



# **ALTRINCHAM PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

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## **1. SCOPE**

Altrincham Preparatory School is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best.

The School is also committed against unlawful discrimination of the public.

The aims of this policy are to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all persons in our employment, whether temporary (fixed-term), part-time or full-time;
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation;
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

Being a committed equal opportunities employer, the School will take every possible step to ensure that employees are treated equally and fairly. All policies and practices will seek to conform to the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline, redundancy and dismissal.

## **2. GUIDANCE**

This policy applies to the School's employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to ex-employees, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff and consultants and volunteers who are not our employees, but who work at the School (collectively workers).

All workers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, to treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against, harass or victimise other members of staff, whether junior or senior to them. In some situations, the School may be at risk of being held responsible for the acts of individual members of staff and will not tolerate any discriminatory practices or behaviour.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The School commits to:

- Encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense.
- Creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
- Taking seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the School's activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the School's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

All staff should understand they, as well as the School, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

Staff working at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the aims and objectives of the School with regard to equal opportunities. To facilitate this process, managers may be given training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

All members of staff are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives.

#### **4. FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where:

- Someone is treated less favourably because of one or more Protected Characteristics. For example, rejecting an applicant because they would not "fit in" because of their race or sexual orientation would be direct discrimination.
- Someone is less favourably treated because of their association with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. For example, an employee may be treated less favourably because they have a disabled child.
- Someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic. For example, an employee may be treated less favourably because they are believed to be (but may not actually be) homosexual.

Indirect discrimination occurs where:

- An individual is subject to a provision, criterion or practice, applied to a group of people, which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a Protected Characteristic, and it cannot be objectively justified. An example might be a minimum height requirement for a job. This is likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified, because it is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, then it will be indirectly discriminatory on the ground of sex.

Discrimination also includes victimisation (suffering a detriment because of action the employee has taken or may take to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard (called a Protected Act) and harassment. (See the School's Bullying and Harassment policy for a more detailed explanation of "harassment").

#### **5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

The School aims to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment because of a Protected Characteristic. Recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and that sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. Job selection criteria are reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job.

#### **6. STAFF TRAINING AND PROMOTION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

Staff training needs shall be identified through regular staff appraisals. All staff will be given an equal opportunity and access to training to enable them to progress within the School. All promotion decisions shall be made on the basis of merit.

The School's terms and conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are available to all workers who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

#### **7. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION**

If you are disabled, or become disabled in the course of your employment, you are encouraged to tell the School about your condition. This is to enable the School to support you as much as possible and to ensure that you are not treated less favourably because of something related to your disability.

You may wish to advise the Head Master of any reasonable adjustments to your working conditions or the duties of your job which you consider to be necessary, or which would assist you in the performance of your duties. This may involve the provision of an additional piece of equipment or assistance in helping you to perform your work. The Head Master may wish to consult with you and with your medical adviser(s) about possible reasonable adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where possible and proportionate to the needs of your job. Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it will not be reasonable for us to accommodate the suggested adjustments and we will ensure that we provide you with information as to the basis of our decision not to make any adjustments.

The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether it can make any changes to help remove disadvantages which these may create for disabled users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.

## **8. FIXED-TERM EMPLOYEES**

The School will monitor our use of fixed-term employees and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress within the School to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

## **9. PART-TIME EMPLOYEES**

The School will monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will also ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the School's flexible working policy.

## **10. AGENCY WORKERS**

The School will monitor agency workers to ensure that they are treated no less favourably than a comparable worker in relation to accessing collective facilities and amenities at the School. The School will also monitor the use of temporary work agencies and subject to the exceptions set out in the Agency Workers Regulations 2010, will ensure that all agency workers have the same basic working conditions they would have been entitled to had they been recruited by the School directly into a comparable role.

## **11. BREACHES OF THE POLICY**

If you believe that you may have been disadvantaged because of a Protected Characteristic, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's grievance procedure. If you believe that you may have been harassed because of a Protected Characteristic, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's Anti-Harrassment and Bullying policy. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure.

## **12. FALSE ALLEGATIONS**

These procedures apply during and after termination of your employment. Workers who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations of a breach in this policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

## **13. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

If, after investigation, you are proven to have engaged in any unwanted conduct because of a Protected Characteristic, or otherwise acted in breach of this policy, you will be subject to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The School will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

## **14. QUERIES**

All members of staff are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Head Master.

## **15. REVIEW**

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management and any issues relating to this policy will be dealt with promptly, thoroughly and confidentially.

School will monitor the make-up of its workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues

Details of the School's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found in the Staff Handbook or in the Staff One Drive folder.

Use of the School's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months of the alleged discrimination.