employees:

- Apply equality and fairness in employment practices. All decisions including advertising of vacancies, shortlisting, selection, induction, appraisal, training, development, promotion, and pay will be based on an objective and fair assessment of need.
- Draw the attention of management or the appropriate trade union to suspected acts or practices which affect equal opportunities.

The academy will ensure that all staff (including Governors) involved in recruitment are trained in equality practices and that procedures are fair, honest and open. The academy will monitor staff recruitment, retention and career development by ethnicity, gender, disability and age.

All staff have a right to challenge any decision or action which they believe to be in breach of these principles. All complaints relating to employment must be made at first informally and if necessary the next step should be through the formal Grievance procedure. Any member of staff who deliberately or knowingly contravenes the policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action. All complaints are assumed to be made in good faith unless there is evidence to the contrary. If however, an accusation is found to have been made maliciously, disciplinary action may be taken against the person making the false complaint.

SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Gender

The academy is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on gender, including gender change, sexual orientation or marital status. This will include any unequal treatment based on pregnancy/maternity.

Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic origin)/Religion or Belief

The academy is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, colour, religion/belief, ethnic or national origin. There may be situations in the academy which require special consideration and where a genuine occupational qualification may apply, for example to justify the employment of a particular sex or someone of one particular race or ethnic origin. However these situations will be unusual and exceptional and will be discussed with the staff in advance.

The academy is further opposed to any act of victimisation or sexual harassment against any member of staff on the grounds of their gender or change of gender, colour, ethnic or national origins or religion/belief. Such action will be investigated in accordance with the academy's procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action.

Disability

The academy is opposed to any discrimination against people with disabilities based on assumptions on their ability or otherwise to carry out the duties of a post in the school. All candidates with disabilities who meet the essential criteria for a post will be considered for short listing. Usually the academy will short list up to 6 candidates for any one job. Decisions on shortlisting will be based on the application form and letter only judged against the essential criteria only. Provision will be made for adjustments to the working conditions or environment where this is practicable.

The definition of disability is “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. The impairment must have lasted or will last at least 12 months or last the rest of an individual’s life. This does not mean that people with “disabilities” do not have “abilities” that are valuable within a working environment.

Age

The academy is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination, based on age towards any employee before, during or after employment. All employees have the right to be treated fairly whatever age, and not be subjected to any practice, which may disadvantage because of being a particular age, unless objectively justified. The academy must not subject any employee to harassment that violates an employee’s dignity, nor victimisation because they have made or intend to make a complaint of discrimination on the grounds of age. This right continues after the working relationship ends.

Membership of Recognised Associations

The academy also recognises its statutory obligation not to discriminate on the grounds of:

- Trade Union
- Political Affiliation
- Professional Association

Positive Action

Handsworth Wood Girls’ Academy recognises that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality of opportunity exists in the school. It will therefore give full consideration to measures of positive action which may assist in achieving the aims of this policy.

These measures may include:

- Encouraging applications from specific groups which are under-represented in the academy
- Supporting training measures for under-represented groups
- The use of job-sharing arrangements wherever practicable
- Reasonable consideration given to the possibility of career breaks for carers to assist with family commitments
- Support young people who are in a caring role

Dignity at work

The academy is committed to the principles of dignity at work for all staff in. This includes the right to be treated with respect by all managers and colleagues. The Staff Code of Conduct and the Teachers’ Standards fully explain expectations for all staff. Any person who fails to act in accordance with this principle and these policies will be investigated in accordance with the academy’s procedure and may lead to formal disciplinary action.

Training

The principle outlined in relation to fair and equal treatment will also apply to selection for training. Details of training opportunities will be made available to all staff, who will be given the opportunity to request training on courses which they believe to be relevant to their role and personal development as identified through the annual performance management cycle. There can, of course, be no guarantee that all such requests will be met. Priorities for training allocation will be based on the school's overall development plan and budget allocations.

RACE EQUALITY

In line with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy fully understands the need to promote racial harmony and to plan opportunities for combating racism in our policies, procedures and curriculum. We are a very diverse academy with a rich cultural heritage representing cultures from across the world.

We believe that our academy must be a safe place for everyone and we are committed to the principles outlined in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and to the recommendations it makes.

We are committed to:

- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination
- promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations

Tackling racial discrimination

We will tackle racial discrimination by monitoring the outcomes of opportunities at our academy and by dealing with and reporting racist incidents.

We accept the definition of a racist incident adopted by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and the LA:

A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on ethnicity will be reported to the police and subsequently investigated using the academy's usual disciplinary procedures, and racism will be directly challenged. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence. Our procedure for dealing with racist incidents will be made known to everyone at or connected with our school through induction, regular training and feedback. Racist incident report forms will be completed to help the academy monitor incidents and take appropriate action, with a summary of incidents being reported termly to Governors. In the event of a member of staff being implicated the incident will be investigated in accordance with the academy's procedure.

Promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations

These aspects of our race equality work will largely be done through seeking out as many opportunities as we can to celebrate cultural diversity, promoting positive images and respect for our own and other communities, individuals and groups, and planning within the curriculum to reflect diversity and engage with teaching about discrimination and race equality.

GENDER

We believe that girls should have equal access to all aspects of academy life, including the curriculum, subject choices and extra-curricular activities. It may be necessary for students to receive different treatment in order to ensure equality of opportunity and the school will pursue strategies to ensure that girls achieve to their full potential. The academy will examine its practices to ensure that girls are given opportunities to achieve and that stereotyped expectations do not limit the experiences available. Faculties are actively encouraged to plan together to break down stereotypical expectations. Through our regular staff training we will raise awareness and use of appropriate teaching and learning styles.

We will promote approaches which provide equality of opportunity, including:

- taking account of the interests and concerns of students by using a range of activities and contexts for work and allowing a variety of interpretations and outcomes, particularly in English, Science, Design and Technology, ICT, Art, Music and PE

Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on gender, transgender or gender reassignment will be investigated and, where proven, directly challenged. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence. The academy's approach will adhere to the Gender Equality Duty (in line with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975) and take account with regards to gender identity of the Recognition Act 2004, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003 and Gender Recognition Act 2004.

DISABILITY

Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy is fully committed to the duties placed on schools in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy accepts the definition of a disabled person as someone who has:

"a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 identifies a number of conditions such as cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis which are deemed to be disabilities from the time of diagnosis.

For many years the academy has worked actively to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage participation by disabled people in the life of the academy. We promote disability equality in our policies, procedures and curriculum even if this results in more favourable treatment within the parameters of 'reasonable adjustment'; this policy details steps to help the academy meet these requirements, and further updates to this policy will be made as guidance is received.

We will consider the needs of all people in the academy including:

- Students who may be disabled but not have a statement of special educational need or EHC plan nor be on any stage of special needs assessment.
- Teachers and other school staff.

- Governors.
- Professionals from other agencies.
- Parents.
- All visitors to the academy.

In addition, the academy will ensure that discrimination does not occur and that disabled people will not be placed at substantial disadvantage compared to others who are not disabled. We will seek to support all students and employees with health conditions or resulting disabilities whether or not they are covered by the Equality Act 2010.

We will ensure that our policies, in particular in relation to admissions procedures, do not place disabled students at a disadvantage.

The academy will audit the academy for facilities and access for disabled people and for access to buildings, facilities and the curriculum. It will maintain updated written information on facilities and services and produce a plan to develop accessibility which is regularly updated.

Teachers will take specific action to enable the effective participation of students with disabilities by:

- planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for satisfactory completion of tasks
- planning opportunities, when necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum
- identifying aspects of their programmes of study and attainment targets that may present specific difficulties for individuals.

The academy's approach to Disability includes its formal responsibilities within the Disability Equality Duty (in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, amended 2005).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The general duties of the academy in relation to equality of opportunity are the responsibility of all members of staff and people involved in working at the academy.

Specific responsibilities should include:

- The Headteacher and SLT are responsible with the Governors of the Leadership Committee for developing and monitoring of the Action Plan arising out of this Policy.
- The Deputy Headteacher (Student Welfare) is the designated person for coordinating the school's response to and reporting onwards of racist incidents report forms.
- The Associate Headteacher (Curriculum & Staffing) is responsible for ensuring that induction and training in equal opportunities work is available to all members of staff.
- The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the priorities in the Academy Improvement Plan. All staff who teach at this academy and all support staff who help facilitate learning are responsible for promoting racial harmony and preparing students for living in a diverse and increasingly interdependent society.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

A range of information, including quantitative and qualitative data, will be used. It will include data by all of the protected characteristics of gender, age, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation (where appropriate data is obtainable):

Data will be used to inform planning, identify priorities and to ensure the academy's commitment to equal opportunities goes from policy to practice to improve outcomes.

*In addition to the above monitoring, as part of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) Schools are required to monitor staff by racial group:

- staff in post
- applicants for employment, training and promotion

The data from the above monitoring is to be produced annually by the academy.

The Policy will be reviewed every three years unless there is a change to Legislation:

- The Director of Finance and Operations will report to the Finance Committee on access, accommodation and resources.
- The Headteacher will report on staffing matters including recruitment.
- The Associate Head (Curriculum) and Deputy Head (Student Welfare) will report on admissions, curriculum and equal opportunities monitoring.

Policy signed off by: Mike Ewins

Vice Chair of Governors

Date: 10 July 2017

Review date for school policy: June 2021

Person responsible for policy: Headteacher