



**NEW COLLEGE SCHOOL, OXFORD**  
PRE-PREP & PREPARATORY SCHOOL

### **Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017**

New College School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. This policy applies to all aspects of our relationship with staff, to relations between staff members at all levels, and to the way in which staff treat visitors, parents, pupils, suppliers and former staff members. This includes job advertisements, recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts), and on school-related trips or events including social events.

We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, part time status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (“protected characteristics”).

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity and respect at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff because of their protected characteristics. All managers/Heads of Department must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Staff are given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and, for the appropriate roles, equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and will be amended from time to time. This policy covers all individuals working at all levels in the School.

- We seek to fulfil our obligation by making all aspects of the curriculum available to all.
- We deal with all applications for staff vacancies from an equal opportunities standpoint.
- We promote an atmosphere within the school of caring, sensitive attitudes and behaviour.

- We seek to be aware of any aspects of our physical environment which might not promote equal opportunities and are working to rectify these in our development plan wherever possible.
- As appropriate, we provide reasonable and appropriate support for any pupil for whom English is his second language, or whose physical disability seriously affects his educational progress, within the budgetary constraints placed upon us.
- We use language sensitively, with positive use of inclusive language, avoidance of language which carries implications of superiority of one race, gender or sexual orientation and an abhorrence of the use of racist or sexist language.
- We use teaching resources to positively support equal opportunities, including a sensitive, unbiased approach to the presentation of historical and geographical material, the critical examination of texts to ensure that they do not contain racist or sexist material or perpetuate racist or sexist prejudices and the positive use of the work of authors from all backgrounds. Equally, we take care that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils in school, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.
- All staff undertake equality and diversity training.

### **Discrimination**

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former staff, job applicants, parents, including those of prospective pupils, pupils/prospective pupils, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with parents, pupils, suppliers or other work-related contacts), and on work-related trips or events including social events. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally and unintentionally/unconsciously. The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

**Direct discrimination** occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

**Harassment** related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. All members of staff at NCS are expected to conform to our Dignity and Respect policy, and they confirm

this at the start of each year through the PMR process.

**Victimisation** is also prohibited. This is 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.

### **Recruitment and selection**

We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics above. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. The school adopts a best practice approach to applications for flexible working. Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.

Applicants should not be asked about: health or disability before a job offer is made; past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy or plans to have children; matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment; without the approval of the New College HR Department (who will first consider whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account).

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively and to identify groups that may be disadvantaged or underrepresented, we may monitor applicants' protected characteristics as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

### **Current staff**

All staff are given appropriate access to training and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit. We will ensure that any redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory. We will also ensure that

disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

We monitor our use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately.

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate. If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your SLT mentor, line manager, and/or the New College HR Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The school may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

### **Breaches of this policy**

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against or that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter with your SLT mentor, line Manager, or the New College HR Department either informally or in accordance with our staff grievance procedure.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

Any member of staff who witnesses anything which causes them to be concerned about discrimination under this policy even if it does not relate to their own treatment should approach New College HR with a view to discussing the matter further. The school has a reasonable expectation to be advised of any behaviour which could result in liability under this policy.

## **Accessibility**

Accessibility applies to all members of the community, whether a pupil accessing education and other opportunities at NCS, or an adult employed to work at NCS. We welcome all children who can make the most of the opportunities that we offer, meet our entry requirements, and can flourish in the caring environment of NCS. Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we welcome pupils with disabilities providing their needs can be met by the making of reasonable adjustments. The same goes for members of staff who would like to work at NCS. There is a duty to make reasonable adjustments if someone is placed at a substantial disadvantage because of their disability compared with non-disabled people or people who don't share their disability. 'Reasonable' in 'reasonable adjustments' takes into account: a person's disability; how practicable the changes are; if the requested change would overcome the disadvantage a disabled person would experience; the size of the organisation; how much money and resources are available; the cost of making the changes; if any changes have already been made.

Alongside this ethos we also have legal obligations in this area. These include The Equality Act 2010 which requires us to have a three year accessibility plan (which forms part of our whole-school development plan). This Accessibility Plan therefore describes how NCS is planning to meet the needs of disabled pupils and improve accessibility for them.

### **Examples of adjustments for accessibility:**

- Regular review of premises to consider reasonable adjustments for physical access; access considered as a major factor when designing new buildings (or making adjustments to old ones) – this takes into account steps and stairs; passageways and paths; entrances and exits; internal and external doors; toilets; signs; lighting and ventilation
- There are disabled toilets readily available at the centre of the school on the ground floor outside the sports hall and in the pre-prep foyer
- Ensuring directional signage is clear
- Seeking external specialist advice, when appropriate, for improving access to written material
- Teachers to explore and utilise methods of alternative delivery, including using handouts and ICT provision (e.g. iPads with variable screen/font size), emphasising the need for clear layout of information
- Exploring different versions of texts, e.g. graphic novels, audiobooks
- Ensuring all staff are aware of SEND matters through regular update and promulgation of IEPs, discussion in staff meetings
- Delivering training, when appropriate in main SEND areas, e.g. autism spectrum disorders

- Using staff meetings (and other methods of staff communication e.g. Schoolbase, staffshare, institutional email) to improve communication flow to/from teachers, especially those engaged most directly with SEND issues
- Maintaining a dialogue with parents to identify any SEND issues early and to refer them to the LECCO, and then to any appropriate outside agencies (e.g. speech and language therapist)
- Recommendations for accessibility from the LECCO include using different coloured paper for some pupils, giving them individual iPads, using the VLE to set and take in work when appropriate, differentiating work appropriately, giving 1:1 support or small-group support
- When possible and appropriate, reallocating location of lessons (if, for example, a pupil is unable to climb flights of stairs and needs to remain on the ground floor)
- External lighting has been adjusted and improved (summer 2020) and there is a rolling audit of internal lighting, with lighting replacement where necessary
- Considering flexible working to account for disabilities, in conjunction with New College HR, if it is possible to ensure that the duties of a particular role are still fulfilled
- Resurfacing the school's outdoor areas to remove curbs, have a uniform level for accessibility, and to minimise the number of steps into buildings
- Adding a ramp to the side door of the 1903 building to allow access to this area