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| Policy Title: | Equal Opportunities |
| Policy Reference: | |
| Function: | To provide support and guidance to Governors, Principal and Managers to ensure that no employee, job applicant, or student receives less-favourable treatment on the grounds of discrimination or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to job/educational performance. |
| Status: | Statutory |
| Audience: | Governors, Principal, Teachers, Support Staff, Local Authority |
| Ownership / Implementation | The Principal and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented. |
| Version: | V1.0 |
| Issued for: | Approval |
| Date for Review: | 2010 |

THE OXFORD ACADEMY

The Oxford Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care and respect, and expect high standards in all aspects of Academy life.

We aim to build a community clearly based on a Christian ethos, recognising the integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution and protect the vulnerable. We are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy.

Our vision for The Oxford Academy is based on the following beliefs:

- Education matters in society: the provision of a well ordered, stimulating learning environment is a common right for all our children.
- The Academy should articulate social and moral values and respect for others, irrespective of their class, sex, race or religion.
- The Academy will promote the highest achievement in youngsters, irrespective of their abilities or self-expectations. Competition and collaboration are both equally important to learning. The aspirations of all our students will be nurtured.
- The Academy will celebrate students' achievements and challenge fixed notions of ability. We will value and reward young people's verbal, practical, academic, sporting, artistic and leadership skills.
- An effective and flourishing Academy should be 'public' rather than 'private', explaining to parents what is being taught and how the curriculum is being interpreted. It should be open to praise and constructive feedback in a genuine spirit of partnership.
- An effective Academy should work closely with neighbouring schools to improve opportunities for children and young people.
- The work of the Academy will be underpinned at all times by its ultimate aim – to improve standards, achievement and the life chances of young people. The Oxford Academy is to be, first and foremost, a place of high quality learning and teaching for young people aged 11-19.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

THE OXFORD ACADEMY

Equal opportunities policy

Employees

As an employer the Academy seeks not to discriminate on grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability, class, age or religious belief, and is committed to taking positive action to redress discrimination and to provide genuine equality of opportunity in order to make full and effective use of its workforce.

Recruitment - Training - Promotion

The Academy ensures that all employees are recruited, trained and promoted on the basis of ability, the requirement of the job and relevant criteria. Recruitment literature does not imply preference for one group of applicants, unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to a particular sex or racial group. In such cases this will be clearly stated according to the Sex Discrimination and Race Relations Acts.

The Continuing Professional Development Policy is shared by all employees and training needs are addressed equitably for teaching and non-teaching staff. Training is made available to employees to overcome discrimination. The staff induction programme includes an introduction to the Academy's Equal Opportunities Policy and practical training pertinent to Special Educational Needs.

The Academy Performance Management Policy ensures that all employees have an equal entitlement to appraisal within a one-year cycle. Identified training needs, with regard to targets set, are addressed, where possible, within budget constraints.

Opportunities for promotion and advancement are published internally, as well as externally, to enable employees to put themselves forward for consideration.

Records are kept on job/promotional/appraisal interviews and all participants are entitled to a de-briefing from the interviewer/panel.

Changes are made to recruitment, training and career development practices, as necessary, usually following the annual review of the Academy Development Plan. Realistic goals are set, with yearly targets, to achieve long-term objectives.

Students

Entry criteria

As a provider of education and training, the Academy does not discriminate on grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, disability, class or religious belief and is committed to take positive action to redress discrimination and to provide genuine equality of opportunity, in order to make full and effective use of the abilities of its students. A formal Appeals Procedure is in place for Post-16 students.

Entry criteria are published in the Academy Prospectus which is available to all parents on request.

Entrance criteria for Post-16 students are linked to individual courses and are clearly published in the Post-16 Course Prospectus. A detailed Admissions Policy sets out the full admissions arrangements. The Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than the published admission number for any relevant age group are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria in priority order, set out below. After the admission of pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs where the Academy is named on the statement, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

- a. children in public care;
- b. children living in the catchment area;
- c. children who have siblings who currently attend the Academy and who will continue to do so on the date of admission;
- d. children living nearest the Academy, using straight line measurement from the main pupil entrance to the Academy to the main entrance to the child's home.

Support Provision

In addition to mainstream education, the Academy benefits from a Student Support department catering for students with a range of learning needs, including students with exceptional ability.

All employees are made aware of the above provision and receive appropriate training, within the context of their own posts.

Students' personal awareness of equal opportunities is raised through assemblies, the Personal, Social and Health Education programme and their participation in the Student Council. Relevant training of equal opportunities issues is included in the Post-16 programme.

Implementation

The Academy Principal has overall responsibility for the operation of Equal Opportunities within the Academy and has delegated the detailed implementation of the policy to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The day-to-day responsibility of the policy is assigned to Senior Managers, Directors of Faculty and Line Managers. It must be stressed however, that the commitment of all employees and all students of the Academy is essential to make the Policy a success. All students should be reminded at regular intervals by tutors and subject staff of each student's own responsibilities under the Equal Opportunities policy to ensure that no

Equal Opportunities STAFF and STUDENTS POLICY

employee, job applicant, or student receives less-favourable treatment on the grounds of discrimination or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to job/educational performance.

All students and staff have a responsibility to accept their personal involvement in the practical application of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The overall responsibility for monitoring and ensuring the effective implementation of the Policy lies with the Principal of the Academy. The SLT, Vice Principals, Leaders and Line Managers support the Principal by sharing in the monitoring process. All employees accept their personal responsibility to ensure the practical application of the Policy and are involved in the monitoring and evaluation process. This is evident through the line management structure and the performance management cycle.

The implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy is reviewed annually with the Academy Development Plan.

The Equal Opportunities Policy is up-dated via the Academy's regular policy review process and following new legislation, but recommendations made by any employee or student, at any time, are considered by the SLT.

Leaders of curriculum areas make a commitment to monitoring and reviewing course materials, teaching styles and assessment processes, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, and action the necessary adjustments to facilitate a learning environment within which all students can flourish equally.

Financial Implications

Funding is available within the annual allocation for Continuing Professional Development for training needs originating from the implementation of the Policy.

Funding for more suitable course materials and departmental administration is included within departmental budgets.

Appeals Procedure

An Equal Opportunities Appeals Procedure is available to members of staff and Post-16 students who feel they have received unfair treatment, in the light of the stated Equal Opportunities Policy.

Any member of staff with a grievance under Equal Opportunities should follow the procedure below:

- a. Before taking a decision to invoke the Procedure members of staff have the right to approach any member of the SLT, for informal, confidential advice.

- b. In order to proceed the member of staff makes known his or her grievance to the Principal. In the case of a student appeal, parents/guardians should be included in this procedure.
- c. If the grievance cannot be resolved at this stage the member of staff can formally approach the Academy's Governing Body.

The Equal Opportunities Appeals Procedure will be carried out in the strictest confidence and will not prejudice the member of staff or student in any way.

In this case the normal Academy appeals procedure for exclusions and admissions will apply, except that the appeals panel would consist entirely of governors.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.