



DAWN HOUSE SCHOOL – STAFF HANDBOOK	
Policy Title: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY	
Section: E	Policy No: E.2
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Equal Opportunities Statement of Commitment

The School Advisory Board and the school are committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins) sexual orientation, religion or belief, because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as ‘protected characteristics.’

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual’s self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

All members of the school community are treated as individuals and their particular cultural, dietary and language needs are considered and addressed.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school’s ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school’s equal opportunities policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Aims and objectives

The School Advisory Board and school, through the Equal Opportunities Policy, aim to:

- Carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (*including Equality Act 2010*)

- Reinforce the school's position as a provider of high-quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities;
- Ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda.
- Establish good people management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisation response.
- Achieve a staffing composition that reflects the composition of the wider community.
- Ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil.
- Ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for and appreciation of one another as individuals.
- Adopting an inclusive attitude and ensuring that the whole school community understands what inclusive behaviour looks like in the school and how this aligns with the school's values.
- Ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g., complaints relating to staff may be investigated under the disciplinary, grievance or anti-harassment procedure as appropriate). All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

Policy and planning

Equal opportunities implications, including all protected characteristics, will be considered and recorded (see appendix C) whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

Employment matters

Appointments: in all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

Family-friendly policies: the governing body/school is a family-friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, flexitime where appropriate, carers' leave provision).

HIV/AIDS

The governing body/school recognises that people with HIV/AIDS suffer not only from the purely medical effects of the infection but may also experience prejudice and misunderstanding leading to unfair discrimination and victimisation.

The school therefore will ensure that people with HIV/AIDS do not experience unfair treatment in relation to employment, as pupils or as other members of the school community. The school will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment and pupil admissions set out in Appendix B.

Transsexual employees and gender reassignment

The Equality Act 2010 now expressly covers discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment. The school will respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community. The wider Speech and Language UK organisation is committed to tackling any discrimination that is based on gender choice or sexual orientation (*see Speech and Language UK's policy*)

Training and development

The success of the Equal Opportunities Policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training. The senior leadership group will ensure there are regular CPD opportunities to develop staff understanding of equal opportunities and keep abreast of current issues and legislation. The Governing Body will receive regular updates on CPD undertaken.

The school will endeavour to:

- Enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status.
- Provided equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, based on their assessed training needs.
- Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians, and pupils can make.
- Equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, discriminatory practices, and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally.

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self-development, encouragement, and motivation. The school places great importance on the relationship between professional team leaders and their teams and will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of the school's performance management system.

Pupils and the curriculum

The school follows the School Advisory Board and Education Committee pupil admission policy that does not permit sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins) sexual orientation, religion or belief or disability (without compromising the school's specialist designation) to be used as criteria for admission. The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin.

The Education Reform Act 1988 stated that 'the school curriculum should reflect the culturally diverse society to which pupils belong and of which they will become adult members. Pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. Equality of opportunity should inform the whole of the curriculum and be reviewed regularly.

Equal opportunities issues will be taken account of in planning the curriculum. This should be reflected in curriculum planning documentation.

Part three: Monitoring, review, and evaluation

- The Education Committee has a duty to ensure that policies are regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Monitoring is an essential aspect of this policy, as it should provide important information by which the school can measure its performance against its aims and objectives. Statistical information arising from the screening can also enable the governors and senior leaders to detect where potential or actual imbalances exist and to take steps to correct them.

Monitoring with respect to employment will be undertaken by the HR department of the organisation in the following areas on by age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins) sexual orientation, religion or belief and marital status.

- Composition of the school staff.
- Recruitment trends.
- Take up of training opportunities.
- Promotion patterns.
- Use of complaints procedure.
- Use of grievance, disciplinary, harassment etc.
- Use of sanctions.
- Take-up of family-friendly policies, e.g., flexible working arrangements.
- Exit interview can also provide further helpful information and feedback.
- The Education Committee will ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

Appendix A: Discrimination, victimisation, and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins) sexual orientation, religion or belief, because someone is married or in a civil partnership is illegal. However, for the school community, discrimination is also unacceptable of any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement. Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures.

There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

1. **Direct discrimination:** this means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex or any other protected characteristic.
2. **Indirect discrimination:** this means applying a requirement or condition which cannot be justified to all groups, but which has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of that group which can comply is smaller than the proportion of the group(s) which can comply with it.
3. **Victimisation:** this occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under the Equal Pay Act, Equality Act or Employment Equality Regulation's, for example, by bringing forward proceeding or giving evidence or information.
4. **Harassment:** harassment can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it.

Harassment may involve any of the following:

- Physical contact or violence.
- Offensive humiliating and intimidating remarks or actions.
- Exclusion from participation in job-related or classroom-related discussions, training or social or other events.
- Unfair work allocation.
- Unjust or excessive or humiliating criticism of performance.
- Offensive signs or notices.
- Graffiti.
- Repeated demands or requests for sexual favours.

