

HOPEWELL SCHOOL

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy statement

Hopewell School is committed to encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination in both its role as an employer and as a provider of educational services.

We aim to create a culture that respects and values each others' differences, that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximize their true potential. We are committed wherever practicable to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the local community in which we operate and serve.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and in the provision of services and not to discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age.

Hopewell School opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All employees and volunteers, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, volunteering or any other benefit will be on the basis of skills and ability.

Principles

Hopewell School commits:

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all employees and volunteers are recognized and valued
- To create a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- To ensure training, development and progression opportunities are available to all
- To promote equality in the workplace, which it believes is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- To regularly review all employment and volunteering practices and procedures to ensure that no job applicants, staff or volunteers are treated less favourably than others
- To treat breaches of the equality policy seriously and to take disciplinary action when required
- To provide information and training to all employees and volunteers so that they are fully aware of the issues relating to Equality and Diversity and their responsibilities relating to it
- To monitor and review the policy annually

Procedures

Positive action

Hopewell School will act positively in using the Equality and Diversity Policy as a means of making public its commitment to provide equal opportunities to all present and future employees and volunteers.

Hopewell School encourages all employees to apply for suitable opportunities and to seek training for promotion or in particular skills.

Any form of discrimination by an employee or volunteer is treated very seriously and where appropriate will be dealt with using the Disciplinary Procedure.

Positive Discrimination

Positive discrimination is illegal and the recruitment of "quotas" of particular groups is also illegal. Discrimination in selection to achieve or secure a balance of persons of different racial groups is also not allowed under the Race Relations Act 1976.

There is an exception, however, which may be appropriate for certain posts in Hopewell School. i.e. when a genuine occupational qualification (GOQ) is necessary or desirable for a particular group or sex. Both the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 allow these exceptions.

Recruitment

Job descriptions and person specifications

Job descriptions and Person specifications are prepared for all posts. The job description indicates the responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the job holder. The Person Specification describes the qualifications, skills and abilities required. A list of preferred criteria may also be prepared. Care will be taken to ensure that neither the description nor the specifications are discriminatory on the grounds quoted in the Policy Statement.

Hopewell School will use a range of advertising methods in order to attract the widest pool of appropriate applicants. Vacancies for new and existing jobs will normally be advertised internally and externally. All our advertising will:

- Contain the statement "Hopewell is an Equal Opportunities Employer"
- Ensure that we do not exclude, discriminate against, or discourage any particular group from applying nor make it difficult for any one from such a group to apply
- Refer to the job description and person specification in order to give information about the requirements of the job
- Give clear instructions about obtaining the application pack

Applications and short listing

All applicants will be asked to fill out an application form which contains only information essential and relevant to the appointment. Different formats will be made available.

Applications will be short listed by at least two people. Short listing will be performed on the basis of objective criteria and the extent to which candidates have shown, in the application form that they meet the required Person Specification, and carry out tasks and responsibilities required of the post holder. Formal qualifications and standards of literacy and numeracy will only be taken into account when they are recognized as necessary for a particular job.

Short listed candidates will be invited to an interview. Staff responsible for short-listing, interviewing and selection of candidates will be:

- Clearly informed of selection criteria and the need for their consistent application
- Given guidance on the effects which generalized assumptions about people from groups quoted in the Policy Statement can have on selection decisions
- Made aware of the possible misunderstandings that can occur between persons from different cultural backgrounds

Interviewing

All interviewing will be carried out by a minimum of 2 people.

The questions asked will seek to gather objective evidence in support of the job description and person specification. The same questions will be asked of all candidates applying for a job.

Disabled candidates will be asked if they need support during the interview process or adjustments should they be offered the position. Notes will be taken and evidence gathered against the job description and person specification. All candidates will be asked about their eligibility to work.

All candidates will be scored against the job description and person specification. The highest scoring applicants will be offered the position.

Offers will be made to successful candidates, subject to satisfactory references and DBS checks. All unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the result of their application and offered brief feedback.

