

## **SINGLE EQUALITIES POLICY**

*This Policy subsumes policy in the following areas: Disability; Race Equality; Equal Opportunities; and Equality and Diversity.*

### **Legal Status:**

Prepared with regard to the Equality Act 2010 (inclusive of Schedule 10), the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, Sex Discrimination Act 1986, Children's Act 1989, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 currently in force.

### **Applies to:**

- The whole School along with out of School care including extra-curricular activities and all other activities provided by the School, inclusive of those outside of the normal School hours.
- All staff (teaching and support), students, visitors within the School, volunteers, executive and non-executive directors of Ashwicke Hall School, the school board, external contractors and providers hired by the School.

**In our School the term 'staff', in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietor.**

### **Related Documents:**

- Accessibility Plan, Admissions Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Management, Discipline and Exclusions Policy
- Curriculum: Teaching and learning Policy, Educational visits and off-site activities
- First Aid and Special Medical Conditions, Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and Procedures and Risk Assessment Policy, Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Policy
- Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE) Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development
- Safeguarding Children - Child protection including E Safety and Safer Recruitment and Staff Code of Conduct
- Accessibility Plan, Accessibility Audit

### **Availability**

This Policy is made available to parents, staff and students in the following ways: via the School Website and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

**Monitoring and review:** This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal. The Advisory Board will undertake a full annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the update/reviewed policy and it is made available to them in either a hard copy or electronically. This policy was last reviewed in march 2019 and will next be reviewed no later than March 2020 or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date reviewed: March 2019

Date of next review: March 2020



Amanda Woods  
Principal

## **Aims**

The policy exists in order to ensure that all the provisions of relevant equality laws, and the recommendations of associated codes of practice, are fully observed throughout all areas of Ashwicke Hall School. Our duties under the Equality Act 2010 include dealing with issues related to students with special educational needs/disabilities, and making reasonable adjustments for these students. This has implications for the School's Admission Policy. We aim to create and protect a learning environment free from any forms of discrimination, victimisation or harassment. Ashwicke Hall School celebrates every individual, supporting them to meet their full potential, regardless of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation. Our key objective is to reduce and eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and to full participation in the School community for students, prospective students and adult users with a disability. Our aims and objectives reflect the requirements of the Duty and that is to have due regard to do the following:

- to continually aim to improve the inclusivity of the curriculum;
- promote equality of opportunity between Disabled People and non-Disabled People;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- eliminate harassment of Disabled People that is related to their impairment;
- promote positive attitudes towards Disabled People;
- encourage participation by Disabled People in public life;
- to support the ethos of the School as a community which respects the rights of disabled students to have equal access to the curriculum, extra-curricular and other services;
- to equally value and encourage all students;
- to foster positive attitudes towards disability within our community;
- to take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

## **Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010**

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Directors of Ashwicke Hall School to have an Accessibility Plan, in writing, which is kept over a prescribed period (currently 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020).

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the School's curriculum,
- Improving the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School, and
- Improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is readily accessible to students who are not disabled. The delivery must be within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking account of the students' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

The Accessibility Plan must be implemented by the Principal, who must have regard to the need to allocate adequate resources for implementing the plan. The plan must be kept under review during the period, and, if necessary, revise it.

## **Definition of Disability**

"A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities."

## **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy**

The Ashwicke Hall School SEND Policy includes:

- an explanation of how the individual needs of all students will be met (including how students who are disabled or have special educational needs (SEN) will be included, valued and supported, and how reasonable adjustments will be made for them);
- the name of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO);
- arrangements for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices that promote and value diversity and difference;
- how inappropriate attitudes and practices are challenged; and
- how the provision encourages students to value and respect others.

The Proprietor of Ashwicke Hall School, has a proactive approach in ensuring that there is no discrimination against disabled students and prospective students in the provision of education and associated services in Ashwicke Hall School and in respect of admissions and exclusions. Improving access to education and educational achievement by disabled

students is essential to the Proprietor's policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation in society and the economy.

We are committed to Disability Equality and understand the need to embrace the spirit of the Disability Equality Duty detailed in the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 (DDA), the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011. Through a positive approach we actively work towards disability equality, with our students, parents/guardians and staff. We note that the Duty is grounded in the Social Model of Disability and undertake to understand the implications of this and ensure it is embedded in the School culture and informs the way we apply the Duty. The School's ethos of care and its commitment to justice are the foundation of its aims in educating the whole School community to make its proper contribution to society. This policy and the Accessibility Plan contribute to the review and revision of related School policies.

