

Equalities Policy

REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

PART 2: Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

PART 3: Welfare, Health and safety

To be read in conjunction with:

SMSC Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed: 28th May 2014, 9th March 2015, 4th March 2016, 4th April 2017, 17th April 2018

Hopedale is committed to treating all members of staff, children and /or suppliers fairly and equitably regardless of: race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religious or political beliefs, membership of professional associations or trade unions, disability, marital status, family responsibility and socio-economic standing or any other category where discrimination cannot be reasonably justified. We will ensure that no unjustifiable requirements or conditions are imposed that could disadvantage individuals on any of the above grounds.

Hopedale believes that it must be proactive in promoting equality through the embracing, valuing and recognition of difference including cultural differences.

Hopedale is committed to tackling all facets of inequality and discrimination, to create genuine equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of different groups. In realising these commitments, Hopedale expresses its opposition to all forms of discrimination and its intention to take positive action in promoting equality and justice for all.

Hopedale seeks to create an accessible environment and to extend opportunities in education, training and employment to those groups identified as under-represented in employment at all levels.

Hopedale intends to disseminate this policy widely to all employees. In addition, it will bring this policy to the attention of contractors, visitors and associates who will be expected to adhere to this and other associated Equality Policies and Procedures. We will strive to ensure that all adhere to the Policy in their work.

This policy is informed by a number of key principles:

- Discrimination, whether direct or indirect, that is based on a person's gender, colour, race, ethnicity or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or any other irrelevant distinction is unlawful, unjust and a waste of human resources. Hopedale is committed to the elimination of unfair discrimination through the adoption of the action plan principle and to the provision of equality for all, through education, training and employment.

- All individuals have a right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect. Since collective group affiliations are often central to people's identities, fair treatment entails acknowledging cultural diversity and respecting cultural differences. The promotion of true equality of opportunity, embracing of diversity and the treatment of people with due regard and respect for differences requires monitoring, target setting and the development of programmes of positive action. Such programmes need to be regularly reviewed and revised when needed.
- Hopedale acknowledges that as an organisation it may still reflect patterns of inequality that are widespread in society at large and recognises that the creation of a truly inclusive organisation, where cultural diversity is positively valued and unlawful discrimination in all its forms is eliminated, will entail considerable and ongoing work, and require a wide-ranging action plan which actively engages all sections of the community, including employees. In order to meet legislative requirements, we must ensure that the promotion of equality becomes central to the way the organisation works. While certain facets of equality Legislation covering gender, race and disability apply to all functions and activities of the organisation, they have particular pertinence to those areas of activity that directly affect its staff and children. The main priorities therefore relate to staff recruitment, selection and career progression and the clients it serves.

Organisational Responsibilities

The senior management team has responsibility for ensuring the implementation and review of the policy and any associated action plan; ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities under the policy; and ensuring that any breaches of the policy are dealt with appropriately.

Hopedale also recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure that the requirements of the Legislation are implemented through partnership and procurement arrangements. In relation to formal partnership activities with public, private and voluntary sector organisations, we will ensure that partners are fully aware of the Hopedale policy and that partner organisations also have in place appropriate policies and where appropriate are able to meet the general duties of the Legislation. In relation to procurement, Hopedale will seek to develop good practice in communicating the values, standards and expectations it has of suppliers and contractors with regard to all in/equality facets. Legislation currently requires that Race and Disability receive specific focus.

The directors have direct responsibilities for promoting equality and good relations between different groups. These include: ensuring that any issues of discrimination and/or breaches of the policy are dealt with through appropriate Company procedures; provision of staff development and training in relation to equality and diversity; and the inclusion within annual reviews and development plans of specific objectives relating to in/equality.

Management Responsibilities

Management responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity entail within their respective sphere of responsibility the following:

- Actively participating in proactive measures, utilising a variety of tools including the Equality Impact Assessment Process.

