

The New School at West Heath

Quality of Opportunity – Policy Statement

This policy should be read in conjunction with related policy documents; Behaviour Management, Admissions and Staff Selection, Recruitment and Retention.

Introduction

The New School at West Heath believes in the principle of Quality of Opportunity for all. We intend to ensure that no job applicant, employee or student (or their parent/carer) receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, sexual orientation, age, social class, political or religious belief.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied to all practices across our school. It affects three broad groups of people:

- Staff and potential employees of the school
- Current and prospective students of our school
- Parents and carers of students who attend, or who are likely to attend our school.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure all staff are appointed in terms of their professional ability with no overt or covert discrimination exercised of any kind.
- To ensure that our admission criteria is clear and that the principles enshrined in this policy are reflected in the way students are admitted to the school.
- To ensure that all students are given equal access to the curriculum on offer.
- To actively encourage students to acknowledge and understand the viewpoints of people with different genders, ages, ethnic groups creeds etc.
- We value and will reflect the principle of partnership with current and potential parents and carers in the way we teach our children. As such we will ensure that equal opportunities are an integral part of the service provided by our school in this relationship.

Strategies

1. Staffing

Decisions regarding employment will be based solely on professional ability with no overt or covert discrimination exercised in any form, but where candidates for any particular post are considered equal, balances will be considered. No potential or actual member of staff will be dismissed or disciplined unfairly or unjustly. We will ensure that we keep selection requirements and procedures for vacant posts under review to ensure that

people continue to be called to interview, selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

The Principal, Vice Principals, Teachers, Support Assistants and Care staff will always be referred to in these terms, avoiding gender specific terminology.

All staff will ensure their responsibility to be positive role models, encouraging students' awareness and acceptance of the views of others in line with the principles inherent in this policy statement. As such, we will promote the spirit and principle of quality of opportunity for all through non-discriminatory practice. Staff training and development strategies will embrace this principle in their application.

2. Students

We endeavour to admit any student who could benefit from the curriculum and philosophical approach of our school. Children and young people admitted to our school will be taught to the best of our ability in achieving their potential. This is irrespective of their ability (having fulfilled our admission criteria), religion, gender or ethnic origin. We will draw from the principles and guidance described in our policies for "differentiation" and "philosophical approach" in the manner of our teaching.

We will ensure that all students enjoy access appropriately to a broad and balanced curriculum.

We will ensure that we comply with the guidance and obligations enshrined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. We will take reasonable measures to ensure that students with physical disabilities are not discriminated against and ensure that active and reasonable measures are taken to positively discriminate for such children.

All students will be actively exposed to views and experiences from many different groups in society in their Sociology, Careers, PHSE, RE lessons and assemblies. All subject staff will seek opportunities within their syllabuses to promote equality of opportunity and, whenever possible, use resources employing examples using male/female names/photographs and those from a variety of ethnic and other minorities.

The school meal menu will feature meals traditionally associated with other countries and cultures in promoting this policy.

There are no gender specific courses. All year 11 pupils are equally encouraged to choose a variety of options, matching their interests and abilities.

Any observed or reported instances of antisocial behaviour regarding issues falling within the remit of this policy will be addressed through the appropriate disciplinary and pastoral system.(See Behaviour management Policy). These issues will be discussed openly and nothing "will be swept under the carpet!"

Sanctions and rewards for our students will be fairly administered.

Staffing and Resources

The Principal has primary responsibility for the setting, implementing and monitoring policy and practice on behalf of the schools' Trustees.

All staff have equal responsibility for ensuring good practice.

Implementation of any part of this policy which has financial implications must be approved by the finance committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Quality of Opportunity	
This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Race Relations, Staff Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure	
Appendices:	
Monitoring of Policy Implementation is the responsibility of: The Senior Leadership Team	
Lead responsibility:	Vice Principal - Residential
Relevant Legislation:	To be detailed in the next release
Annual Policy Review Required:	Yes / No
Approved by: S.S. Committee	Date approved:
Ratified by: Trustees	Date ratified: 10/2003
Reviewed – no changes	Date:
Reviewed – with revisions	Date:
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