



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. HARMENY'S COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

- 1.1 We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment where staff can work free from discrimination, bullying or harassment, and use their talents and abilities to their full extent. We strive to promote equality of opportunity in all our policies, practices and procedures and will vigorously challenge unacceptable behaviour or conduct.
- 1.2 The promotion of equality and diversity is the responsibility of all members of the community. As members of this community, it is expected that all staff will contribute to ensuring that Harmeny continues to be a safe, welcoming and productive environment.
- 1.3 As part of our commitment, you will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**Protected Characteristics**).

2. ABOUT THIS POLICY

- 2.1 This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, performance reviews and supervision, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 2.2 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.
- 2.3 Any questions in relation to this policy should be directed to the HR Department.

3. DISCRIMINATION

- 3.1 You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, pupils, parents, social workers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace and on work-related trips or events including social events.
- 3.2 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 Dignity at Work 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.

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

We are proud to employ people of all ages and backgrounds and understand that diversity is beneficial to the organisation. Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Please refer to our Recruitment Policy for more details.

5. DISABILITIES

- 5.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate. To help us to understand your needs better, we may ask you to attend an occupational health appointment.
- 5.2 We will be guided by medical information in relation to your condition and any potential reasonable adjustments, but you are also encouraged to suggest any adjustments that you believe would be helpful. Careful consideration will be given to any requests and, where reasonable and practicable, such adjustments will normally be made. There may however be circumstances where it will not be reasonable or practicable for us to accommodate proposals, but in those circumstances we will consult with you and explain our decision.

6. 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.

7. RETIREMENT

We have no fixed retirement age and understand that retirement is a choice for the individual. We will not pressurise employees into resigning because they have reached or are approaching a certain age, but we may have discussions with employees regarding their future plans, as part of normal communications and review.

8. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

- 8.1 We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary and Performance Management Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 You will 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 and Performance Management Procedure.

9. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and in line with equality legislation.

V#	Date	Summary
1	April 2020	Information on the school's approach to equality and diversity.