

NEW MILLS SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Revision	Authorised by	Date	Adopted by	Date
Draft	J Elms	February 2007	FGB Min No.11.1	06/02/2007
Review	C&S	September 2012	FGB Min No.	08/10/2012
Review	F Wicks	February 2016	FGB Min No. 18a	21/03/2016

Revision	Date	Description of Changes
Draft	February 2007	Model DCC Policy dated November 2006
Review	September 2012	Reviewed by C&S Committee
Review	February 2016	Updated to include The Equality Act 2010

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Date:

SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

1.0 Legal Duties

At New Mills School and Sixth Form, we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The general duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between groups

In practice, this means that we will work to ensure that our School truly values diversity, by recognising and appreciating individual needs and differences, giving everyone the same equality of opportunity.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a specific group of 'protected characteristics', thereby protecting those with these characteristics from discrimination in law. These are:

- Age (for employees, not for service provision)
- Disability
- Race
- Sex or gender, including gender reassignment;
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership (for employees)

An Equality Statement in respect of each of these protected characteristics can be found at Appendix A.

2.0 Aims and Values

New Mills School and Sixth Form is a welcoming school and community. The School's Improvement Plan offers a Strategic Vision which embeds consideration of Equality and Diversity across all areas of activity.

- Leadership and Management: 'An outstanding curriculum which is broad, balanced, relevant and accessible, but always ambitious and rigorous, meeting the diverse needs of every individual learner to enable them to aspire and achieve.'*
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment: 'The highest quality teaching...creating aspirational, creative, independent and resilient teachers and learners.'*
- Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare: 'The highest standards of personal development, behaviour and welfare...underpinned by our inclusive and caring ethos and values. An embedded and proactive approach to preventing bullying and all potential breaches of equality with outstanding safeguarding*

procedures, resulting in all students feeling safe, happy and therefore able to be academically challenged at all times.'

- iv. Student Outcomes: *'Outstanding and ambitious progress for all our students that...leaves no group falling behind. Highly literate and numerate young people who...achieve their full potential.'*

We promote equality across all areas of school life, and actively tackle any form of discrimination. We look to maintain positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community, ensuring that our inclusive attitude has a positive impact on the wider community.

2.1 We aim to...

To put our strategic vision into practice, we aim to:

- Ensure that every student, no matter their ability or educational achievements when they join the school, has opportunities to achieve the highest possible standards and the best possible qualifications for the next stage of their life and education.
- Develop the curriculum and resources to support all students' learning.
- Provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging.
- Foster a positive attitude towards learning in all students.
- Prepare children for life in a diverse society in which children are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community.
- Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development, and procurement, by following guidance from Derbyshire Children's and Younger Adults Service HR on equality in recruitment, selection and employment.

2.2 To achieve these aims we will...

- Consult widely in developing all relevant policies and improvement plans, involving students, their families, staff and the local community as appropriate.
- Collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well, and no group is subject to disadvantage; use these data to set equality objectives, as appropriate.
- Publish Equality policies and impact assessments on the school website.
- Use all available information to set effectively differentiated teaching for each student, overcoming any potential barriers to learning to enable each learner to aspire and achieve.
- Ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to the promotion and celebration of diversity.

- Respect the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the school community and comply with reasonable requests for religious observance and practice.
- Maintain high expectations of behaviour, with regard to respect to others and tolerance of difference.

3.0 Leadership, Management and Governance

New Mills School and Sixth Form is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, and the celebration of diversity, throughout the whole school and wider community.

3.1 Responsibilities

The promotion of this belief is the responsibility of three main groups.

3.1.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is committed to Equality and Diversity. All Governors, employees and those acting on behalf of the Governing Body or school are responsible for implementing the policy, and have a continuing duty to challenge all forms of discrimination.