These are merely examples and not an exhaustive list. Whatever the form, the school will provide support for any member of the school community, pupil or staff member who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

Appendix B: HIV/AIDS guidelines

The SAB and school will:

- Ensure that job applicants, who are deemed to be medically fit to perform the job for which they have applied, are not denied an offer of work solely because they are HIV positive. In arriving at the decisions, the school's normal recruitment criteria will be observed including the normal medical procedures.
- Ensure, where possible, that resources are available to support employees or pupils with AIDS or other major health problems associated with HIV infection. The school's normal rules and procedures regarding ill health will apply in such cases. Equally the school will make appropriate arrangements for the provision of counselling (i.e. by referral to external agencies).
- Give positive consideration to applications for unpaid leave for those with responsibility for caring for people with AIDS related conditions in accordance with carers' leave arrangements.
- Treat any breaches of confidentiality as a serious matter to be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary (or other appropriate) procedure.
- Provide appropriate training in relation to AIDS in order to combat fears and prejudice and to enable the school community as a whole to function without risk to health.

Appendix C

School Advisory Board's Policy Screening Form

The terms of reference for all school advisory board committees includes the need to consider Equality and Diversity issues as required by the Equality Act 2010. Equality Impact Assessments should undertaken as and when school policies are reviewed. This form is intended to assist with the screening of any policies and to record the outcome of the screening. On completion forms should be retained and filed with the relevant policy.

The screening procedure should lead to one of these conclusions:

- The policy being screened has an insignificant impact on equality of opportunity
- The policy being screened has (or is likely to have) a significant impact on equality of opportunity. *Policies falling into this category will need to be considered further and may require an Equality Impact Assessment*

1.1 Policy to be screened:

1.1 Title of Policy to be screened

1.2 Brief Description of policy to be screened

1.3 Aims of policy to be screened

1.4 Committee responsible for screening policy

1.5 Committee members carrying out screening

2. Screening Analysis

When proceeding to screening there are four criteria to be considered: listed 2.1-2.4 below. You are asked to consider the question / criteria in relation to groups with protected characteristics and to answer the question accordingly.

Please do not consider 'don't know' an easy option. In cases where you do not know and you do not have any data on file, you will need to make a pragmatic judgement based on experience as to whether the policy you are screening may have an impact on any of the categories. If your judgement is that the policy may have an adverse impact on any of the groups ie it affects them differently and less favourably than other groups you should seek to obtain evidence.

It should be noted that evidence can be qualitative ie drawn from the experience of individuals from their perspective as well as quantitative. Where there is little or no evidence and common sense indicates a differential impact may be expected you should refer this to SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UKcentral office for further advice.

2.1 Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups? If so please indicate below:

CATEGORY	Yes	No	Don't Know
Disability			
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation (heterosexual / lesbian / gay / bisexual)			
Gender reassignment			
Pregnancy or maternity			
Marital Status			
Age			

If YES give details

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2.2 Is there any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?

CATEGORY	Yes	No	Don't Know
Disability			
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation (heterosexual / lesbian / gay / bisexual)			
Gender reassignment			
Pregnancy or maternity			
Marital status			
Age			

If YES give details:

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2.3 Is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or better community relations by altering the policy or working with others in SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UK or the wider community?

CATEGORY	Yes	No	Don't Know
Disability			
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation (heterosexual / lesbian / gay / bisexual)			
Gender reassignment			
Pregnancy or maternity			
Marital status			
Age			

If YES give details:

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2.4 Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems which are specific to them?

CATEGORY	Yes	No	Don't Know
Disability			
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation (lesbian / gay / bisexual)			
Gender reassignment			
Pregnancy or maternity			
Marital status			
Age			

If YES give details:

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If the answers to ANY of the questions in respect to the categories is YES Governors will have to consider whether the policy has a significant impact on equality of opportunity and therefore be subject to an equality impact assessment.

If the answers to ALL the questions in section 2 is NO an equality impact assessment is not required.

If the answers to any of the questions is DON'T KNOW and common sense and experience indicate a differential impact may be expected Governors should refer to ICAN

3. Equality Impact Assessment Recommendation

Equality Impact Assessment procedures are confined to those policies considered likely to have significant implications for equality of opportunity.

3.1 If screening has indicated that a policy is having an adverse differential impact, how would you categorise it?

Please tick:

Significant impact	
Low impact	

3.2 Do you consider that this policy needs to be submitted to a full equality impact assessment?

Yes	
No	

If NO but the policy has significant impact, please give reasons for your recommendation:

Please ensure a copy of this completed form is attached to the policy following completion of screening.