

Compassion – Courage – Hope – Integrity – Justice

Respect – Responsibility - Wisdom



**Herne Bay Junior School**

# Equal Opportunities Policy

**Policy Agreed: Sept 2017**

**Review Date: Sept 2018**

## **Statement of policy**

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Governing Body to the promotion of equality of opportunity in Herne Bay Junior School.

It is our policy to provide employment equality to all, irrespective of:

- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Having or not having dependants
- Religious belief or political opinion
- Race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, being an Irish Traveller)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on any of the above grounds. Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination.

We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice; it also makes sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be utilised fully to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

### **To whom does the policy apply?**

#### **(Scope)**

The Equal Opportunities Policy applies to all members of the organisation and the principles underpin the ethos of the school, including the behaviours and attitudes of the pupils.

### **Equality commitments**

We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all persons
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which all persons are treated with respect
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Fulfilling all our legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice
- Complying with our own equal opportunities policy and associated policies
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings

This policy is fully supported by Senior Leadership Team, Governing Body and staff employed at the school has been agreed with all staff employed at the school. All who have been given the opportunity to comment on the content.

### **Implementation**

The Headteacher has specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. We expect all our employees to abide by the policy and help create the equality environment which is its objective.

In order to implement this policy we shall:

- Communicate the policy to employees, job applicants and relevant others (such as contract or agency workers)
- Incorporate specific and appropriate duties in respect of implementing the equal opportunities policy into job descriptions and work objectives of all staff
- Provide equality training and guidance as appropriate, including training on induction.
- Ensure that those who are involved in assessing candidates for recruitment or promotion will be trained in non-discriminatory selection techniques
- Incorporate equal opportunities notices into general communications practices (e.g., staff newsletters, intranet)
- Obtain commitments from other persons or organisations such as subcontractors or agencies that they too will comply with the policy in their dealings with our organisation and our workforce
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.
- Ensure that if a situation arose where an employee with a disability were unable to access a part of the premises in order to carry out an occasional task, Herne Bay Junior School would either consider carrying out any necessary alterations to enable access or ensure the task was carried out by another member of staff. This would have no bearing on the employment of any person with a disability.
- Provide an appropriate space in the school together with appropriate facilities for writing for visitors, should they be required to write anything, as the main reception screen serves only as a barrier between the office and the holding area. Visitors to the premises are generally not required to write anything and are signed in by the receptionist.

### **Monitoring and review**

We will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our equal opportunities policy. The effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly and action taken as necessary. For example, where monitoring identifies an under-representation of a particular group or groups, we shall develop an action plan to address the imbalance.

### **Complaints**

Employees who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the agreed procedures<sup>1</sup> [School Grievance procedures and complaints procedures]. A copy of these procedures is available from Karen Hall [School Business Manager]. All complaints of discrimination will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. In addition to our internal procedures, employees have the right to pursue complaints of discrimination to an industrial tribunal or the Fair Employment Tribunal under the following anti-discrimination legislation:

- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003
- Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, as amended
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, as amended.

However, employees wishing to make a complaint to a tribunal will normally be required to raise their complaint under our internal grievance procedures first. Every effort will be made to ensure that employees who make complaints will not be victimised. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Victimisation will result in disciplinary action and may warrant dismissal.