

DATE: July 2025

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RESPONSIBILITY: SLT/HEAD OF HR



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (Staff and Pupils)

1. General Statement

This policy applies to all members of the Dame Allan's Schools' (hereafter the Schools) community, including staff, pupils, parents and visitors. In this policy 'staff' includes governors, teaching and support staff, visiting music, drama, dance and sports teachers and coaches and regular volunteers.

Guiding Principles: Dame Allan's Schools are

- are committed to securing equality of opportunity through the creation of an environment in which all individuals are treated on the sole basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination or harassment whether of current or former staff, job applications, pupils, parents and visitors. This applies not only in school grounds but also outside the Schools (when dealing with colleagues, pupils or parents or other school-related contacts) including on school trips and social events.
- aim to ensure that no current or former staff, job applications, pupils, parents and visitors receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, cultural background, disabilities, physical ability, neurodiversity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic factors, age, gender reassignment, nationality, , skin colour, disability, political or religious beliefs, marital or civil partnership status, age, membership of a trade union, pregnancy or maternity (in this policy these are known as the 'Protected Characteristics'). Under equality

legislation, the protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- will promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the Schools, both for staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- seek to develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities.
- will promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities.
- will encourage staff and pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others.
- Dame Allan's schools are committed to a zero-tolerance policy in relation to less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic, as defined above.

Relevant employment legislation : [The Equality Act 2010](#)

2. Responsibilities

The Principal has responsibility for the equal opportunities policy and for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff and for ensuring that the policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents. Specifically, responsibility for the implementation of this policy amongst support staff is delegated to the Bursar.

The Principal will ensure that appropriate training will be undertaken by all members of staff (teaching and support) and governors to ensure that they are kept fully aware of their responsibilities in respect of equal opportunities and in preventing harassment and discrimination.

The Vice Principal (Academic) is responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum.

Human Resources are responsible for ensuring that all employees are aware of this policy and associated procedures. The team will also ensure that this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

All employees are responsible for:

- the day-to-day operation of this policy and will contribute to an inclusive and welcoming environment;
- reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the appropriate senior member of staff and
- Treating colleagues, pupils and visitors with dignity and respect and to avoid behaving in a manner that may give rise to claims of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage in accordance with their responsibilities.

3. The Legal Framework Definitions

For the purposes of this policy 'discrimination' includes direct and indirect discrimination and other 'prohibited conduct' under the Equality Act 2010.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this **policy** and are unlawful:

- a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
- b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Schools do not tolerate any of these types of discrimination.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- a) This policy will be kept under regular review and will be evaluated at least every two years.
- b) An analysis of types of incidents will be undertaken with a view to informing or amending practices or procedures.

5. Equal Opportunities and Harassment for Staff

The Governors recognise and fully support the rights of all School staff to seek, obtain and hold employment without discrimination or harassment. All employees will be made aware of the Governors' Policy on equal opportunities and harassment.

6. Recruitment and Selection of Staff

The Schools are an equal opportunities employer. Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person and with the involvement of Human Resources. Our recruitment procedures

should be reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market.

Advertisements and job descriptions should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage potential applicants from applying.

A decision to recruit will be based solely on the merits of the individual, how they meet the requirements in the person specification and how they perform. .

The School's will, when able, ensure reasonable adjustments are made when requested by candidates who declare they have a disability during the recruitment process.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with the approval of Human Resources. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the selection or decision-making process).

Where necessary, job offers may be conditional until a satisfactory medical check is completed by our occupational health provider.

We are required by law to ensure that all staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before their employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting, and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity. This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy](#)

7. Training and Promotion and Conditions of Service

Training needs will ideally be identified through regular appraisals. Staff members will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the Schools and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.

Workforce composition and promotions will be regularly monitored to ensure equality of opportunity at all levels of the Schools. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.

Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all Staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

8. Termination of Employment

We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

9. Disabilities

If staff are disabled or become disabled, we encourage them to tell us about their condition so that the Schools can support them as appropriate.

If any staff experience difficulties at work because of their disability, they should contact their line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Their line manager may wish to consult with the member of staff and their medical adviser about possible adjustments. The Schools will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the member of staff's needs within reason. If the Schools consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access for disabled users of the school.

10. Reasonable Adjustments

Where a member of staff has declared a disability, reasonable adjustments will be considered, following advice from a medical professional and/or Occupational Health.

11. Part-Time and Fixed-Term Work

Part-time and fixed-term staff should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

12. Breaches of this Policy

Dame Allan's School operate a zero-tolerance policy for harassment or discrimination and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with the Schools' Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If any member of staff believes that they have suffered discrimination they can raise the matter through the Schools' Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

What is a Discriminatory Incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, social economic factors or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender, social economic factors or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments during discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g., food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to cooperate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability, social economic factors or sexual orientation.
- Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

This list is not exhaustive

12. Equal Opportunities for Pupils

a) Admissions

The Schools are committed to securing equality of opportunity through the creation of an environment in which all individuals are treated on the sole basis of their relevant merits and abilities. The Schools seek to select pupils of academic potential irrespective of any Protected Characteristics.

Where a candidate has any disability, they will be treated no less favourably than those without disabilities. The Schools will make reasonable adjustments to address the needs of disabled candidates subject to the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; the financial resources available; the cost and practicality of measures proposed; health and safety requirements or the interests of other pupils in the Schools.

Entrance examination and interview procedures will be arranged to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged. Special arrangements will be made in advance of examinations or interviews for any applicant who has a disability including the provision of extra time for applicants who have a recognized specific learning difficulty. Arrangements will be discussed in advance with the parents and the current school of any candidate. Relevant specialist reports will be sought in advance of entrance examinations and interviews.

The Schools' Admissions policy further outlines practice in this area.

b) Curriculum

All pupils have equal access to the Schools' programmes of study throughout each Key Stage, according to aptitude and ability.

The Schools are committed to full educational inclusion (see SEND, Accessibility and EAL policies for specific details).

The Vice Principal (Academic) will make and record figures on the take-up of courses. These will be presented to the Principal annually, or more often if requested.

All subjects will have equality of opportunity at their core and make explicit references within schemes of work.

The Schools' curriculum policy further outlines practice in this area.

c) Behaviour

School rules and the Code of Conduct require pupils to treat all people with respect. Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity is specifically taught through the PSHE and enrichment programme.

Where a pupil or pupils' behaviour is in conflict with the code of conduct, the Schools will take appropriate action.

Staff who are aware of incidents of bullying linked to a Protected Characteristic, or any other pupil behaviour which is in breach of this policy will report such incidents to the appropriate member of the pastoral staff. All alleged incidents of bullying amongst pupils will be taken seriously, dealt with appropriately and recorded in the Schools' bullying and/or racist incidents log. Sanctions – where appropriate – will be imposed in accordance with the [Whole School Behaviour Policy](#). This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).