### **Equality and Diversity Definition**

- Diversity can be described as celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences. By respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions as beneficial not only for the individual but for the School.
- Equality and Diversity are not inter-changeable but inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed and taken account of.
- The School is committed to ensuring that its pupils are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination with regard to relevant characteristics as outlined by the Equality Act 2010, including disability, race (includes colour, nationality and ethnic origins), religion and sexual orientation

### **Equality and Diversity (Students)**

#### **Purpose:**

- The School is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the way we learn. The School aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon.
- The School is also committed to compliance with relevant equality legislation, the Equality Act 2010, Codes of Practice and relevant best practice guidance. This policy pursues and builds on the statutory position to ensure effective policies and practice of promoting equality.
- The School aims pro-actively to tackle discrimination or disadvantage and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment or accessing its services.
- Issues regarding harassment and bullying are covered in the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

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### **Guiding Principles**

Ashwicke Hall School is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in respect of all its members. To this end, we take steps to ensure that students appreciate racial and cultural diversity, and avoid and resist racism. Fundamental to its life as a School community is the belief that all individuals, regardless of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation are of equal value. In order to ensure that our School community is one in which these values flourish, Ashwicke Hall School is guided by the following principles in relation to Equality. Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHEE), including Social, Moral, Spiritual, Cultural (SMSC) Development, instructs all aspects of School life.

Staff and students will be aware of disability and understand its effects and accept and support disabled students as part of School life. Appropriate staff Inset will be provided to enhance understanding of disability, the need for making reasonable adjustments in compliance with our legal duties and to improve our educational provision. Other relevant policies of the School such as the Equal Opportunities Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Codes of Conduct, student and staff handbooks, reflect inclusiveness and the difficulties faced by disabled students to improve understanding and integration. The School will agree with parents appropriate regular means of communication with regard to any disabled student's progress, behavioural issues and the effects of any medication.

### **Principle 1**

#### **All learners are valued, and their contributions recognised.**

Learners are supported and encouraged to maximise their potential and to contribute fully in all areas of School life. Contributions are regularly recognised: on a small scale, through regular verbal and written feedback by teaching staff; on a larger scale, through end-of-term prizes which include academic, theatrical, dramatic, and sporting achievement, as well as dedication to the School qualities of Excellence, Respect, Courage and Perseverance.

We aim to give every student a sense of achievement and fulfilment regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, national origin, national status, sex, gender, religious or non-religious affiliation, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Mindful of our tradition within the Christian community of the British Isles, we are also fully committed to the fundamental ethical principles of:

- Consideration for others
- Awareness of the importance and celebration of each and every individual within the School community
- The need to respond generously to the needs of those less economically fortunate than ourselves.

School assemblies will cover themes of shared concern and are not biased in respect of any religion, denomination or gender. Just as cultural and religious diversity within the School community is to be valued, so it is important that the life and direction of individual religious groups should be supported within the context of Ashwicke Hall School.

### **Principle 2**

#### **Diversity is recognised and respected.**

Treating people with respect and consideration, in accordance with Principle 1, does not necessarily mean that everyone should be treated identically. We aim to treat members of our School community with the utmost consideration and respect, and in doing so will approach their life situations, experiences and problems with a personalised and differentiated response in accordance with their particular needs. We will also recognise and respond to problems that people may face, and will recognise and work to eliminate discrimination, in relation to:

- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Sex
- Gender
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender identity

And as relevant:

- Pregnancy/maternity

And in relation to employment:

- Age
- Marriage/civil partnership

The Principal will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy. Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments

that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Ashwicke Hall School fully acknowledges its moral duty (as related to the United Kingdom's Race Relations Act, 1976, Section 1) to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial groups and it positively welcomes any communal or educational opportunities afforded by the School's cultural and religious diversity. All members of the School (whether of the student body, teaching or support staff) deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and with a sensitive understanding of their religious, cultural and racial differences and of the consequences thereof. Racially abusive language by children and young people or staff will not be tolerated. If racial, religious or cultural elements are discovered to be present in incidents of bullying, these must be acknowledged and challenged. Racially abusive language by staff or children and young people will be a matter for disciplinary action.

Special leave for religious reasons will not be unreasonably refused by the School. Applications for such leave should be made in writing to the Principal, giving at least a month's notice. Any special leave granted will be treated as unpaid leave; part-time employees may be given the option of making up lost time if this would benefit the School.

