



MORE HOUSE
SCHOOL
KNIGHTSBRIDGE

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

What this policy covers

The School recognises the benefits of a diverse workforce and is committed to providing a working environment that is free from discrimination.

The School will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity in all its dealings with employees, workers, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors, recruitment agencies and the public.

All employees and those who act on the School's behalf are required to adhere to this policy when undertaking their duties or when representing the School in any other guise.

Your entitlements and responsibilities

Unlawful discrimination

Unlawful discrimination of any kind in the working environment will not be tolerated and the School will take all necessary action to prevent its occurrence.

Specifically, the School aims to ensure that no employee or job applicant is subject to unlawful discrimination, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, caste and ethnic origin), disability, sexual orientation, marital status, part-time status, pregnancy or maternity, age, religion or belief, political belief or affiliation or trade union membership. This commitment applies to all aspects of employment, including:

- recruitment and selection, including advertisements, job descriptions, interview and selection procedures
- training
- promotion and career-development opportunities
- terms and conditions of employment, and access to employment-related benefits and facilities
- grievance handling and the application of disciplinary procedures
- selection for redundancy

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.

The School is a Catholic foundation and is registered with the Secretary of State as being of a designated religious character. This may be taken into account when recruiting teaching staff where appropriate to do so.

Equal opportunities practice is developing constantly as social attitudes and legislation change. The School will review all policies and implement necessary changes where these could improve equality of opportunity.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

The School actively promotes equality of opportunity for all candidates, including those with criminal records where appropriate.

The School requires you to provide details of any relevant criminal record at an early stage in the application process. Specific rules about which convictions and spent convictions you should disclose and those you need not disclose - known as "protected convictions" - are contained in legislation.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent you from being appointed.

Any recruitment decision will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offence(s). The School will discuss with you the relevance of any offence to the job in question.

If you fail to reveal any information relating to disclosures in accordance with the School's Disclosures Policy, this may lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Further information on the recruitment of ex-offenders is detailed in the Recruitment and Selection policy.

Career development

While positive measures may be taken to encourage under-represented groups to apply for employment opportunities, recruitment or promotion to all jobs will be based solely on merit.

All employees will have equal access to training and other career-development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities.

However, the School will take appropriate positive action measures (as permitted by equal opportunities legislation) to provide specialist training and support for groups that are under-represented in the workforce and encourage them to take up training and career-development opportunities.

Disability

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

A disability will not of 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.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your Head of Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the impact of your disability on your work or working arrangements. Your Head of Department may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments and you may be required to give your consent to a report being produced about your state of health and ability to perform your duties. 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. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

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, flexible hours.

Where during the course of their employment an employee with a disability recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work arrangements or School premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Bursar.

Procedure

Complaints of discrimination

The School will treat seriously all complaints of discrimination made by employees, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors or other third parties and will take action where appropriate.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against, you are encouraged to raise the matter as soon as possible with your Line Manager or other senior employee using the School's Grievance Procedure (outlined elsewhere in the Employee Handbook).

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated thoroughly. If you make an allegation of discrimination, the School is committed to ensuring that you are protected from victimisation, harassment or less favourable treatment. Any such incidents will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedures.

Investigating accusations of unlawful discrimination

If you are accused of unlawful discrimination, the School will investigate the matter fully.

During the course of the investigation, you will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation of your actions.

If the investigation concludes that the claim is false or malicious, the complainant may be subject to disciplinary action.

If the investigation concludes that your actions amount to unlawful discrimination, you will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

The School may carry out monitoring for the purposes of measuring the effectiveness of its equal opportunities and diversity policy.

