

# St. Ninian's High School Equal Opportunities Policy

*“St. Ninian's High School values each person's worth, celebrating both people's individuality and the cultural diversity of the school community, and shows respect for everyone.”*

The [Equality Act 2017](#) defines unlawful behaviour as direct discrimination, indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation of people on the grounds of protected characteristics – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The school is committed to the need both to eliminate discriminatory behaviour and to promote equality for students, staff and others using school facilities.

1.2 The school is committed to giving all students every opportunity to achieve the highest standards by:

- taking account of their varied experiences and needs
- offering a broad and balanced curriculum
- having high expectations of all students

1.3 The school complies with current legislation concerning unlawful discrimination and promoting best practice in equality of treatment. This policy accords with the Equality Act 2017.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- R2L Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Sex and Relationships Education Policy
- AEN Policy
- Educational Visits Policy

## 2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 The Governing Body is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, student or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race (which includes colour; nationality; ethnic or national origins; and caste); religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

2.2 All members of the school community, including visitors, are responsible for promoting the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and are obliged to respect it and act in accordance with the policy.

2.3 The school promotes the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that it provides in the school.

2.4 The school seeks to ensure that, wherever possible, all students have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

2.5 The school strives to constantly identify and remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for vulnerable groups by regularly assessing the impact of its policies, practices and guidelines.

2.6 The school ensures that recruitment, employment, promotion and development opportunities are open to all.

2.7 The school challenges personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur. The school is aware that prejudice and stereotyping can be caused by misconception and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's point of view, the school aims to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

2.8 The school and its staff strive to be proactive in tackling prejudice and unlawful behaviour.

2.9 All employees have a specific responsibility to operate within the boundaries of this policy. Any employee found to have breached this policy will be dealt with as a possible case of misconduct or gross misconduct under our disciplinary policy.

2.10 The school seeks to ensure that the students and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

### **3. Equal Opportunities in Recruitment**

3.1 Recruitment and selection procedures and practices are regularly reviewed to ensure that no group is put at a disadvantage either directly or indirectly.

3.2 Employees are given an equal opportunity for career progression within the organisation.

3.3 The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified.

#### **4 Equal Opportunities in the Curriculum**

4.1 Every student has an equal entitlement to the school curriculum, subject to entry requirements, to all other areas of the curriculum, regardless of language, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.

4.2 Students should have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that will prepare them well for life beyond school regardless of academic ability. Consequently, this policy should be read in conjunction with guidance on Additional Educational Needs.

4.3 Staff will actively encourage the breaking down of any traditional gender stereotyping regarding subject choices when advising on Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 courses.

4.4 The school will monitor any careers advice or work experience placements provided by outside agencies with the aim of ensuring equal opportunities.

4.5 All forms of individual and subject support, guidance, amenities and facilities, including extracurricular activities, will be equally available to students of both sexes.

4.6 Behaviour expectations and disciplinary sanctions will be free of any gender, sexual orientation, race or culture bias, religion and belief.

4.7 Teachers will assess all materials and resources used for teaching and take appropriate action whenever possible to ensure that they reflect concepts, themes and information which seeks to eliminate prejudice, and any other form of discrimination. Teachers should try to ensure that all students feel that their language and culture is both acknowledged and valued.

4.8 The school actively encourages an ethos in which all students feel secure and valued.

#### **5 Race / Ethnicity**

5.1 The school will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism (including against colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), prejudice and racial discrimination.
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups

5.2 The school will not tolerate any form of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, it will be dealt with in accordance with school procedures and logged accordingly.

5.3 The school endeavours to be welcoming to all minority groups. The celebration and understanding of cultural diversity are promoted through the topics studied by the students and is reflected in displays, resources and events.

5.4 Cultural diversity and respect for others are celebrated and reflected across the whole curriculum. The curriculum will enhance students' understanding of the Isle of Man, Britain and world society and history, including the contributions of minority ethnic groups and key individuals within those groups.

5.5 The school will give students the understanding they need to recognise prejudice and reject racial discrimination.

5.6 As part of the broad and balanced curriculum, the school will ensure strong values are promoted; giving students clear understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **6 Gender / Sex [see also 4.3]**

6.1 The school will constantly examine its curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias, inequality or stereotyping.

6.2 The school will encourage students to be aware of the rigid gender stereotypes presented by, for example, the media and will try to ensure that resources include books and other learning materials which value the achievements of both women and men.