School lists are organised chronologically or alphabetically, rather than by gender (unless this is required by an outside agency for a particular purpose). Equal opportunities will be considered when grouping children for activities. This may involve specific grouping to ensure that every child participates fully (e.g. by attainment). Each child will be given opportunities to exercise responsibility within the classroom or the School, with care taken regarding stereotyping of roles. We see males and females as both carers and leaders. Male and females are mixed throughout the School.

### **Principle 3**

#### **Everyone is welcomed and made to feel comfortable within our School community**

Our policies and practices should work to ensure that relations between different individuals and identity groups within School are positive, cordial and tolerant.

This includes the promotion of:

- Positive attitudes, knowledge and understanding towards disability.
- Positive attitudes, knowledge and understanding of different ethnicities, cultures, religions, races and nationalities.
- Positive attitudes and mutual respect between boys and girls; women and men; and an intolerance of any sexual, homophobic or gender-based prejudice.

We welcome all applicants to join the School, whatever the background or physical disability of a child and will seek to ensure we can support applicants where reasonable adjustments can be made. We also seek to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our School. We take all reasonable steps to ensure that the School environment gives access to people with disabilities. So, for example, all students have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding School uniform will be applied equally to both male and female students. If a student's religion affects the School uniform, then the School will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the student's cultural traditions.

We celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups. We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

### **Principle 4**

#### **Ashwicke Hall School follows best practice in staff recruitment, retention, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and cessation of employment.**

All policies and practices adopted by Ashwicke Hall School should be of benefit to employees and potential employees, in all areas of recruitment, promotion, retention, CPD, discipline, dismissal and redundancy. Employees and potential employees should receive equal opportunities in these areas, regardless of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation. As relevant, employees and potential employees should be given equal opportunities regardless of pregnancy, maternity, marriage/civil partnerships.

Being a committed equal opportunities employer, the School will take every possible step to ensure that employees are treated equally and fairly in respect of these matters, be they staff or student, and the School challenges stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs. All students have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the School, and we are always striving to remove all forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning. All policies and practices will conform to the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline and dismissal, and redundancy.

### **Principle 5**

#### **We will recognise and address inequalities and barriers that already exist.**

Ashwicke Hall School aims to foster an environment in which inequalities in any form are not manifest in our community. We will, however, commit to recognising any forms of inequality that do arise, and will work to combat these in the most effective manner possible.

**Anti-Racism:** It is the right of all students to receive the best education the School can provide, with access to all of its educational activities. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident. We endeavour to make our School welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of different cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the School. Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. Should anyone at our School be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

The following are some ideas on how racism can be combatted:

- Students' names should be pronounced correctly and nicknames should be the prerogative of the nicknamed.
- Attention should be paid to spelling names correctly at all times.
- Literature in School should include names from a wide variety of cultures.
- Racist language must be categorically rejected.
- Racial stereotypes should never be used or allowed. Those in classical literature must be made explicit to students and contextualised.
- Bi-lingual students and parents must be allowed to nominate an interpreter when necessary.
- Lack of fluency in the English language should not be used as an indication of academic potential.

#### **Sex:**

- No student should be excluded from receiving the curriculum on the basis of their sex.
- No privileges must be reserved for students on the basis of their sex.

#### **Class:**

- Assumptions should not be made about students' home circumstances or potential based on social class.
- Students must be allowed to talk in their natural dialect as and when they need to.
- Direct speech in children's work may reflect dialect, particularly in the lower School before punctuation differentiates speech in written work.

### **Principle 6**

#### **The wider community and society should benefit from our policies and practices.**

We intend that our policies and practices contribute to the creation and maintenance of a diverse, tolerant and socially cohesive community. We view Ashwicke Hall School as playing a part in the creation of such communities at a School, local, regional and national level. We aim to encourage the active participation of all individuals and groups in society and in public life, regardless of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability or sexual orientation. We intend to promote a society in which discrimination, victimisation and harassment on the basis of any perceived 'difference' is not tolerated.

### **Principle 7**

#### **On-going review and appraisal**

Ashwicke Hall School is committed to regular review of its equalities policy, which will be evaluated and edited in the light of public research; individual comments and/or complaints; quantitative and qualitative information gathered by the

School. Ashwicke Hall School is open to feedback and response on all matters related to its equalities policy from all stakeholders, including students, staff, parents, and Directors.

## **Procedures for addressing discriminatory behaviour**

### **Definitions**

**Discrimination:** treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds of age, gender, social or ethnic background, nationality, colour, religious affiliation, physical disability, marital status or sexual orientation.

