

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Introduction

Tring Park School (the School) is an equal opportunities employer.

In order to promote an environment within which the School can call upon the widest possible range of knowledge, skill and experience, as well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we are committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which represents the population.

All employees and job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

To this end, we shall regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion, training and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular but not only, in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, appraisals, transfer & training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- Conduct at work

The School's procedures also seek to ensure fair and equitable treatment in relation to the admission and assessment of students. The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity apply to the way in which staff must treat job applicants, employees, visitors, pupils, parents, suppliers, former members of staff and all other third parties.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

The Business Director is responsible for this policy and any necessary training on equal opportunities.

2. Implementation

The School with the assistance of the staff will:

- Break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit.
- Advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job.
- Promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary.
- Ensure that all members of staff are fully informed and trained on this policy.
- Monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices.
- Review and examine existing procedures to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation.
- Ensure that language used in official communication reflects the letter and spirit of the policy.

3. Recruitment and Selection

The staffing process is governed by the School's principles of non-discrimination and is designed to achieve the best match between, on the one hand, the individual's knowledge and skills, experience and character and, on the other hand, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. The capability of the individual to perform in the position will be the major selection criterion but the ability both to work with others and to be trained, coupled with individual potential will be considered.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

Shortlisting should be done by more than one person if possible.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

All applicants will be dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible.

Carefully selected and validated skills and/or psychometric tests may be used as part of the selection process and will be administered by a trained tester.

Appointments will be confirmed on receipt of satisfactory references and CRB checks and satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

4. Disability

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Where possible reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your Head of Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your Head of Department may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments and you may be required to give your consent to a report being produced about your state of health and ability to perform your duties. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals to assess its continuing effectiveness.

The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or School premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out his or her duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job redesign, and flexible hours.

Where during the course of their employment a disabled member of staff recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work

arrangements or School premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Principal.

5. Part-time and Fixed-term Work

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

6. Discrimination

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, pupils, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with pupils, colleagues or other work-related contacts) and on work-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

(a) 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.

(b) 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. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

(c) 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. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy.

(d) Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

(e) 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.

7. Dignity at Work

You should not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to harassment of another person at work. Harassment of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence and in serious instances may lead to summary dismissal. This is dealt with further in our Disciplinary Policy.

Harassment may take the form of unwanted conduct which is related to a relevant Protected Characteristic which is perceived as affecting an employee's dignity at work. It may also take the form of unwanted conduct towards someone based on their appearance or other personal characteristics which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It is not only unwanted physical contact, assault or propositions; it includes suggestive remarks or gestures, pin-ups, graffiti, offensive comments, jokes and banter. Harassment may include bullying, intimidating behaviour, persistent teasing or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities, or exclusion from normal workplace conversation. It may be directed towards one individual or a group. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave.

8. Breaches of this Policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.