



*Inspiring Learners for their future*

# **EQUALITY POLICY**

**UPDATED MAY 2012**

## Consultation History

<b>Governors/staff/parents/students</b>	<b>Date</b>
Executive (Leadership Group)	
Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff	
Students and HR/H&S Committee	
Full Governing Body	May 2012
Next Review of Policy	

# Equality and Diversity Policy

# The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College

## EQUALITY POLICY

### Equality Policy

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation such as the Ethnicity Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It has consolidated this legislation to provide a single source of discrimination law.

### Rationale:

At The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College there is a commitment to provide equal opportunities to everyone within the School's learning community, including staff, students, parents and visitors to the School. At The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College we value respect and will not tolerate racism, sexism, homophobia relating to gender or sexual orientation, prejudicial attitudes towards culture, religion, special educational need/disability, bullying or any other oppressive behaviour.

Discrimination in any form is actively discouraged and students are encouraged to show respect for others. We recognise the important role which School plays in helping to form attitudes and values in young people and will actively promote anti discriminatory behaviour and work to prevent anti social behaviours.

As such, The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College, will ensure a learning and teaching environment which is free of discrimination. Education is about maximising opportunities for personal growth and fulfilment. Opportunities will be available to all, regardless of ability, age, gender, ethnic or social background. These opportunities are secured through positive action by the School and the community.

At The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College we celebrate diversity of culture, ethnicity and talents and try to ensure that everyone is given opportunities to value their own contribution to the School and to have this noticed and valued by others. The School's mission is to ensure that students, regardless of background, will be part of our community. We seek to give all students equality of opportunity, irrespective of gender, ability (both physical and mental), ethnicity or religion. We seek to close the gap between the achievements of different groups of young people so that all have equal opportunities in their adult life and empower them in all areas of life to contribute purposefully to society. This is fully reflected in our School's vision and values, which seeks to promote good relationships between everyone in the School community, building an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence.

**Aims:**

At The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College we are committed to the following aspects of equality:

- to ensure high quality education for all students
- having high expectations of all students  
to support the positive development of personal and cultural identities, preparing students for full participation in society
- to promote the principles of equality, respect, fairness and justice for all
- to develop universal values and citizenship by celebrating cultural diversity and supporting students in developing a positive self-image
- to provide students with equal access to the full range of learning opportunities
- to promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups, challenging stereotyping, prejudice and acting promptly to remove any forms of direct or indirect discrimination
- to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve
- to collect information with regard to ethnic origin for monitoring purposes

**The Role of the Headteacher is to:**

- ensure that School policies take account of equal opportunities
- implement and review the School's Equality policy
- ensure that all members of the School community are aware of and implement the policy
- ensure that the policy is implemented with regard to staff selection and appointments
- take seriously reports of discrimination from parents/carers, students or staff by investigating them and ensuring that appropriate action is taken
- ensure that information with regard to ethnic origin is collected and entered into the school Information System and that this information is used as part of the monitoring of equality of opportunity in line with the Data Protection Act

**Specifically this includes ensuring:**

- cover for absent colleagues is fairly distributed
- requests for leave of absence are dealt with consistently
- duties are fairly allocated
- non-contact time is distributed as per the recommended formula
- workload expectations are reasonable
- interviewing procedures adhere to Safer Recruitment guidelines
- equal access to professional development is provided and
- pay and conditions are implemented according to National Pay Scales
- monitoring curriculum planning
- monitoring School procedures and organisation
- undertaking initiatives to improve provision for all students
- to create an environment which affirms and supports ethnic, cultural, religious and social diversity and effectively promotes good personal, community and ethnicity relations

## **The Role of the Faculty Leader:**

When designing schemes of work, this policy will act as a guide both in their choice of topics for study and in how to approach sensitive issues:

1. To ensure opportunities are provided in curriculum content to promote students' understanding of different environments and societies other than their own
2. When devising curriculum policies and selecting resources all staff will ensure that teaching material is non-discriminatory
3. To provide balance in themes or topics and planned learning experiences, taking into account the interest of both boys and girls
4. To implement strategies to raise levels of achievement, aspirations and self-esteem in all students

## **The Role of the Teacher:**

The teacher has a crucial role in providing for equal opportunities and enabling students to develop universal values and encompass the principles of equality, respect, fairness and justice.