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to:

- Designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy.
- Ensure that any action plans are monitored through a relevant sub-committee.
- Support the headteacher in implementing any actions necessary.
- Engage with parents and partner agencies about the policy.
- Evaluate the impact of the policy.
- Review the policy to ensure that it reflects changes in legislation, directives and codes of practice.
- Ensure that the school complies with equality legislation.
- Meet requirements to publish a Single Equality Scheme.
- Ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans.
- Scrutinise the recording and reporting procedures at least annually.
- Follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups.
- Enable equality of opportunity in staff recruitment and professional development, and encourage a diversity of the Governing Body to reflect the diversity of the school and wider community.
- Provide information in appropriate, accessible formats.
- Be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy.

3.1.2 The Headteacher

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to:

- Oversee the effective implementation of the policy, including by ensuring it is referred to in the School Improvement Plan.
- Ensure that staff, parents / carers and students are aware of the school's commitment to equality and diversity.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate continuous professional development to be able to implement the policy.
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice.
- Deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with LA guidance.
- Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's Equality Policy.
- Produce an annual report on progress for governors.

3.1.3 All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them.
- Be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment and bullying, and deal effectively with all incidents.
- Ensure the principles referred to in this policy are demonstrated across the curriculum throughout all year groups.
- Make known any queries or training requirements.

3.2 Breaches

All breaches of the policy will be followed up using the appropriate procedures. Instances of bullying will be reported by the Headteacher at each meeting of the Full Governing Body. Serious breaches will be reported to the Local Authority as required.

4.0 Policy Planning and Development

- The policy will be developed and reviewed taking into account a wide range of stakeholder views.
- All improvement plans will be set in such a way as to be able to monitor the success and impact of each activity.
- The approval of this policy will trigger a systematic audit of the impact of all policies and procedures on equality and diversity, to identify any immediate areas of inequality to be addressed. This review will be conducted by the Governor with responsibility for the Equality Policy, the Chair of Governors, and the Personal Development Co-ordinator (teaching staff), reporting to the Headteacher as necessary.

4.1 Over the next three years we will...

- Conduct an Equality and Diversity audit (immediate).
- Identify and disseminate effective practice throughout the school (immediate).
- Review all School policies with a view to ensuring Equality compliance and best practice.
- Review achievement and attainment data especially in relation to identified protected groups.
- Identify and publish Equality objectives, to be reviewed, prepared and published every four years.

5.0 Monitoring and Quality Assurance

- Each student's progress is monitored and tracked, and the resulting data analysed in respect of gender, race, ability or additional needs and looked-after status.
- This data is considered at each meeting of the Full Governing Body, and further used to inform planning, target-setting and decision-making.

Appendix A Equality Statements

The Governing Body is committed to the following policy statements:

A.1 Age

Ageism is discrimination based on preconceived ideas of an individual's capabilities at certain stages in their lives and is often targeted at younger and older people. The school is opposed to discrimination on the grounds of age.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that age is not a barrier to recruitment, selection, promotion, training or personal development.
- Ensure that age will not be considered adversely where redundancy and retirement may apply.
- Seek to eliminate age discrimination through education and training.

A.2 Disability

The Governing Body is committed to eliminating unlawful and unjustified direct and indirect discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity in the field of employment.

The Governing Body will not discriminate against candidates applying for vacancies within the school. Special consideration will, therefore, be given to the following:-

- Application forms.
- Interview arrangements.
- Terms and conditions of employment.
- Staff development opportunities.
- All other policies and procedures adopted by the Governing Body.

The Governing Body will seek to avoid direct and indirect discrimination by:-

- Not making assumptions about a person's disability.
- Promoting equal opportunities.
- Seeking professional advice on whether an impairment is covered by the Equality Act 2010, and carrying out workplace risk assessments where appropriate.

The Governing Body, wherever possible and practicable, will agree to make reasonable adjustments which will assist a person with a disability including:-

- Adjustments to premises.
- Reallocation of a disabled person's duties.
- Consideration of suitable alternative employment.

- Consideration of more flexible working, including altering the person's working hours.
- Allowing time off for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- Training.
- Acquiring or modifying equipment.
- Modifying instructions or reference manuals.
- Modifying procedures in recruitment and selection for testing or assessment.