DBS Policy

For all positions we will request enhanced disclosures for all employees and volunteers. This requirement will be clearly stated in the application pack.

Ex –Offenders

Hopewell School will not discriminate against ex offenders with unspent convictions, unless required to do so because of the nature of the post. All applications will be considered on an individual basis.

Induction and training

All employees and volunteers will be required to follow an appropriate induction process to ensure they are equipped for the job. All employees and volunteers will receive training on the Equality and Diversity Policy, procedures and action plan as part of their induction.

Recruitment Monitoring

All applicants will be asked to complete an anonymous monitoring form as part of the application pack. The monitoring form will monitor age, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, marital status, disability.

Flexible working

Hopewell School will consider all requests for flexible working arrangements constructively and creatively, taking account of balancing the needs of the organization with the needs of the individual employee.

Hopewell School will offer a range of flexible working arrangements and will work collaboratively to identify solutions that suit both the individual and the organization.

Promotion

All vacancies will be advertised internally and externally, where appropriate.

Training

All employees and volunteers have access to a wide range of training opportunities which are regularly circulated.

Training opportunities will be discussed during performance management sessions and as needs arise. Selection for training will be made on the basis of both the needs of the business and the personal development of the individual.

Special needs and requirements for people with disabilities or caring responsibilities will be taken into account whenever practicable and methods sought to help them overcome disabilities in taking up training opportunities.

Staff with management, recruitment and selection responsibilities will be given guidance in the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure that they understand their position in law and under Hopewell's Policy.

Induction training will include an explanation of the Equal Opportunities Policy and a requirement to undertake formal training within the probationary period of employment.

Terms and conditions

Annual Leave and Religious Holidays

Hopewell School will not ask about an employee's religion and will not discriminate against anyone wishing to celebrate their festivals. Employees are required to use part of their annual holiday entitlement to cover time off for these and must follow the normal holiday booking procedure.

Cultural and Religious Needs

Where employees or volunteers have particular cultural and religious needs, Hopewell School will consider whether it is reasonably practicable to meet these needs while maintaining the efficiency of the business.

Hopewell School will make genuine efforts to recruit people with disabilities and take reasonable steps to make the workplace and individual jobs accessible to people with disabilities.

Hopewell School will regularly review its facilities for disabled employees and volunteers and will try to overcome any problems faced wherever practicable and within reasonable resources available.

Hopewell School will ensure that people have maximum access to employment opportunities and to meetings and events, regardless of any disability.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

Hopewell School will take seriously any complaints of discrimination and will not victimize people who make such complaints.

Staff will be made aware as part of the induction process of their responsibilities in relation to Equality and Diversity and that discriminatory behavior will be fully investigated and dealt with using the Disciplinary Procedure.

Bullying and Harassment

Hopewell School upholds the rights of all employees and volunteers to be treated with respect and dignity and to work in an atmosphere free of bullying and harassment.

All employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that their own behavior is sensitive to others and for ensuring that they do not condone or support the bullying or harassing behavior of others.

All complaints of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously and should be raised using the Grievance Procedure. All complaints will be investigated and where appropriate, the Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

Monitoring

Monitoring the workforce

Employees and volunteers will be asked to fill out a monitoring form on appointment. The monitoring forms will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Hopewell School will endeavor to ensure that its services are sensitive and appropriate to respond to the needs of all groups, whenever practicable.

Hopewell School will take care to avoid unintentionally discriminatory passages appearing in published, printed or spoken material and will continue to take a leading role in combating any form of discrimination.

Responsibility

All employees and volunteers have the individual responsibility to:

- Follow procedures introduced to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination
- To draw the attention of management to suspected or alleged discriminatory practices
- To refrain from harassing or intimidating other employees or volunteers, clients or visitors to Hopewell School on any of the grounds cited in the policy statement

Policy Reviewed on: 30th March 2017

Policy Reviewed by: Susan Mayo

Ratified by Governors: *Date to be confirmed*