1. The class teacher will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect
2. They do not discriminate against any child
3. When selecting classroom material, teachers pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers will strive to provide material which gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups
4. Will choose learning styles and teaching strategies that avoid gender bias and stereotyping and that also reflect the diverse and multi-racial nature of our society
5. Will use teaching styles, methods, language, questioning and classroom management that includes and engages all students

## **Whole School Application:**

### **a. Admissions**

The School does not permit gender, ethnicity, colour or disability to be used as a criteria for admission.

### **b. Registration**

- school lists are organised chronologically or alphabetically, not by group (unless this is require by an outside agency for a particular purpose)
- students' names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students should be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures

### **c. Discrimination**

All forms of discrimination within the School should be treated seriously. All reported incidents will be logged whenever they take place in the School. It will be explained to the offender why the behaviour is unacceptable.

**d. Curriculum**

All students have access to the School's curriculum. Staff are aware how their own expectations affect the achievements, behaviour and status of each student. The curriculum is to be balanced, objective and meet the needs of all students.

**e. Resources**

The School's aim is to provide for all students according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origins. In selecting curriculum resources, staff should aim to present positive images that are non-racist and non-sexist. Students should be presented with accurate information about similarities and differences between cultural groups.

**f. School and Classroom Organisation**

1. Equal opportunities will be considered when grouping students for activities. This may involve special specific groupings to ensure that every child participates fully.
2. Each child will be given opportunities to exercise responsibility within the classroom or the School, with care taken regarding stereotyping of roles. We see boys and girls equally in the opportunities we provide for achievement and leadership.

**g. Resources:**

1. When choosing new materials, we seek balance in the representation of the sexes and minority groups, looking for positive role models in stories and settings.
2. Language used in resources is monitored for bias so that we do not promote negative or derogatory images.
3. Display materials and illustrations reflect the diversity of our society where appropriate and show both men and women in positive situations and roles.

**h. Strategies for creating an equal opportunities environment:**

1. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour, rather than giving a high profile to students who are misbehaving, including use of praise, certificates and rewards.
2. Clear and concise School rules, phrased in terms that the student can understand. All students need to understand that name-calling, bullying or biased attitudes and behaviour are unacceptable in our School.
3. Use of the mentoring programme and curriculum where appropriate to promote positive attitudes.
4. Changing groupings for specific tasks, so that students have opportunities to join in co-operative activities with different people.
5. Creativity and role-play, including acting out feelings or conflicts, in order that students can see why their behaviour is unacceptable and be encouraged to change their attitudes.
6. Visits from people who have non-stereotypical jobs.
7. Visits from people from different races and cultures.
8. Visits from disabled people.
9. Taking part in multi-cultural activities and events.
10. Contact with disabled students.
11. Recognition and praise for all forms of achievement from all students.

**i. Personnel and Staffing Issues:**

The school affords equal treatment to all its employees and prospective employees. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less than favourable treatment on grounds of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and

maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sex orientation, or is disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. Selection and promotion criteria will be kept under continual review to ensure that individuals are selected and promoted on the basis of their relative merit and abilities, having agreed to the need of the specific job.

Where possible, training will be given to enable employees to have an opportunity of promotion and progression according to their ability and potential.

**j. All staff:**

1. All our staff will challenge incidents of prejudice or racism.
2. Serious incidents are recorded and reported to the attention of the Assistant Headteacher (Student Support).
3. All staff will support the work of other colleagues and intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

### **Action in Cases of Discrimination against Students**

All staff must challenge incidents of prejudice or discrimination. Incidents are to be recorded using a Behaviour Incident Form and reported to their line manager who is responsible for reporting to the Assistant Headteacher (Student Support).