6.3 The school is committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions.

6.4 The school tries to ensure that:

- teachers allocate their time fairly between those of different genders

- all students have opportunities to work with students of different genders
- the traditional gender stereotypes are broken down
- students have opportunities to examine their own pre-conceived ideas of gender roles
- students are given the opportunity to pursue less conventional subjects and interests; for example, girls to read more non-fiction and boys more fiction.

## 7 Disability

7.1 There is a general requirement in The Equality Act 2017 to make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities. The school is committed to meeting the needs of students, staff and visitors with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantage.

An Accessibility Plan published on the the school website highlights actions the school takes to improve access to the physical environment, the curriculum and information that will support any person with a disability. All reasonable steps will also be taken to ensure that students with disabilities are not placed at any disadvantage compared to students without disabilities..

7.2 The school will seek to provide an environment that allows students with disabilities full access (where reasonably practicable) to all areas of learning and opportunities afforded to all other students at the school, including educational visits.

7.3 Teachers will modify teaching and learning as appropriate for students with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities or modify teaching materials or offer alternative activities where students are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

## 8 Religion / Belief

8.1 The school respects the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, students, parents and visitors and will comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice. This includes respect for lack of religion or belief, as in atheism.

## 9 Sexual Orientation

9.1 The school will make no assumption about the sexual orientation of any of the members of its community.

9.2. In the curriculum, sexuality is taught within the context of healthy relationships. Students' questions will be answered as they arise, honestly, factually and non-judgementally.

9.3 The school will promote students' awareness and understanding of sexuality, including sexual health and diversity. Through the curriculum and wider opportunities, students will develop understanding and respect for individuals of all sexual orientations. In doing so, the school aims to cultivate an inclusive community in which all members feel respected and valued.

9.4. The school will not tolerate any form of homophobia or homophobic behaviour. Should a homophobic incident occur, it will be dealt with in accordance with school procedures and logged accordingly.

## **10 Age**

10.1 The school will put procedures in place to ensure that no-one is denied a job, an equal chance of training or promotion, or suffers from discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of their age.

## **11 Due Regard**

11.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty creates a legal duty to give due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed.

## **12 Training and Development**

The School will seek to:

12.1 Enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status.

12.2 Provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs.

12.3 Promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution that students, staff, Governors and parents can make.

12.4 Provide training to staff on equal opportunities to promote understanding of equalities legislation and the school's and their responsibilities.

### **13 The Role of Governors**

13.1 In this policy statement the School has set out its commitment to equal opportunities and the Governing Body will do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

### **14 The Role of the Headteacher and School Leaders**

14.1 The Headteacher will ensure that the school's policy on equal opportunities is implemented.

14.2 The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities and that these guidelines are applied fairly in all situations.

14.3 The Headteacher will ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy so that no one suffers discrimination.

14.4 The Headteacher and school leaders will promote the principles of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and in providing opportunities for training.

14.5 The Headteacher and school leaders will promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in assemblies, for example, respect for other people will be a regular theme and it will also be in displays around the school.

14.6 The Headteacher and School Leaders will view all incidents of potentially discriminatory treatment with due concern.

### **15 The Role of Teachers and Support Staff**

15.1 Staff will aim to ensure that all students, parents and their colleagues are treated fairly and with respect. The school will not discriminate against any child/young person, parent, member of staff or visitor and will actively seek to identify and remove indirect discrimination. Ignorance of what constitutes discrimination is not a defence.

15.2 When selecting classroom materials, teachers will strive to provide resources which promote positive images and which challenge stereotypes of minority groups.

15.3 When designing schemes of work, teachers will pay cognisance to this Equal Opportunities Policy, both in the choice of topics to study and in how to approach sensitive issues.

15.4 All teachers and support staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice or discrimination, and draw them to the attention of a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **16 The Role of Students**

16.1 Students will be made aware of this policy and draw any incidents of prejudice or discrimination to the attention of a member of staff.

16.2 Students will be encouraged to show respect, tolerance and understanding towards others and expected to demonstrate these important school values in their interactions with others.

## **17 The Role of Parents**

17.1 Parents will be made aware of this policy through the school website and are expected to encourage their children to do as outlined in section 16.2 and will draw any incidents of prejudice or discrimination to the attention of a member of staff.

## **18 The Role of Visitors / Contractors / Third Party Employees**

18.1 All visitors and contractors are expected to adhere to the Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **19 Complaints**

19.1 Any complaints concerning equality opportunities should be addressed, as appropriate, through the [School's Complaints procedure](#).