

Equal Opportunities Policy

Aims

Hollygirt School recognises that direct and indirect discrimination might take place and therefore sees the need for a positive and effective Equal Opportunities Policy.

- We will promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the school, both for those adults within the community of the school and for all pupils.
- We seek to develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities.
- We will promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities
- We will enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others.

Legal Background

The main statutory provisions covering discrimination are the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Special Educational Needs and Regulations 2014

Also relevant are:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 1983
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000
- The Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality

The school's values, aims and objectives all accord with the equal treatment of people promoted by these laws and regulations, and the rights enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Responsibilities

The Trustees will monitor and review the working of the policy and procedures.

The Headmistress has responsibility for the Equal Opportunities Policy, and for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents.

The Headmistress will present general reports, statistics and incident reports to the Trustees.

The Deputy Head is responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum.

All staff are responsible for following the policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the Headmistress or Deputy Head.

Employment of Staff

Appointments

- Job specifications will all carry a statement that this school is an equal opportunities employer, and welcomes applications from all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of sex, race, religion, disability or age.
- Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only, i.e. skills, qualifications and experience in selection for recruitment.
- The school will make and keep information about the sex, ethnic background and age of candidates for appointments, and actual appointments.

Staff Development

- All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.
- All recruits to Hollygirt School will be offered induction training which will include a reference to the organisations' Equal Opportunities Policy.
- People becoming disabled whilst in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs or to be considered for redeployment if that is necessary.

Appointment of Ex-Offenders

Hollygirt is committed to the fair treatment of its staff or users of its services, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, religious or political beliefs, age, sexual orientation or offending background.

Hollygirt School uses the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of **all applicants**, as all work in positions of trust and have substantial access to children. An enhanced check is made on all those working in a paid or voluntary capacity.

The school is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aims to select people on the basis of their individual skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and where appropriate, qualifications and training. Therefore, ex-offenders will be considered for employment on their individual merits and he/she will not be refused employment unless the nature of the conviction has some relevance to the job for which he/she has applied.

All applicants must declare any cautions or convictions both spent and unspent on their application form. If they have been found guilty of any offence by the Court (even if conditionally discharged or placed on probation) this must also be declared. 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 could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Any matter revealed in a disclosure will be discussed with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence.

Pupils

- Pupils have equal access to the curriculum throughout each key stage, and non-compulsory courses, according to aptitude and ability.
- The school is committed to full educational inclusion.
- All subjects will have equality of opportunity at their core and make explicit references within schemes of work.
- The school rules clearly and explicitly forbid the verbalisation or vocalisation of discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religious, gender, sexuality and ability/disability.
- Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity is specifically taught throughout the curriculum including the 'Issues' programme.

Racist, Sexist or Homophobic Bullying

- All staff have a legal duty not to bully or otherwise harass other staff.
- Where staff come across incidents involving racist or homophobic bullying they must report these incidents to the Headmistress or Deputy Head. All incidents of racist or homophobic bullying amongst pupils will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately.

Requests for Variation in School Uniform

The Headmistress will consider any written requests from parents for variations in school uniform on religious grounds or for transgender pupils that are consistent with the school's ethos and its policy on Health and Safety.

Administration

- Where practicable, venues for meetings, teaching and learning will take account of the needs of all participants.

Documents

- Language used in documents will reflect and promote equal opportunities and font style and size will take account of the full range of readers.
- Access to documentation will include alternative formats such as tape, disk or large print.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Unchanged August 2020