

Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Discipline/sanctions
- Anti-bullying
- Admissions
- SEN
- Curriculum
- Out of School Activities
- Harpur Trust Equality and Diversity Policy

Equal Opportunities Statement of Commitment

The School is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of age, sex, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity. These are known as **Protected Characteristics**. Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds are not acceptable. 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.

We aim to empower our students to make informed choices so that they are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within British society. 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. It is recognised 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 supporting the School's and Harpur Trust's Equal Opportunities Policies and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Aims and objectives

The School, through its adopted Equal Opportunities Policy, aims to:

- carry out its legal duty in complying with the *Equality Act 2010*;
- reinforce the School's position as a provider of high quality education;
- ensure that equality remains high on the School's agenda;

- ensure that staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every student;
- ensure that students and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals;
- effectively prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society;
- actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those of different religions and beliefs and those of none;
- ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the School's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly. All forms of discrimination by any person within the School's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

Please see Appendix A for further descriptions on Discrimination, Victimisation and Harassment.

Students and the curriculum

The School's Admissions Policy does not discriminate against any student on the grounds of any Protected Characteristic. Students should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all. Equality of opportunity should inform the whole of the curriculum and we will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that these aspirations are met.

Policy and planning

Equal opportunities' implications will be considered and recorded whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation. Equal opportunities issues will be taken account of in planning the curriculum.

Employment matters

Decisions regarding recruitment and retention of staff will be in line with the Harpur Trust Equality and Diversity Policy

Training and development

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;
- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs;
- promote awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians and students can make;

- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour.

David Jenkins
Member of Compliance Committee
Trevor Collins
Head of SEN

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Appendix A: Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is illegal. However, for the School community, discrimination is also unacceptable on 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 etc.
- 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, Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act or Employment Equality Regulations, for example, by bringing forward proceedings 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. The School has robust anti-bullying policies.