



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy

This is a whole school policy.

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Action	Responsibility	Date
Reviewed	Headmaster (ACJ)	September 2018
Approved	Headmaster (ACJ)	September 2018
Next Review	Headmaster (ACJ)	Review Pending

The Policy

The School operates a policy of equal opportunities for all, and stands against any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, culture, race, ethnic group, language, disability or other personal characteristics.

It aims to:

- Promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all and allow all pupils to achieve the level of success and self-respect to which they are entitled.
- Instil in pupils a respect for those of a different gender and background.
- Establish an environment in which the school becomes effective in reducing prejudice and raising self-esteem.
- Deal with incidents where there has been a breach of this policy promptly and in a sensitive manner.
- Provide a safe and welcoming background for all its members.
- Develop an environment in which all sexist and racist assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Ensure that teachers by careful use of language and choice of resources avoid reinforcing stereotypical views.
- Enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others and to challenge stereotyping and prejudice wherever it occurs.
- Make provision for and monitor the particular needs of gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, age, SEN and disability.
- Prepare pupils for living in a complex multicultural society.
- Provide a curriculum which emphasises the positive aspects of all cultures and of cultural diversity in any society.
- Ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone to succeed.

To promote these aims, the School will:

- Address equal opportunities matters through assemblies, using pupil presentations wherever possible, and PSHCEE courses.
- Wherever and whenever possible in the curriculum, educate pupils about the importance of equal opportunities, and about other people, their cultures, religions and traditions.
- Through the actions of staff, foster the climate for recognition of the validity of other cultures and backgrounds.
- Support all new pupils from overseas backgrounds through the system of pastoral support to ensure they feel part of the whole school community.
- Ensure that schemes of work reflect the interests and experiences of both boys and girls and of those from differing backgrounds.
- Choose resources which portray a view as seen from different cultural and gender perspectives, thereby communicating how it feels to be part of a different group.
- Challenge any notion that some subjects or career paths are purely masculine or feminine.
- Ensure as far as possible that all activities and facilities are open to both boys and girls, and to both day pupils and boarders.
- Provide specialist teaching in English as a Second Language as appropriate.
- Discourage judgements made on social background, 'class' or accent.

- Discourage through effective classroom management either boys or girls from dominating lessons and encourage each group to view their contributions as having equal value.
- Ensure that group-work is used to increase opportunities for co-operation and understanding between different groups.
- Set exercises and examples in familiar contexts to which all pupils can relate.
- Value equally the experiences of either gender or other backgrounds.

Access

Owing to the nature of the school buildings, not all rooms are fully accessible. Where necessary, the rooming timetable will be adjusted (whether temporarily or permanently) in order to allow all pupils and staff equality of opportunity.

Variation in the School Uniform

The Headmaster will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on Health and Safety. The Headmaster may take expert advice and will if required arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

Appointment and Development of Staff

- Job specifications will all carry a statement that this School is an Equal Opportunities employer.
- Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities, experience) in selection for recruitment.
- People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment.
- All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.
- People becoming disabled while in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs or to be considered for redeployment if that is necessary.

Freedom of Expression

- Freedom of expression is a fundamental right protected under the Human Rights Act 1998 by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is also a fundamental right under common law. The School promotes freedom of expression, as well as healthy and balanced debate of all issues, including those considered controversial or sensitive.
- Freedom of expression does not extend to statements that discriminate against or harass, or incite violence or hatred against other persons or groups, particularly by reference to race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. In such case the School will take action against the pupils concerned in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.
- Promotion of extremist views or attempts to radicalise groups or individuals are not protected under freedom of expression. The School actively works to protect pupils and staff from exposure to such views and to promote fundamental British values. Anyone who promotes extremism or attempts to radicalise others within school will be immediately reported to the police.
- The boundary between the expression of intolerant or offensive views and hate speech is not always an easy one to draw. However, a number of factors are likely to be relevant, including the intention of the person making the statement, the context in which they are making it, the intended audience, and the particular words used.

- The School has a duty not to promote partisan political views. When political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, the School ensures that pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views
- In promoting freedom of expression, the School has a duty to protect vulnerable individuals. In particular, younger pupils will be protected from discussion of certain issues and debates
- As stated in the Anti-Bullying Policy, the School always challenges peer on peer abuse

Breaches of the Policy

Any breach of policy will be dealt with in line with procedures set out in the Behaviour Policy.

Examples of behaviour which is unacceptable and which would be considered a breach of policy.

- Unless stated otherwise, each statement embraces acts of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of either age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or disability:
 - a. Physical assault against a person or group;
 - b. Verbal abuse, insults, threats or intimidation;
 - c. Graffiti;
 - d. Distribution of leaflets, magazines or insignia which incite hatred or encourage discrimination or harassment;
 - e. Excluding or inciting others to exclude a person or a group;
 - f. Recruitment to subjects and selection for teams, clubs etc. in preferential ways.
 - g. A refusal to co-operate with pupils or colleagues;
 - h. Making discriminatory comments in the course of discussion or lessons; or
 - i. Making comments of a sexual or sexist nature.
- In addition, pupils should be made aware of, and staff vigilant to, the fact that the content of posters displayed on walls or leaflets distributed in school (including by electronic means) could be offensive. No pupil should display posters or distribute leaflets without the express approval of a member of teaching staff.

Monitoring

- The School monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy actively. As part of the monitoring process, our application forms ask parents of prospective pupils to state their ethnic background and details of any relevant medical conditions or disabilities.
- The School monitors the ethnic background, religion, nationality and disabilities of applicants for employment as part of the recruitment process.
- The Headmaster and SMT have primary responsibility for the monitoring process. They are supported in this by the Governors.

All staff and pupils should recognise the importance of a whole-school approach in this area, and refer any concerns or any instances of inconsistency between policy and practice to the Headmaster or any member of the SMT.