



## SHERBORNE

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

#### 1. Statement

- 1.1 The Sherborne School Group, of which Sherborne School and Sherborne International are parts, is an equal opportunities employer.
- 1.2 In order to promote an environment within which the School can call upon and benefit from the widest possible range of knowledge, skill and experience, as well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we are committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which represents the population within our recruitment area in terms of race or colour; nationality or national or ethnic origins; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; pregnancy or maternity; marital or civil partnership status; gender reassignment; age; and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").
- 1.3 To this end, we regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion, training and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment and no member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- 1.4 No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic; because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic; or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular but not only, in relation to:
  - recruitment and selection;
  - promotion, transfer and training opportunities;
  - benefits, terms and conditions of employment;
  - grievance and disciplinary procedures;
  - termination of employment including redundancies;
  - conduct at work.
- 1.5 Procedures are in place to ensure fair and equitable treatment in relation to the admission and assessment of pupils.
- 1.6 The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff must treat visitors, pupils, parents, suppliers and former members of staff.

## **2. Implementation**

2.1 The School, with the assistance of the staff, will:

- break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit;
- advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job;
- promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary;
- ensure that all members of staff are fully aware of and understand of this policy;
- monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices;
- examine and review existing procedures to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation;
- ensure that the language used in official communication reflects the letter and spirit of the policy.

## **3. Recruitment and Selection**

3.1 The staffing process is governed by the School's principles of non-discrimination and is designed to achieve the best match between, on the one hand, the individual's knowledge, skills, experience and character; and, on the other, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

3.2 The capability of an individual to perform in the position will be the major selection criterion but individual potential, the ability to work with others and to be trained will also be taken into account.

3.3 All applicants will be dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible.

3.4 Appointments will only be confirmed on receipt of two satisfactory references; DBS checks (and, where applicable, a check of the list of those prohibited from teaching and/or management; Certificates of Good Conduct (overseas police checks), where necessary; self-declaration of physical and mental fitness to carry out the responsibilities of the role; and satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

## **4. Gender Pay Gap Reporting**

4.1 We are required to publish an annual report containing data on our gender pay gap. Our report is on the School's website.

## **5. Disability**

5.1 Individuals who are disabled or who become disabled are encouraged to notify the School of their condition so that they can be appropriately supported.

5.2 A disability will not in itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at

the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

- 5.3 If an employee experiences difficulties at work because of disability, they are encouraged to contact their Head of Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Head of Department may consult with the employee and their medical adviser about possible adjustments and the employee may be required to give their consent to a report being produced about their state of health and ability to perform their duties. The School will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the employee's needs within reason. If the School considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the reasons for this will be explained and efforts will be made to find an alternative solution wherever possible. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.
- 5.4 The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or School premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out his or her duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job redesign, and flexible hours.

## **6. Dignity at Work**

- 6.1 Employees must not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to harassment of another person at work. Harassment of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence and in serious instances may lead to instant dismissal.
- 6.2 Harassment may take the form of unwanted conduct which is related to a relevant Protected Characteristic and which is perceived as affecting an employee's dignity at work. It may also take the form of unwanted conduct towards someone based on their appearance or other personal characteristics which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It is not only unwanted physical contact, assault or propositions; it includes suggestive remarks or gestures; pin-ups; graffiti; offensive comments; jokes; and banter. Harassment may include bullying, intimidatory behaviour; persistent teasing or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks; unfair allocation of work and responsibilities; or exclusion from normal workplace conversation. It may be directed towards one individual or a group. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave.
- 6.3 If an employee considers that they have been the recipient of unwanted conduct amounting to harassment, it is open to them 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, the employee may raise a grievance in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedure. All such grievances will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence as far as reasonably practicable to progress the complaint. Both during the investigation of the complaint and afterwards (whatever the outcome), consideration will be given to

ensuring that the employee and the alleged harasser are not required to work together against the wishes of the former.

- 6.4 Any member of staff may use the Grievance Procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to sexual or racial harassment or harassment on the basis of disability, sexual orientation, trans-gender status, religion or belief or age, then the complaint may be raised directly with the Bursar or Headmaster. The School is concerned to ensure that staff feel comfortable about raising such complaints. No individual will be penalised for raising such a complaint unless the substance of the complaint is false or the complaint is made in bad faith, for example out of malice. Any employee who makes a false accusation of harassment will be subjected to disciplinary action. In serious cases, such behaviour may be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal.

**Bursar**  
**December 2021**