- Ensuring that bullying and harassment are not tolerated.
- Ensuring that wittingly or unwittingly they are not carrying out or requesting to be carried out acts which may be deemed to be discriminatory.
- Facilitating effective communication between management and staff by ensuring that information is cascaded/disseminated/distributed amongst the staff groups for whom they have responsibility.
- Ensuring that staff are fully trained to perform their roles and that staff are released to attend mandatory programmes of training on Equality and Diversity and any updates to the required training.
- Ensuring where appropriate that Disciplinary and Grievance Policies and Procedures and associated Policies are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring that accurate records are maintained for Staff. This entails thorough records being kept of all reported incidents, notably complaints, grievances and disciplinary cases, and their outcomes.

Individual Responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to co-operate in ensuring that the aims and objectives of the policy statement are achieved.

All staff are required to participate in the Equality and Diversity Training and Development Opportunities provided.

All individuals have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they encourage Equality and Diversity within Hopedale and to ensure that their actions do not contribute wittingly or unwittingly to unfair or discriminatory treatment of others.

Individuals are encouraged to support colleagues who may be experiencing unfair or discriminatory treatment through bringing this to the attention of the perpetrator and/or by encouraging the recipient to take action through informal and formal Procedures.

Equality and Diversity for children

We encourage children to develop respect for themselves and for others

We deliver services that recognise and build on the strengths of children from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and backgrounds; in ways that meet their needs and help them to achieve their full potential.

Every effort is made to ensure that Hopedale is welcoming to all children and others significant in their care and wellbeing.

Each pupil has a diversity section on their risk assessment.

Children are offered opportunities to try out new experiences, which are not restricted by traditional gender options.

Staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

Managers are expected to monitor the range of children and young people placed within the Home and school in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability. This is to ensure the service provision is reaching all and not creating barriers to certain groups.

Inclusion

All children are given the opportunity to be cared for and educated. Where possible this is alongside their peers in order to develop their full potential.

Children are encouraged and supported to understand their rights and be well-informed about ways of challenging discrimination.

Managers are expected to identify local community resources that contribute to meeting the needs of individuals- these are highlighted and promoted and where they do not meet required needs alternatives are sought and suitably identified regardless of geographical location, for example hairdressers who specialise in braiding or cutting African Caribbean hair.

Children are cared for by staff who have been suitably trained in all aspects of equality and diversity including legislation and their responsibilities.

Managers ensure that assessments of the child's specific needs are carried out with an aim to support and develop their full potential.

Managers are expected to examine ways in which diversity can be celebrated and activities adapted to meet the Individual child's needs including food preparation and menu choices.

Staff are expected to acknowledge the importance of maintaining a link between the child's home and the school in meeting the individual's need.

Staff are expected to offer appropriate support to aid inclusion and ensure that the children can fully participate in activities. If necessary seek additional support in order to do this.

Additional support is offered to staff and/or Children who are finding difficulty in understanding diverse or complex situations

Equality in Employment

Hopedale aims to ensure no job applicant or employee is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, colour, creed, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

We will maintain a neutral working environment in which no worker feels under threat or intimidated.

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment and selection process is crucially important, we will endeavour through appropriate training to make selection and recruitment decisions which do not discriminate, whether consciously or subconsciously.

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

Job descriptions, where used, will be revised to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any person specifications.

We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of the vacancies.

We will not confine our recruitment to areas or media sources, which provide only, or mainly, applicants of a particular group.

All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

All employees involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

More than one person will carry out short listing and interviewing where possible.

Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of any discriminatory nature.

We will not disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete an application unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the job.

Selection decisions will not be influenced by any perceived prejudices of other Staff.

Accessibility

Hopedale will ensure that it complies with the legislation relating to disability, especially the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and believes in providing a welcoming, comfortable and accessible environment that is safe and easy to use for children, parents, relatives, staff, visitors and other users of the premises.

We will endeavour to achieve equality of opportunity for all to ensure equal access to its facilities.

Where possible, we will avoid physical features that make it difficult for people with a disability and make reasonable adjustments to improve the environment.