Guidance as appropriate from Derbyshire County Council will inform the Governing Body's consideration of any reasonable adjustments that may be required.

A.3 Race

The school recognises that people from black and minority ethnic groups face discrimination.

The school recognises its general duty to promote race equality as follows:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination
- To promote equality of opportunity
- To promote good relations between individuals of different racial groups.

The Governing Body will:

- Give full and fair consideration to all applicants, regardless of their ethnic origin, based solely on their ability to do the job and give equal opportunity for training, career development and promotion for employees.
- Ensure that information provided by the school is accessible and, where necessary, targeted at ethnic minority or other identified groups.
- Ensure that the school considers, and where appropriate implements, recommendations from DCC as a result of their consultations with the Racial Equality Council, other minority community groups and trade unions on the implementation of this policy.

A.4 Sex / Gender (including gender re-assignment)

The Governing Body is opposed to all forms of sex- and gender-based discrimination, and will respect the right to dignity of all women and men, including anyone who proposes to, starts, or has completed a process to change their gender.

It will continue to strive to achieve equality of opportunity, while attempting to recognise and address historical and gender-specific discrimination.

The Governing Body will:

- Recognise family and caring responsibilities through the continued development of family-friendly and carer support policies and provisions.

- Recognise that career patterns are often disrupted because of caring responsibilities and provide appropriate training and career development opportunities.
- Challenge sexist attitudes and practices both within the school and external organisations with which the school may deal.
- Give full and fair consideration to applications for employment from individuals, based solely on their ability to do the job and give equal opportunity to training, career development and promotion for employees regardless of gender.
- Develop specific initiatives, where required, to address gender imbalances within the school.
- Ensure that information, publicity and advertising over which the school has control or influence is non-sexist and uses positive images and language.
- In the case of anyone who proposes to, starts, or has completed a process to change their gender, the School will be fully supportive. This will include (but is not limited to) discussing with the person how they would like members of the school community to be told about their transition; allowing time off for medical appointments; amending all personnel records to the new name and gender (and retaining records with the previous gender only when necessary).¹

A.5 Pregnancy and Maternity

The governing body is opposed to all forms of discrimination against a person who is, has recently been, or could be of an age to be, pregnant. Any member of staff in this position will not be treated any differently from any other member of staff in the workplace, including opportunities for promotion.

Any student of the School who is pregnant will be dealt with sympathetically, signposting to relevant support services where appropriate, and supported to continue their studies.

A.6 Religion or Belief

The Governing Body is opposed to all forms of religion- or belief-based discrimination. It recognises that decisions and practices relating to employment and vocational training should not be based on an individual's religious beliefs or lack of them.

The school's policy is to protect the right of individuals, regardless of their religion or belief, and will work for the eradication of all forms of discrimination on these grounds through training, awareness raising and implementation of anti-harassment procedures.

The Governing Body will:

- Respect an individual's right to follow and practise a particular religion, religious or similar philosophical belief and respect those individuals who do not do so.
- Encourage a culture within the school which allows individuals to be open about their religious beliefs or otherwise.

¹ <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2064> (retrieved 25/11/15)

A.7 Sexual Orientation

The Governing Body recognises its general duty to protect people at work and in vocational training from discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

The Governing Body is opposed to all forms of discrimination against lesbians, gay women / men, bisexual or heterosexual men and women. It recognises that decisions and practices relating to employment should not be based on the assumption that everyone is, or should be, heterosexual.

The school's policy is to protect the rights of individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, and will work for the eradication of all forms of discrimination on these grounds through training, awareness raising and implementation of anti-harassment procedures.

The Governing Body will:

- Respect an individual's right to define their sexual orientation.
- Protect the dignity of women and men at work.
- Support employees to feel safe in being open about their sexual orientation, should they wish.

4.8 Marriage and civil partnership

The Governing Body recognises that all members of staff should be treated equally, regardless of marital or civil partnership status.