

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Rugby School Group fully supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes discrimination based on sex, marriage and civil partnership, any gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, part time or fixed term employment and age (defined as Protected Characteristics).
- 1.2 Being a committed equal opportunities employer, Rugby School Group will take every possible step to ensure that staff members are treated equally and fairly in respect of these matters. All policies and practices will comply with the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline, redundancy and dismissal. Our staff and applicants for employment shall not be disadvantaged by any policies or conditions of service, which cannot be justified as necessary for operational purposes.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff members of Rugby School Group, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to ex-staff members, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff, consultants and volunteers and Governors who are not our staff members, but who work at Rugby School Group (collectively workers).
- 2.2 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, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 2.3 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 Rugby School Group with regard to equal opportunities.
- 2.4 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 Human Resources Department.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 All staff members 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.
- 3.2 The Governing Body of Rugby Group 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 maintenance and review to the Head of Human Resources.

- 3.3 If you believe that, you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or through our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

4.0 DISCRIMINATION

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

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

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their race or sexual orientation.
- **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 do. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- **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 him or her. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
- **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- **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.

5.0 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- 5.1 Recruitment and other selection exercises will be conducted based on merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than

one person and with the involvement of the Human Resources Department, where possible.

- 5.2 Rugby School Group 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 based on 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.
- 5.3 To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to recruitment and selection, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be underrepresented in employment, the School monitors applicants' racial origins, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of the data provide the basis for taking appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and implement this policy.

6.0 STAFF TRAINING AND PROMOTION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- 6.1 Staff training needs shall be identified through yearly staff appraisals. All workers will be given an equal opportunity and access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation. All promotion decisions shall be made based on merit.
- 6.2 Terms and conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are available to all workers who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

7.0 DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 You may also wish to advise your Line Manager or the Director of Human Resources of any reasonable adjustments to your working conditions or the duties of your job, which you consider 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 to perform your work. Your Line Manager or the Director of Human Resources 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.

7.3 Rugby School Group shall 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, Rugby School Group will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.

8.0 FIXED TERM AND PART TIME WORKERS

8.1 Rugby School Group will monitor our use of fixed-term workers member and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress within Rugby School Group to ensure that they have access to available permanent vacancies.

8.2 Rugby School Group will monitor the conditions of service of part-time workers member and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will also ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the School's Flexible Working Policy

9.0 AGENCY WORKERS

9.1 Rugby School Group will monitor agency workers to ensure that they are treated no less favourably than a comparable worker in relation to accessing collective facilities and amenities at Rugby School Group. The Group will also monitor the use of temporary work agencies and subject to the exceptions set out in the Agency Workers Regulations 2010, will ensure that all agency workers have the same basic working conditions they would have been entitled to had they been recruited by the School directly into a comparable role.

10.0 BREACHES

10.1 Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

10.2 There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

11.0 RELATED POLICIES

Harassment & Bullying Policy

Disciplinary Policy

Flexible Working Policy

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption Shared and Parental Leave Policies

Time Off for Dependents Policy

12.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 12.1 Further information and guidance regarding this policy or its application can be obtained from the HR Department; hr@rugbyschool.net.