

# Durston House

## Equal Opportunities Policy – Staff

### Aims of the Policy

- to state the commitment of Durston House to equal opportunity for staff, current and prospective
- to promote a school environment which is representative of the wider community
- to recruit staff of the highest skills and professionalism
- to reflect statutory and non-statutory advice

### Objectives of the Policy

- to confirm to staff that Durston House is an equal opportunities employer
- to promote opportunity for all staff members, based on merit, regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or disability
- to enable all staff to reach their full potential
- to complement the school's **Safeguarding Policy**, the **Safer Recruitment, Selection and Vetting Policy**, the document **Working at Durston House**, the **Disciplinary Procedures**, the **Incapability Procedures**, the **Grievance Procedures**, the **Staff Absence Management Policy**, the **Stress Management Policy**, the **Maternity Policy**, the **Paternity Policy** and the **Shared and Ordinary Parental Leave Policy**

### Introduction

Durston House is an equal opportunities employer, complying with all employment and social legislation, such as the Equality Act 2010, and reflecting all non-statutory advice and codes of practice. The school seeks to employ and deploy staff based on knowledge, skill and experience, drawn from a wide pool of professional people and reflecting society in the local area and the UK.

The school makes every effort to break down barriers to equality of opportunity to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. Durston House reviews regularly its staff recruitment, promotion, training and development policies. It advertises vacancies and ensures job selection criteria are appropriate for the job. It promptly and fully investigates all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary. The school endeavours to use language in all communication that reflects the letter and spirit of the policy.

### Equality of Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

No member of staff or prospective member of staff receives unfair or unlawful treatment in:

- recruitment and selection
- promotion, transfer and training opportunities
- benefits, terms and conditions of employment

- grievance and disciplinary procedures
- termination of employment including redundancies
- the conduct of his/her work
- procedures ensuring fair and equitable treatment in relation to admission and assessment of pupils

No member of staff or prospective member of staff receives unfair or unlawful treatment because of a **Protected Characteristic**, or if he/she is perceived to have a Protected Characteristic, or is associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. **Protected Characteristics** are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Durston House does not tolerate harassment of staff, at any time. It does not tolerate harassment of a member of staff because of a Protected Characteristic, denying him/her the right to dignity at work. Such harassment may include bullying, intimidation, unfair criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities, suggestive remarks, teasing, offensive written or visual communication, or social exclusion. Harassment is regarded as a disciplinary offence and is dealt with according to the school's Disciplinary Procedures.

## **Recruitment and Selection**

The procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff are governed by the principles of this policy. They are designed to achieve the best match between an individual's knowledge, skills, experience and character with the requirements of the post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions. The suitability of the individual for the position is a major selection criterion, but the ability to work with others, to take direction and to be trained are taken into account.

A disability does not in itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at Durston House. Such reasonable adjustments, as required, are made to the recruitment procedures to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of any disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements are made for visually impaired applicants.

All applicants are dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible. Carefully selected and validated skills and/or psychometric tests may be used as part of the selection process and are administered by an appropriate tester. Appointments are confirmed on receipt of satisfactory references, DBS checks (in the absence of prohibition orders), proof of a right to work in the UK, the satisfactory completion of a probationary period and, if necessary, a medical report.

## **Disability**

If a member of staff or prospective member of staff is disabled or becomes disabled, he/she is encouraged to inform the school about the condition so that appropriate support can be given.

If difficulties at work are experienced because of a disability, the member of staff should contact the Deputy Head or Bursar to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Deputy Head or Bursar may consult him/her and his/her medical adviser about possible adjustments. This may include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job redesign, or flexible hours. The staff member may be required to give consent to a report being produced about his/her state of health and ability to perform professional duties. Measures to overcome difficulties are considered carefully and accommodated, within reason. If a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, an explanation is given and an alternative solution sought, where possible. Once an adjustment has been made, its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

### **Procedure for Reporting a Breach of Equal Opportunities**

If a member of staff or prospective member of staff considers that there has been a breach of the principles of equal opportunity, as stated in this policy, he/she should raise this with the school, through the Deputy Head or Bursar. It is hoped the problem can be resolved by the member of staff, in consultation with the Deputy Head or Bursar, and/or with other members of staff, through discussion or in writing. The member of staff is encouraged to try to resolve the problem informally with the other person, either face to face or in writing. If this is not appropriate or has not been successful, a grievance may be raised, in accordance with the school's Grievance Procedures. All such grievances are dealt with according to such procedures, sensitively, and in confidence, as far as reasonably practicable. The school seeks to ensure that the member of staff is not in any way penalised for raising a grievance and the situation is monitored to ensure equal opportunities exist and discrimination does not occur. Both during the investigation of the grievance, and afterwards, consideration is given to ensuring that a breach of equal opportunities does not occur again, through adjustments to the nature of the work and the possible reassignment of staffing.

### **Evaluation of this Policy**

*This policy will be evaluated triennially by the school, amended where necessary and approved by SMT.*

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