



Halliford
School
SHEPPERTON

Equal Opportunities Policy

October 2020

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Mission Statement

Halliford is a school based on strong family values where we know and respect every student as an individual. We encourage and support Hallifordians to flourish and become the best version of themselves that they can possibly be.

We aim for excellence by being academically ambitious but at the same time academically sensitive.

We inspire Hallifordians within a community that is founded on high quality teaching and learning, outstanding pastoral care and first class sporting, cultural and extra-curricular opportunities.

Introduction

Halliford School recognises the benefits of having a diverse community, who respect and value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. The school is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and will take every possible step to ensure equality of opportunity for all members of the community.

School's position

The School supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes discrimination on the basis of age, sex, marriage and civil partnership, any gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, part time or fixed term employment (defined as **Protected Characteristics**). Being a committed equal opportunities employer, the School will take every possible step to ensure that employees are treated equally and fairly in respect of these matters. All policies and practices will conform with the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline, redundancy and dismissal.

Related policies

This Equal Opportunities Policy is in accordance with and must be read and applied in conjunction with all of the school's policies, including the Admissions Policy; Behaviour Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy, Accessibility Plan and the Special Educational Needs Policy.

To whom does this policy apply?

Application

This policy applies to the Schools' 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, consultants, volunteers and Governors who are not our employees, but who may work, volunteer or attend at the School (collectively workers).

Workers' duties

All workers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore to treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass 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.

Personnel responsible

Overall responsibility

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's equal opportunities policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Governors has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Bursar.

Management

Those 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.

Questions about this policy

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 are involved in management or recruitment, or if you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Headmaster/Bursar.

Forms of discrimination

Types

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

Direct discrimination: 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 who 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: Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice 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 criteria 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.

Victimisation and harassment: Discrimination also includes victimisation (suffering a detriment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard (called a **Protected Act**) and harassment (see the School's Dignity at Work policy for a more detailed explanation of "harassment").

Recruitment and selection

School's position

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.

Staff training and promotion and conditions of service

The School's position: 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 develop within the organisation. All promotion decisions shall be made on the basis of merit.

Terms and conditions: Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

Disability discrimination

Informing the School

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

Reasonable adjustments

You may also wish to advise the Bursar 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 perform your work. The Bursar 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.

Physical features

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.

Breaches of the policy

Complaints

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 dignity at work policy. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure.

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 and dismissal procedure.

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.

Applicants

Halliford School admits boys from the ages 11 – 18 and Girls into the Sixth Form between the ages 16 - 18. The School accepts applications and admits students irrespective of their race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or special educational needs and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered, subject to the applicant passing the school's entrance examination and subject to the terms of the Admissions Policy. The School will treat every application in a fair, open- minded way.

Selection

Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the student's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of excluding students with special educational needs and/or disability, subject to their passing the entrance examination and subject to the terms of the Admissions Policy.

Admissions Policy

The School's Admissions Policy reflects the School's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this Policy.

Equal Access

The School will afford all students equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual

orientation, religious belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare, and responsibilities as detailed below.

Positive discrimination

The School may afford students of a particular racial group, or students with special educational needs and/or disability, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the students in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

Exclusions

The School will not discriminate against any student by excluding him or her from the School, or by subjecting him or her to any other detriment, on the grounds of his or her gender, gender reassignment, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or special educational needs, subject to the responsibilities as detailed below.

Teaching and School materials

Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias. Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to all students.

Student interaction

All students are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and students will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

The Uniform Policy

This Policy is consistent with this Policy. The school's policy on uniform applies equally rigorously to all students, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare.

Special educational needs and/or disability

Our approach

We are an inclusive school which welcomes members of the school community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the school and we will not treat a member of the school community less favourably on these grounds without justification. Our Policy on Special Educational Needs and out Accessibility Plan are consistent with this policy and are available from the School website.

Definitions

Children have 'special educational needs' if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a "physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term, adverse effect on the ability to perform normal day-to-day activities" (Equality Act 2010). For further clarification please refer to the policies mentioned above.

Informing the School

In accordance with the School's Terms and Conditions, parents of students must notify the Headmaster in writing if they are aware or suspect that the student (or prospective student) has a disability or if they (either parent), the student (or prospective student), or any close relations have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty. The registration form enables prospective parents to give details of their child's disability when applying for a place at the School. Parents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the school with such information will enable the school to support the student as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis.

Admission of children with special educational needs and/or a disability

Applications for a place at the school will be considered on the basis that all 'reasonable adjustments' (see definition below) have been made by the school in order to cater for the child's special educational needs and/or disability. The school will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, the school will not be able to provide adequately for the student's physical and educational needs. The school shall inform the parents of their decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or give reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

Existing students

Where the School becomes aware of special educational needs and/or disability of an existing student, the school will do all that is reasonable to assist the student whilst within the School, which may include making 'reasonable adjustments'. Parents will be asked to withdraw the student, without being charged Fees in Lieu of Notice and with the Acceptance Deposit returned, if, in the professional judgement of the Headmaster, and after consultation with the parents and the student (where appropriate), the School cannot provide adequately for the student's physical and educational needs after all reasonable adjustments have been made. The School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement, which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

Reasonable adjustments

The School has an on-going duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled students and students with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other students. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life, for example: the curriculum; classroom organisation and timetabling; access to School facilities, clubs and visits; the schools' sports and other school policies. Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

Access

The School shall monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The School has an Accessibility Plan, which is reviewed annually and is available on each School's website.

Responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with dignity at all times without regard to their gender, marital/civil partnership status, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religious belief or age except where common decency and consideration dictate.

Overall responsibility: The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Governing Body has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review to the Bursar.

Management: Those 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.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admission and selection, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in the School, the School monitors applicants gender, race, disability and religious belief as part of the Admissions procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy.

Review

The Bursar is responsible for the ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data monitored above and below and will arrange for the taking of appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination where necessary. The Bursar is also responsible for reviewing whether the aims of this Policy are carried out throughout all areas of the School and taking appropriate action where necessary. This policy is reviewed annually by the Bursar. Recommendations for any amendments are reported to the Governors.

Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination

Questions about this policy

If you are involved in management, or if you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Bursar.

Complaints

If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's formal Complaint's Procedure. For a copy of the School's Policy on the handling of concerns and complaints received from Parents and Students aged over 16 years, please see the School Website or request a paper copy from the Headmaster's PA. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

Reports

If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint as outlined above, please contact the Bursar.

Enforcement

We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. The School will always take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

Record

All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Bursar.