

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Equality of opportunity at New Hall School is based on the Gospel values expressed in its Mission & Ethos Statement:

New Hall, a Catholic boarding and day school, provides **the best start in life**, enabling students to meet confidently the challenges of the wider world.

Here **academic excellence** is achieved in surroundings where relationships are based on **care, trust** and **respect**.

We **welcome** students from many traditions, building a Christian **community** that has at its heart **prayer** and **service** to others.

1. Purpose of the policy

1.1 School's position: New Hall School, in accordance with its Mission & Ethos Statement, aims to develop students from many traditions to meet confidently the challenges of the wider world, to achieve their own academic potential and to develop relationships based on the Gospel values of care, trust and respect. Equality of opportunity at New Hall is based on these key Christian values.

At the heart of our foundation is the faith that is essential to the character of the School. The School is a Catholic community, and welcomes students and staff of different religious beliefs who support its ethos. The spiritual development of all those at New Hall is of the highest importance.

The School supports the principle of equal opportunities and opposes unfair discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, (defined as 'Protected Characteristics'). Being a committed equal opportunities employer, the School will work to ensure that employees are treated equally and fairly. Policies and practices will conform with the principle of equal opportunities in terms of recruitment, selection, training, promotion, career development, discipline, redundancy and dismissal, taking into account that the Catholic ethos is upheld and supported (e.g. through the provision of specified reserved posts for practising Catholics).

As a Catholic independent school, however, certain posts are reserved for practising Catholics. In addition, key pastoral and boarding roles require a particular level of knowledge and understanding of Catholic teaching and liturgy. For other posts, there is no discrimination on the basis of religion.

On account of the Catholicity of the School and wider commitment to Catholic education, the Governors pay attention to national policy for Catholic schools, as stated from time to time, with regard to reserving particular posts for practising Catholic teachers. This means that the posts of Principal, Deputy Principal, as well as Head of Theology, Theology Teachers (unless with the express permission from the Diocese), Subject Leaders for RE, Chaplain and the Head of Chaplaincy will be reserved for practising Catholics, which will

be made explicit when advertising these posts. These posts will be re-advertised if a suitable Catholic applicant is not found.

It is expected that all staff, regardless of their religious affiliation, will not only support the particular ethos of the School but will attempt to contribute to the building up of that ethos by the living out of the Mission & Ethos Statement and the School's Aim and Objectives. All members of staff are involved in the pastoral care of students and all teachers will be expected to act as tutors.

2. To whom does this policy apply?

- 2.1 Application:** This policy applies to the School's employees, whether permanent, temporary, casual, part-time or on fixed-term contracts, to job applicants and to individuals such as agency staff, consultants, volunteers and Governors who are not our employees, but who may work, volunteer, or attend the School (collectively workers).
- 2.2 Workers' duties:** At New Hall, there is a contractual obligation on all staff to support the ethos of this Catholic independent boarding and day School and to refrain from any conduct that would undermine the School's religious character or call the School into disrepute. All workers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, to treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against, harass or victimise other members of staff, regardless of seniority. In some situations, the School may be at risk of being held responsible for the acts of individual members of staff and will not tolerate unfair discriminatory practices or behaviour.

3. Personnel responsible

- 3.1 Overall responsibility:** The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Governors has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Principal.
- 3.2 Management:** 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 the School with regard to equal opportunities and the Catholic ethos.
- 3.3 Questions about this policy:** 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 Head of HR.

4. Recruitment and selection

- 4.1 School's position:** The School aims to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment because of a Protected Characteristic, though the School has the right to seek practising Catholic candidates for certain posts, and to expect that all staff support the Catholic ethos of the School. Recruitment procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities, and that

sufficiently diverse sectors of the community are reached. As a Catholic School, we reserve the right to appoint practising Catholics to certain key positions (reserved posts) within the School: e.g. Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Theology, Head of Chaplaincy, Chaplain, Chaplaincy Assistants and Theology Teachers. Please see the Appointment of Staff Policy for more information.

- 4.2 Monitoring:** To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to recruitment and selection, the School has an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form sent with every Application Form.. 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 action to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and implement this policy.

5. Forms of discrimination

- 5.1 Types:** Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

- 5.2 Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination may occur where:

5.2.1 Someone is treated less favourably because they have one or more Protected Characteristics. For example, rejecting an applicant because they would not "fit in" because of their race or sexual orientation would be direct discrimination.

5.2.2 Someone is treated less favourably because of their association with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. For example, an employee may be treated less favourably because they have a disabled child.

5.2.3 Someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic. For example, an employee may be treated less favourably because they are believed to be (but may not actually be) gay or lesbian.

- 5.3 Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination may occur where an individual is subject to a provision, criterion or practice, applied to a group of people, which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a Protected Characteristic and it cannot be objectively justified. An example might be a minimum height requirement for a job. This is likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified, because it is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, then it will be indirectly discriminatory on the ground of sex.

- 5.4 Victimisation and harassment:** Discrimination also includes victimisation (suffering a detriment because of action the individual has taken or may take to assert legal rights against discrimination or to assist a colleague in that regard (called a **Protected Act**)) and harassment (unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic).

6. Staff training and promotion

- 6.1 The School's position:** Staff training needs shall be identified through regular staff appraisals. Promotion decisions are made on the basis of merit.

7. Disability discrimination

- 7.1 Informing the School:** If you are disabled, or become disabled in the course of your employment, 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 your disability.
- 7.2 Reasonable adjustments:** If you require reasonable adjustments to assist you in the performance of your duties, you should in the first instance discuss this with your manager. This may involve the provision of additional equipment or assistance in helping you to perform your work. Your manager, and/or HR may need 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. In circumstances where it will not be reasonable for us to accommodate the suggested adjustments, we will provide you with information on which our decision is based.

8. Part-time workers

- 8.1 Monitoring:** The School will 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 also ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the School's Flexible Working Policy.

9. Agency workers

- 9.1 Monitoring:** The School 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 the School. The School 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. Breaches of the policy

- 10.1 Complaints:** If you believe that you may have been disadvantaged because of a Protected Characteristic, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's Grievance Procedure. If you believe that you may have been harassed because of a Protected Characteristic, you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's Dignity at Work Policy (B.3). Allegations regarding potential breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure.
- 10.2 False allegations:** The School seeks to foster an inclusive community and encourages staff to raise concerns promptly and appropriately, however false allegations which are found to have been made maliciously may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

11. Revision of Policy

- 11.1 Review:** This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of HR.

11.2 Management: The School is committed to providing relevant training for all staff on their responsibilities and duties under this policy.