

**Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy**

Watchorn Christian School strives to ensure that our recruitment and employment procedures are fair for all, creating an ethos of respect and kindness. We aim to support our staff to be able work to the best of their ability in a caring environment, whilst upholding the religious character of our school.

This policy is applicable to all employees of Watchorn Christian School including teaching and support staff. It also applies to job applicants and volunteers.

**Aims**

This Equality Policy is intended to respond to the spirit as well as the letter of the Equality Act (2010). The policy recognises that the school has a duty to remove discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, by integrating equality into the school’s core priorities and functions.

**Introduction**

The school is firmly committed to promoting and complying with equality of

opportunity in all aspects of employment including recruitment, pay, terms and conditions of service, development and training. The school will take positive steps to create an employment culture through its governing body, senior leadership team, employees and volunteers, in which people feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and tolerance irrespective of the characteristics that they share or their individual differences.

This policy complements other equality policies that are available within the school.

**Definitions**

**Equality and Diversity**

Equality refers to outcomes, making sure that all social groups benefit equally from our activities. Diversity recognises that we can only achieve equality by taking into account the different needs of the population. Equality is impossible to achieve without recognising diversity.

The school will promote and celebrate diversity. The school recognises that that it can only deliver high quality services through its employees, and that it values and welcomes the perspectives and contributions that a diverse workforce brings to their roles, and will endeavour to secure a workforce that is representative of the wider community.

**Discrimination**

Discrimination is a type of negative treatment that affects a whole group of people who share a Protected Characteristic, or an individual because they belong to a group. In the Equality Act this is called a Protected Characteristic and they are as follows:

• Gender

• Marital status and civil partnership

• Pregnancy/Maternity

• Transgender

• Disability

• Ethnicity

• Age

• Religion and Belief

• Sexual Orientation

 Discrimination is shaped by social assumptions that feed into:

• The way people behave towards each other

• The way in which institutions operate

Discrimination gives rise to long term patterns of inequality in terms of:

• Educational attainment

• Employment opportunities

• Distribution of wealth and resources

• Health

• Involvement in the criminal justice system

**Direct discrimination** is when a person is treated less favourable than others because of their (real or perceived) ethnicity, disability, age, sexuality, religion/belief or gender.

**Indirect discrimination** is when there are rules or procedures that have the effect of discriminating against certain groups of people.

The school is committed to developing employment policies, procedures and

practices that do not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against anyone and that promote equality of opportunity for all.

**Harassment and victimisation**

Harassment, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, is unwanted conduct or behaviour related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Victimisation, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, is where an employee suffers less favourable treatment because they have brought proceedings or given evidence or information relating to such proceedings, or has alleged that discrimination occurred under relevant legislation.

The school will not accept harassment and victimisation of any kind and perpetrators are liable to action under the school’s disciplinary policy.

**The equality duty for schools**

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

As public bodies, maintained schools must comply with the Public Sector

Equality Duty (PSED) introduced by the Equality Act 2010, which requires schools to have due regard to the need to:

* Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristic.
* Advance equality of opportunity between different groups/people, who share a relevant protected characteristic and groups/people who do not; by taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
* Foster good relations between different groups/people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; by encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
* Having due regard involves thinking consciously about how the schools

 existing and proposed policies and decisions impact on equality.

**Responsibilities**

**The Governing Body of the school has responsibility for:**

* ensuring that all policies and procedures comply with the Public Sector

Equality Duty (PSED) introduced by the Equality Act 2010;

* monitoring the equalities impact of all policies and working practices;
* supporting the implementation of this policy;
* ensuring that all employment policies and procedures are non-discriminatory;
* ensuring that complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively;

**The head teacher and other members of the senior leadership team have**

**responsibility for:**

* ensuring that this policy is implemented in all employment and management practices;
* ensuring that this policy is brought to the attention of all employees and volunteers;
* encouraging good practice and dealing appropriately with any breaches of this policy;
* monitoring the operation of relevant policies and procedures; and
* nominating a lead member of the senior management team to take the lead of equality and diversity issues.

**All school employees and volunteers have a responsibility to:**

* act within equal opportunities legislation and to comply with this policy;
* report any breaches of this policy to their line manager, or other appropriate person.

**Principles**

Our objective is to treat everyone with dignity and respect and value all views, efforts and achievements. We are committed to treating everyone, whether currently employed in the school or an applicant for a post, fairly, respecting their achievements and contributions and ensuring equality of opportunity. This will be seen both in the way that potential employees are encouraged to seek and gain employment within the school and in the way existing employees are treated.

Further principles of this policy are:

* the training needs of Governors and employees in the school will be

reviewed to ensure that they promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice in their work.

* Selection criteria and procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
* All Governors and employees who are involved with recruitment and selection have a responsibility to ensure that they have received the appropriate training to enable them to act in a fair and legal manner and to ensure that no unlawful act of discrimination occurs. This provision runs alongside the Safer Recruitment requirements which apply in schools.
* This policy will be made available to all Governors, employees, new

employees and job applicants within the school.

* Any school employee who is subject to discrimination in the course of his/her employment will be fully supported and may raise their complaints with their manager, or make use of the school’s grievance, dignity at work (bullying and harassment) or complaints procedures in order to raise their complaints.

**Schools with religious character**

As Watchorn Christian School is an independent, Christian School, we will pay regard to **Section 60 (5) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010)** which states that:

(5) If the school is a voluntary aided school—

(a) preference may be given, in connection with the appointment, remuneration or promotion of teachers at the school, to persons—

(i) whose religious opinions are in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination specified in relation to the school under section 69(4), or

(ii) who attend religious worship in accordance with those tenets, or

(iii) who give, or are willing to give, religious education at the school in accordance with those tenets; and

(b) regard may be had, in connection with the termination of the employment of any teacher at the school, to any conduct on his part which is incompatible with the precepts, or with the upholding of the tenets.

Equality Act (2010) Non-teaching staff

8.19 Religious criteria may not be applied to any other posts in a VA school unless there is a genuine occupational requirement. This would need to be justified but might, for example, apply to a member of staff required to give pastoral care to pupils.

**Complaints**

Existing employees of the school who feel they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised should raise it in the first instance with their line manager or another manager within the school (where their own line manager is the subject of the complaint). Employees should refer to the school’s staff grievance policy.

Other complaints from individuals not currently employed by the school should raise their concerns via the school’s complaints procedure.

All concerns raised will be handled in a positive and sensitive manner and in

accordance the relevant policy/procedure.

**Review**

The policy will be reviewed in the light of operating experience and/or changes in legislation and in consultation with the Trade Unions.

**This policy was reviewed by the schools Governing Body on 12/01/2021 and will be reviewed every other year.**