

# POLICY STATEMENT



Policy	Equality policy...Educate and Celebrate
OFSTED Standard No	
School Department	HR and Student Services

Date Written	15 May 2018
Written by	M Lawless
Approved by	SMT
Date of Approval	16 May 2018
Next major review date	15 May 2020
Location and disseminations	A copy of the policy can be found, in the school admin office and on the school website.
The context of the policy and its relationship to other policies	This policy should be considered in conjunction with other written policies on behaviour, health and safety, medicines, school visits, child protection and safeguarding.

Buckswood School is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the school and by each other. This applies to the school as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination, and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instil in our pupils a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others. The school's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can, and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, so as to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

Overall, there is no sexual segregation at Buckswood. Boys and girls follow an identical curriculum on the academic side. Only in games, lessons are girls and boys provided with suitable separate sports. There are some sports where boys and girls can participate together such as football and cricket. They are all treated equally.

As an international school it is important that all students are treated equally and that there should be no racial discrimination. Total integration is the aim.

BUCKSWOOD SCHOOL operates under the ethos of a positive discrimination policy and that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of our education programmes or activities. Any pupil with restricted mobility is catered for and is provided with appropriate assistance including eating in a manner which promotes dignity and choice.

Although a legal requirement, this is a basic tenet of BUCKSWOOD SCHOOL. It is our aim that ALL of our programmes and activities are available to ALL of our students regardless of gender. This extends throughout the school curriculum to counselling of students on career development.

Memberships of clubs and activities are not based on gender alone. The sports programmes offered by the school are all co-educational, with the exception, naturally, of contact sports and those requiring selection of teams based on competitive skill.

It is our belief that legislation alone will not alter the basic assumptions and attitudes held about male and female roles in society – it will only equalize the rights, opportunities and treatment of students. However, it is our experience that once discriminatory practices are eliminated, changes in prejudiced attitudes follow.

Constant reappraisal of this policy enables us to ensure that we are offering the best possible education to ALL students, free of any discrimination.

This policy sets out how the school will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act to eliminate all behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as LGBT, race, gender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation). The school aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its services and the employment of its staff. It is created by Buckswood School's Senior Management team in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the school's other policies – particularly the **special educational needs policy**, **admissions policy**, **anti-bullying policy** and the **behaviour related policies**. These policies/documents are published/can be accessed as follows:

- on the school website
- paper files in the school office
- as part of induction

Through the creation of this equalities policy, we have been able to develop a better understanding of what the challenges to equality are within the school and how we can best deal with these. This document will be reviewed annually, or any time there is an update or change to equality legislation, to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and remains focused and up to date on issues surrounding equality both within the school and nationally.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

Individuals in the school are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below. The HR manager has the day-to-day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this scheme.

This document will be overseen by the Buckswood School Advisory Board.

## **The Senior Management Team**

The Senior Management Team will:

- create and approve this document with the help of the Co-Principals and ensure that it is adopted correctly throughout the school
- ensure the school complies with all equality legislation and the school's equality objectives
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the equalities policy annually and make any amendments to improve on it when and where necessary
- nominate a named Manager, Mr Mike Lawless, to oversee the implementation of the equalities policy monitor equality outcomes, and regularly report back to the rest of the senior management team
- ensure that parents are informed of any incident related to this scheme which could directly affect their child
- report to parents, carers, and the wider community on the progress of the school's equality policy through the school prospectus, the school website, and the school's annual report.

## **The Principals**

The Principals, with the support of the rest of the senior management team, will:

- promote the equalities policy both within the school and externally to the rest of the community
- ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school
- report on any incidents of inequality that are discovered and make any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as observing feedback from staff, pupils and parents
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs.

## Staff

School staff will:

- ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this policy and towards all types of discrimination
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the school's **behaviour and antibullying policy**
- show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to pupils
- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary.

## Pupils

Pupils at the school will:

- engage with the school in eliminating any discrimination
- promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site
- report to school staff any incidents of in appropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred
- work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the school's **behaviour and anti-bullying policy**
- set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger pupils and their peers.

## Parents, carers, and visitors

Parents, carers, and visitors to the school are expected to:

- familiarise themselves with the school's and support the school policy by promoting a positive attitude towards equality at home
- attend any relevant meetings/awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to relating to the school's equality policy
- work with the school to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- respect and follow our equality when visiting the school.

## **Key groups at risk**

While the school recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

□ Race □ Disability □ Gender and transgender □ Religion or belief □ Sexual orientation

## **Promoting equality and social awareness in school and within the local community**

### **Community-cohesion**

The school expects all of its students and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the school is part of.

### **Inclusion**

Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds. You can find more information regarding our provision for and policy on inclusion for SEN in the school's **SEND policy**.

### **Pupil voice**

Through our support of student voice we encourage our pupils to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our children how to engage in mature social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between pupils from different year groups, pupils and staff, and pupils and the wider community.

A representative group meet with a nominated member of the SMT each half term in Student Council to discuss and address issues that are arising.

The school has an Independent Listener and a School Councillor who are available for pupils to talk to and take advice from.

### **Recruitment**

Buckswood School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. Buckswood School acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy is the foundation for all its activities.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

## **Staff**

### **Equal opportunities for staff**

As part of our commitment to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment, the school will ensure that:

- all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law;
- staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community wherever possible;
- as an employer we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce;
- we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice;
- we ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Staff discipline and suspension**

Buckswood School is committed to ensuring that all school staff are treated fairly and consistently and this is held to account through our **staff code of conduct, and grievance policies**.

The education and wellbeing of our pupils is our main priority. Any member of staff who creates a barrier to learning for our pupils will be disciplined. The **school's staff appraisal policy** provides more information on how the school monitors staff performance. We hope that staff will feel confident to voice complaints and grievances in the confidential environment of the school and that they will trust the school to deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly. The school puts great faith in all its employees, and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

## Behaviour, exclusions and attendance

The school **behaviour policies** take full account of the duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups, and will take action to address any concerns that arise in this area.

Read our school **attendance, behaviour and exclusions policies** for more information on the processes surrounding these topics.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team, unless there is specific reason for it to be reviewed earlier (for example an incident involving members of the school community or new legislation). Senior Managers will review how effective it is in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relationships between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Senior Managers will also review evidence that it is being put into practice in school by staff and pupils, and whether there is any need for extra training or development sessions across the whole school to ensure it is promoted and implemented as much as possible.

### **Information will be gathered through:**

Identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics. At present, with the exception of ethnicity, the school has a limited number of people with protected characteristics on its staff and school population. We are mindful that any new entrants to our community are screened for protected characteristics and in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language we would collate specialised information to ensure equality for them.

### **Outcomes**

One of the most important indicators of how successful we are as a school in promoting equality and eliminating discrimination are the outcomes for various individuals and groups with protected characteristics. If analysis of outcomes reveals poorer outcomes for any particular groups, an impact assessment would be carried out and an action plan put in place to aid these outcomes.

Action plans will outline:

- objectives and specific actions to be taken
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria)
- clear timescales
- who has lead responsibility
- resource implications