



# Equalities Policy

**Date of Ratification: June 2019**

**Date of Review: June 2022**

# Equalities Policy

Northgate School recognises it has an important role in creating a culture of equality and acceptance. Equality of Opportunity for all is a right upheld by law, and it is a key part of our school provision.

Equal opportunity is an umbrella term for a range of issues. When it is used at Northgate it is intended to refer to gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation, special educational needs, disability, mental health and the needs of bilingual learners. At Northgate we believe that learning can only take place when all the people concerned feel safe, have high self-esteem, high expectations, feel valued, respected and included. It is our duty to use all the resources at our disposal to create this atmosphere through the application of our policies and practices.

## Scope

This policy will apply to staff, students, parents, and visitors, all members of the Management Committee and all people who use the school premises for school related activities.

We aim to:

- Provide a friendly and secure environment
- Fully implement the discrimination legislation with regard to equality of opportunity
- Promote equality for all and value everyone as individuals in their own right
- Develop all members of the community according to their needs
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the multi-cultural nature of society and foster inclusive attitudes.
- Commit ourselves fully to opposing discrimination and harassment
- Provide an environment which will give every child equal access to educational and social experiences
- Ensure that lessons provided are accessible to all students
- Promote a sense of responsibility and sensitivity to others and to the environment.
- Help everyone acquire a set of moral values and the confidence to make and uphold moral judgements.

## Definitions of discrimination

Under the law, there are different categories of discrimination, with differences in the legal framework surrounding them.

Direct discrimination happens when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of gender.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but it has a different impact on members of one gender, of which the complainant is one, and is placed at a disadvantage as a result.

Victimisation is the practice of treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination, for example by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague.

Harassment is any unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on grounds of gender.

## **Process**

### **The Management Committee**

- The Management Committee will not discriminate against an applicant for a post, or against an existing member of staff.

### **Leadership**

- Appointments and promotion of staff will be made and monitored with due regard not only to the letter of the discrimination legislation but also to their spirit. All posts will be open equally to all (unless there is a genuine occupational requirement which means this cannot be the case.)
- The make-up of interviewing panels and the nature and content of questions asked at interview will reflect the principles laid down in this policy.
- Conditions of employment, opportunities for promotion, discipline and grievance procedures, training and other benefits will not be affected by gender, race, or sexual orientation.
- Stakeholders will be consulted and their views taken into account. Information about how the school's policies and practices affect gender, race, or sexual orientation equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services will be collected and used to inform practice and policy updates.

### **Staff**

- Staff will be expected to treat each other and all students equally and with respect. The use of sexist, racist, or homophobic language, insults or any form of harassment will not be tolerated.
- Physical assault, written insults, graffiti, provocative behaviour, or unwillingness to cooperate with staff or students because of their gender, race, or sexual orientation will be regarded as serious infringement of the staff code of conduct.
- Staff will not discriminate on grounds of gender, race, or sexual orientation when providing teaching or allocating students to particular types of classes.
- Staff are expected to promote the progress of equal opportunities. Staff will try to ensure that they give equal attention to all.
- Staff will display positive images in the classroom and the whole school environment which reflect our belief in equal opportunities.

## **Students**

- Students are expected to treat each other and all members of staff with respect. The use of sexist, racist or homophobic language, insults or any form of harassment will not be tolerated.
- Physical assault, written insults, graffiti, provocative behaviour, or unwillingness to cooperate with other students because of their gender, race, or sexual orientation will be regarded as serious infringement of the school's behaviour policy.

## **Amenities**

- The amenities provided in the school should be of equal standard for all, and all students should have equal access to all areas of the school including break and lunchtime facilities.

## **Pastoral and Administrative**

- The school's behaviour policy will apply equally to all. There will be different but comparable rules for boys and girls as regards dress and personal appearance.
- Information sent out from the school will be worded in non-sexist language.
- Careers guidance, work experience and all benefits and services will be accessible to all students regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation.

## **Curriculum**

- The structure of the curriculum will be organised in such a way that subject choices do not discriminate against students on the basis of gender, race, or sexual orientation.
- Where necessary positive encouragement will be given to girls and boys where either seem reluctant to make full use of their potential in relations to the curriculum being offered.
- Teachers will organise teaching groups in order to ensure equality of access for all students.
- Teachers will regularly evaluate course content, material and displays for evidence of bias and stereotyping.

## **Breach of the Code of Conduct**

Discrimination complaints must be taken up first with the Headteacher. They can then be referred to the Management Committee should this be necessary. Complaints about gender, race, or sexual orientation discrimination against students can also be brought to the attention of the Secretary of State for Children.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has the power to enforce the specific duties by issuing a compliance notice to order the school to meet the specific duties within a certain timescale. Much of UK legislation, as regards equal opportunity in the employment and vocational training field, reflects European Union (EU) Law. In addition to UK legislation, in certain circumstances, employees in the public sector may rely directly on EU law. Normally, however, EU rights such as a right to equal pay,

equal treatment and non-discrimination on certain grounds are enforced in the UK through national legislation which has been shaped to reflect EU law.

The following actions may be taken if this policy is not followed:

**For members of the Management Committee**, a discussion with the Chair of the Management Committee, which may be followed by a verbal and then a written warning.

**For the Headteacher**, discussion with the Chair of the Management Committee or Local Authority which may be followed by a disciplinary action. This could take the form of a verbal or written warning, or be escalated to a higher level for a serious or repeated issue.

**For a member of staff** a discussion with the Headteacher which may be followed by a warning which could take the form of a verbal or written warning. This could be escalated to a higher level for a serious or repeated issue.

**For a student** sanctions will be implemented in line with in the school's Behaviour Policy. Actions could take the form of restorative justice, a written apology, a meeting arranged with parents, withdrawing of privileges, exclusion or other sanctions. Where appropriate outside agencies may also be involved to educate, or support the student.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Management Committee and the Headteacher will review the Equalities Policy every 3 years to take account of any legal or educational changes.

## **Responsibilities**

The Management Committee and the Headteacher have a responsibility to ensure that the school complies with all relevant legislation and that this Policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **Relevant Law**

The Equal Pay Act 1970

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Education Act 1996: Part 4

The Education (Modification of Enactments Relating to Employment) Order 2003

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

The Equality Act 2006

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The Gender Recognition Act 2004