### **Serious Incidents**

If a student or a group of students are found to be in breach of the Equality Policy, the School will apply an appropriate sanction, which will be recorded in a special file and the student's personal file. The following sanctions may be used:

- detention
- isolation
- fixed-term exclusion and
- permanent exclusion

### **Discrimination by Staff**

Staff are required to adhere to the policies of The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College.

The complaints procedure will be invoked if it is found that the equal opportunities policies have not been adhered to. Disciplinary action may follow.

### **Discrimination against Staff**

If a member of staff believes that they have been subject to discrimination they should report the matter to the Headteacher or a member of the senior team. If they feel unable to discuss the matter with the Headteacher they may refer to the Chair of Governors.

The Headteacher will make a record of the interview with the member of staff and both should sign it as an accurate record. The Headteacher is responsible for conducting an investigation

within four working days and informing those concerned of the outcome. The disciplinary procedure is followed if a member of staff is found to be in breach of the Equality Policy.

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that there is a procedure in place to monitor and evaluate:

- the progress of students of all groups compared to the progress made by other students in the school
- the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post is discriminated against
- behaviour incident forms and exclusions to ensure that students from minority groups are not unfairly treated and
- the impact of additional support on standards achieved

Any changes to the policy required as a result of monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and or changes in the law must be disseminated to students, parents and staff.

## **Access and Disability**

The School has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to provide access to the site and its facilities or to have a plan to do so. The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring that all reasonable adjustments and alterations are made to ensure that no student with a disability is disadvantaged compared to students without a disability.

Parents are encouraged to provide information with regard to age, sex and ethnic origin for monitoring purposes as per the Data Protection Act. An individual's race, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, disability or religious beliefs do not form part of the admissions process at The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College.

Where it is practicable, reasonable adjustments are made to enable a student to be admitted.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- reviewing the School's policy, procedure and facilities with regard to the admissions, physical layout of the School and its facilities, access to the curriculum and extracurricular activities
- drawing up a disability plan as part of the School Strategic and Operational Plan which makes recommendations to improve accessibility
- accessing and monitoring the impact of the Equality policy on students, staff and parents, in particular the attainment levels and participation of students from different groups
- recording racist incidents and responding to them in the most appropriate way and
- reviewing the policy on an annual basis

## **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Learning & Teaching Policy
- Special Educational Needs and DDA Policies
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policies
- Relevant DFE legislation

## APPENDIX

### Annex 1: Definition of Discrimination

Discrimination in recruitment is unlawful and can be identified as direct/indirect discrimination, harassment, segregation and victimisation.

Direct discrimination occurs when a person or group is treated less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.

Indirect Discrimination involves the inclusion of a condition or a requirement which adversely affects applications from a large proportion of persons.

Harassment consists of any repeated and unwanted comments, looks, suggestions or physical contact that a person finds objectionable and offensive and causes them discomfort at work.

Segregation is unlawful and occurs when a person or group of people are kept separate from others on the basis of their particular race or sex.

Victimisation is unlawful and occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others would be in the same circumstances.

### Annex 2: Examples of incidents requiring serious response

Race:

- a) a physical assault against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity;
- b) verbal abuse, derogatory name calling, insults, threats, racist jokes
- c) racist graffiti
- d) issuing/wearing of racist materials, eg, leaflets, magazines, insignia;
- e) inciting others to behave in a racist manner
- f) making racist comments or suggestions in the course of discussions or lessons
- g) refusing to co-operate with colleagues or students because of colour or ethnic origin
- h) excluding students from activities, or recruiting and selecting in preferential ways

Gender:

- a) physical abuse against a person or group because of their gender
- b) verbal abuse and intimidation, insults, threats against a person or group because of their gender
- c) using lurid or suggestive vocabulary to cause offence or humiliation
- d) reference to an individual or groups sexuality
- e) making sexist comments or suggestions in the course of discussion or lessons
- f) refusing to co-operate with colleagues or students because of their gender

Disability:

- a) physical assault against an individual because of his/her disability
- b) verbal abuse, intimidation, insults, threats against the individual because of his or her disability
- c) offensive reference to an individual's disability inside or outside lessons
- d) refusing to co-operate with an individual because of his/her disability