

Equal Opportunities Policy

Independent Boarding and Day School for Boys and Girls

Royal Hospital School

October 2017

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Related Policies and associated documents	Disability & Discrimination Policy Reasonable Adjustments Policy Learning Support Policy Accessibility Plan Anti-bullying Policy

Aims of this policy

The aims of this policy are:

- to afford equal opportunity to all staff, applicants and prospective pupils
- to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the Education Act 1996 and any other applicable or amending legislation at the time

To have regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission *"What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools"*

Policy statement

The Royal Hospital School (the School) will

promote the School's policy of equal opportunities in countering any prejudice on the basis of age, sex, race, gender reassignment, religion or belief, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other such unjustifiable cause.

The School and staff will actively seek to:

- promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the School community;
- promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and to raise awareness of related issues;
- foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures and to learn to identify any forms of bias;
- understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour; and
- understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

All members of the School community have a duty to:

- recognise, appreciate and acknowledge the contributions made by each sex and by different racial, ethnic, national and religious groups to the richness of the School's academic, social, spiritual, cultural and sporting life.
- treat each other fairly and with sensitivity, recognising that a person's sex; age; religion or belief; physical ability or disability (including HIV status); learning ability; other special educational needs or academic or sporting ability; race (including colour, nationality or ethnicity; marital status and civil partnership; sexual orientation; political views; trade union membership; part-time and fixed-term working; gender reassignment; pregnancy, maternity and paternity are not subjects for negative comment or behaviour of any kind.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all pupils, parents, prospective parents, prospective current and former members of staff and visitors and includes inappropriate discrimination on the grounds of:

- sex;
- race;
- disability;
- religion or belief;
- marital or civil partnership status;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- age; and
- sexual orientation.

(the Protected Characteristics)

and on other grounds including:

- learning ability;
- other special educational needs or academic or sporting ability;
- political views;
- trade union membership; and
- part-time and fixed-term working.

Any visitors to the School are also expected to adopt and endorse this policy.

All staff, pupils and parents are expected to support the ethos of the School actively and to promote a civilised, friendly, compassionate and secure environment for everyone to value and enjoy.

Discrimination and harassment

No member of the School community should engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to discrimination of another person.

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
- **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified.
- **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

- **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Harassment or discrimination of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence.

The following are forms of discrimination and harassment. The list is not exhaustive and is intended simply as a guide:

Discrimination against the disabled: any attitudes held by a person or group towards an individual with a disability, which are offensive, discriminatory or hostile towards that individual are unacceptable. Also unacceptable are acts or expressions that reflect such attitudes, or any incitement to make others adopt such attitudes or behaviour.

Unacceptable behaviour, for example, would be:

- physical assault against a person because of his or her disability;
- verbal, written or online abuse, intimidation, insults, threats and graffiti;
- making reference to an individual's disability in the course of discussions, lessons or activities;
- refusing to co-operate with an individual or excluding an individual because of his or her disability; and
- inciting or encouraging others to behave in any of the above ways.

Racism: any attitude held by a person or group of one ethnic origin towards another individual or group of different ethnic origin which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile towards the individual or group is regarded as racism and is unacceptable. Racism is also considered to exist in acts or expressions that reflect such attitudes or in any incitement to behaviour of that kind.

Unacceptable behaviour, for example, would be:

- physical contact or assault against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity;
- verbal, written or online abuse, derogatory name-calling, insults, threats and racist jokes;
- racist graffiti or caricatures;
- the issuing or wearing of racist materials such as leaflets, magazines or insignia;
- making racist remarks in the course of discussions, lessons or activities;

- refusing to co-operate with other pupils or excluding other pupils because of colour or ethnic origin; and
- inciting or encouraging others to behave in any of the above ways.

Sexism: any attitude held by a person or group of one sex towards an individual or group of the other sex which is offensive, discriminatory or hostile towards the individual or group is regarded as sexism and is unacceptable. Also unacceptable are acts or expressions that reflect such attitudes, or any incitement to behaviour of that kind. Such behaviour need not be repeated or continuous to constitute harassment.

Sexual harassment: any 'unwanted conduct' which has the purpose or effect of violating your dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment on the grounds of sex may amount to sexual harassment. There are two main types of sexual harassment. It is either unwanted conduct towards you on grounds of your sex or gender, or it is unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Unacceptable behaviour, for example, would be:

- uninvited physical contact, physical assault or abuse against a person or group because of their gender;
- verbal, written or online abuse, intimidation, leering, insults, jokes or gestures of a sexist nature;
- using lewd or suggestive vocabulary to patronise or to cause offence or humiliation;
- making unwelcome comments of a sexist nature about dress and appearance;
- sexist graffiti or other pornographic writing, offensive use of pornographic pictures;
- making sexist remarks in the course of discussions, lessons or activities;
- offensive reference to an individual's or group's sexuality;
- refusing to co-operate with other pupils or excluding other pupils because of their gender or supposed sexuality; and
- inciting or encouraging others to behave in any of the above ways.

Responding to allegations of discrimination or harassment

The effect of discrimination or harassment on its victims is to cause distress and tension. It can lead to fear, anxiety, stress-related illnesses and a general inability to cope as the victim's self-esteem is undermined. Furthermore, discrimination undermines the ethos of the School. All staff and pupils are held to be of equal value.

In all cases, complaints must be treated in a serious but sympathetic manner. Victims may find it difficult to make a complaint for fear that their response to discrimination or harassment is interpreted as a lack of sense of humour or an overreaction to what others perceive as normal working or social relationships.

If a member of staff considers that they have been subject to any form of discrimination they should inform their line manager, Bursar or Headmaster.

If a pupil considers that they have been subject to discrimination or harassment of any form, they should inform their tutor, Head of House or any other member of staff.

The School will seek to ensure that the victim is not in any way penalised whether directly or indirectly for bringing a complaint and the situation will be monitored to ensure that the harassment has stopped.

False or malicious allegations will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Retaliation against a member of staff or pupil who complains of harassment can be expected to lead to disciplinary action.

Monitoring and evaluation

The School is committed to the continuing development and review of its equal opportunities policy and practices and reports to the governors annually in order to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment of those who are, or seek to be, its pupils, staff or visitors.

Under no circumstances will the School link its ethnic monitoring data with its pupil records. This policy will be kept under annual review.

Associated documents

- RHS Equal Opportunities policy (Staff employment)
- RHS Accessibility Plan 2016-2019
- RHS Learning Support Policy
- RHS Anti-Bullying Policy
- RHS Disability Policy
- RHS Reasonable Adjustments Policy