**Harassment:** any unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can be persistent or isolated and includes behaviour which induces anger, stress, anxiety, fear or sickness on the part of the person being harassed. It can be physical, verbal, direct or indirect and can include gestures, intimidation, unwelcome remarks, suggestions, propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and 'banter'. In addition, non-verbal harassment can include offensive literature, pictures, graffiti, isolation, non-co-operation or unwelcome physical conduct. The School will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying: such behaviour is totally unacceptable and the School looks to support any employee who is suffering from harassment. The School strives to provide a neutral working environment in which no-one feels threatened or intimidated.

**Victimisation:** treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds that that he or she has brought discrimination proceedings, given evidence or information regarding discrimination proceedings or alleged discrimination or because he or she intends to do any of these acts.

**Unwanted Behaviour:** If you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised in breach of the principle of equal opportunities set out above, you are entitled to complain using the procedures set out below.

### **Informal Resolution**

**Stage 1:** You should speak or write to the individual concerned informing him or her that their behaviour is unwelcome.

**Stage 2:** If the unwanted behaviour continues, you should ask the Principal to speak to the person concerned. If the person concerned is the Principal, you should ask the Directors to speak to the Principal.

**Stage 3:** If the unwanted behaviour continues, you should keep a record of any relevant incidents and consider taking formal action as set out below.

### **Formal Procedure**

**Formal notification:** If you feel that the informal procedure has not stopped the unwanted behaviour or that the behaviour is too serious to be resolved by using that procedure, you should follow the formal parts of the School's Grievance Procedure. You will be entitled to an appeal against any decision in accordance with the Grievance Procedure. Under the Grievance Procedure, any grievance will be investigated thoroughly by an impartial member of management. Where possible, the member of staff complaining of harassment or discrimination will be kept anonymous. Any mischievous, vexatious or malicious claims of harassment of any nature will be regarded as gross misconduct.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff and stakeholders should recognise that they have a specific role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to:

- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations;
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- tackle bias and stereotyping;
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and report these;
- highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities;
- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations;
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- tackle bias and stereotyping;
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies; and
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.

## **Your Responsibilities**

- Every employee is required to assist the Principal and the whole School to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.
- Employees should be aware that they can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the Principal any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may also be guilty of a criminal offence.
- Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or parents and their families are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the School's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

## **The Role of the Principal**

It is the Principal's role to implement the School's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy.

- It is the Principal's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the School policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Principal ensures that all recruitment and selection processes give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Principal promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of School life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the School.
- The Principal treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

## **The Role of the Class Teacher and Boarding Staff**

The class teacher ensures that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child. When selecting classroom material, the class teacher should pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, History topics in our School include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In Geography topics the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world. All our teachers challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents and draw them to the attention of the Principal.

## **Equality of Opportunity: Employment Code of Practice**

Ashwicke Hall School is an equal opportunities employer, and aims to implement best practice in this area.

### **Recruitment**

All newly created posts will normally be advertised externally online, on our website, in the national press, and/or in local press, and/or in specialist journals as appropriate to the position in question. Our aim in doing this is to encourage suitable applicants from a broad range of backgrounds. In observing equal opportunities practice, Ashwicke Hall School will also make clear in employment advertisements and application packs our exemption under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act as part of our Child Protection commitments.

### **Selection of Candidates**

We will clearly define requirements for selection in the job descriptions sent to candidates as part of the employment application process. Selection criteria for employment will be objective, job-specific and carefully assessed as necessary to the fulfilment of the position. Interviewing and short-listing will be carried out in a consistent and fair manner across all positions and departments within the School, in order to ensure an equitable and non-discriminatory practice. Selection methods for interviewing and short-listing will be objective and directly relevant to the nature of the vacant position. Interviewing must only be carried out by suitably qualified and prepared panels of staff.

### **Existing Workforce**

The School will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

**Job Applicants Equality Profile**

Ashwicke Hall School will regularly monitor the ethnic/gender/age/disability profile of job applicants applying to the School throughout the main stages of recruitment (application, short-listing, and interview) using the information voluntarily provided by applicants in the personal information section of the job application form. This is the responsibility of the HR Manager.

**Employee Training and Development**

Ashwicke Hall School is committed to equality of opportunity in terms of access to CPD and training to increase employees' knowledge, skills and professional awareness in order that they are more readily able to fulfil their full professional potential.

**Grievances Following Termination of Your Employment**

**Procedure:** If you wish to raise a grievance in writing following the termination of your employment, you should follow the relevant provisions of the School's Grievance Procedure.