



Abbey College Ramsey

Equality and Diversity Policy (Employees)

Policy Developed by: Sarah Noble
Reviewing committee: Operations Committee
Frequency of Review: Annually
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To be reviewed: Summer 2024

Introduction

This document sets out how Abbey College, Ramsey will meet its obligation under the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for all employees. We are committed to creating a working environment where all employees are treated fairly and with respect.

1 Policy

- 1.1 Abbey College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. We aim to create a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.
- 1.2 We will not discriminate against staff on the basis of age; race; sex; disability; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; religion, faith or belief. (Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics). The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff and Governors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors and former staff members.
- 1.3 All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.
- 1.4 This policy has been agreed following consultation with appropriate governing and staff representatives.

2 Who is covered by the policy?

- 2.1 This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, employees, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, volunteers, casual workers, agency staff, visitors and governors (collectively referred to as **staff** in this policy).

3 Who is responsible for this policy?

- 3.1 Abbey College has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and the Senior Manager with responsibility for equalities issues has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. The Operations Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy, and for ensuring that Abbey College discharges its duty under the Single Equality Act 2010. The schools personnel provider, Juniper, will provide overall guidance and advice on matters regarding equal opportunities.

32 All managers have responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. All members of staff are personally responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. In certain circumstances Abbey College could be held to be vicariously liable for actions of their staff. Staff should be aware that they may be personally liable if they are found to have discriminated against another person whilst in School or on School-related business.

4. Scope and purpose of the policy

4.1 This policy applies to all aspects of our relationship with staff and to relations between staff members at all levels. This includes job advertisements, recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

4.2 We will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities. Please see the following for specific information on our approach to these issues: Recruitment Selection Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Dress Code, and Flexible Working Policy.

5. Forms of discrimination

5.1 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.

5.2 Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not "fit in" would be direct discrimination.

5.3 Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

5.4 Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and

Bullying Policy.

- 5.5 Victimization is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

6. Staff training and promotion and conditions of service

- 6.1 Staff training needs will be identified through regular staff appraisals. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation 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 organisation. Where appropriate, steps will be taken to identify and remove unjustified barriers and to meet the special needs of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.
- 6.2 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. Annual pay reviews will be monitored to ensure that no bias or subjective discrimination is applied.

7. Discipline and Termination of Employment

- 7.1 We will ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.
- 7.2 We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

8. Disability discrimination

- 8.1 If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- 8.2 If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you should speak to your line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 8.3 We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled

staff.

9. Fixed-term employees, Casual and Agency Workers

9.1 Where relevant, all fixed-term employees, casual and agency workers, will be offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities.

10. Part-time work

10.1 We will ensure that part-time employees are considered for progression and have the same opportunity to access benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under our Flexible Working Policy.

11. Breaches of this policy

11.1 If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter informally with the Headteacher or HR in the first instance. If you are not content with this or feel unable to do so, you may raise the concern through our Grievance Procedure. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment or bullying you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Harassment and Bullying Policy.

11.2 Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

11.3 Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

12. Monitoring and review of the policy

12.1 This policy is reviewed annually by the Operations Committee.

12.2 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

13. Monitoring and review of the policy

13.1 Unless stated elsewhere in this policy the data gathered during this management process is processed in line with our data protection policy.

- 13.2 Any data gathered during this process will be held in line with our records retention policy.
- 13.3 If you have any questions about the way your data has been gathered or will be retained, please contact the Data Protection Officer at dpo@meridiantrust.co.uk.