

## **BRENTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL**

### **GENDER EQUALITY POLICY**

#### **LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). It added to the duty to eliminate sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, the duty to promote gender equality.

#### **SOCIAL CONTEXT**

We understand that despite thirty years of individual legal rights to sex equality there is still widespread discrimination and persistent gender inequality. Both sexes suffer from the stereotyping of their roles and needs and such stereotyping has to be understood, challenged and overcome.

#### **SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

'Brentside High School challenges all to achieve excellence as lifelong learners with the highest expectations of themselves and others. No exceptions, no excuses.'

Our vision is one that will take Brentside from good (OFSTED 2008) to outstanding.

#### **BRENTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL AIMS**

- The School's general statement of aims, as appears in its publications, is:

'To value every student and ensure that all have equal opportunity to experience a whole curriculum which will promote their intellectual, cultural, aesthetic, moral, spiritual and physical development'.

- Equal Opportunities Statement

#### **THE GENERAL DUTY (Statutory)**

In accordance with our school's values, we welcome the statutory Gender Equality Duty. In compliance with the General Duty, Brentside High School has due regard for the need to, and works to:

- Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination
- Eliminate sexual harassment
- Promote gender equality

By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly. Indirect discrimination means that a particular policy or practice may impact more negatively on one gender than on the other, or may favour one gender to the disadvantage of the other.

By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also

damaging to the perpetrator. This is supported by the school's Anti-bullying and Behaviour policies. We understand 'sex' to refer to the biological differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider social roles and responsibilities which structure our lives.

By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognise and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions. We understand that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to treat girls and boys, and women and men differently, if that action is aimed at overcoming previous, current or possible future disadvantage.

We will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice. We understand the three parts of the duty to be different, but that they should normally support each other. However, we are aware that achieving one may not lead to achieving all three.

In taking due regard we will exercise the principles of proportionality and relevance. By this we mean that the weight we give to gender equality will be proportionate to its relevance to a particular function. The greater the relevance of a function to gender equality, the greater regard we will pay to it.

### **SPECIFIC DUTIES**

We welcome the responsibility to think and act more strategically about gender equality. To meet the specific duties, and guided by the Code of Practice prepared by the Equal Opportunities Commission ([www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)), we have prepared, published and implemented, and will maintain, a Gender Equality Action Plan which contains our current objectives. This is attached to and forms an essential part of this policy.

We are working to develop our understanding of the major gender equality issues in our school's functions and services.

In order to do this we will:

- Collect and analyse school data and other gender equality relevant information, including data about our local area
- Consult all staff, pupils, parents and relevant local communities
- Review all our school policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on gender equality
- Ensure governors, staff, pupils, parents and others in our school are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality
- Assess and address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Publish and implement the Action Plan with our proposed objectives and actions

We will:

- Set out the results of reviews, consultations and impact assessments

- Report on progress annually and set further objectives where necessary
- Review and revise the Policy and Action Plan at least every three years

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All governors, staff, volunteers, pupils and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the school's Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan. In addition:

**The school governors** are responsible for ensuring that the School prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews a Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Duty.

**The Headteacher works with the SLT** to ensure that:

- the Policy and Action Plan are implemented
- staff recruitment, training opportunities and conditions promote gender equality
- all staff, pupils and their parents are consulted regarding, and are aware of the school's responsibilities to meet, the Gender Equality Duty
- existing and planned policies are assessed for the ways in which they impact on gender equality
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities take account of the need to promote gender equality
- incidents of sexual/gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy
- visitors to the school, or those who use the premises, are aware of the Gender Equality policy and action plan

**All staff** have a responsibility to deal with incidents of sexual harassment or bullying; help eliminate unlawful discrimination; prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities (including work with parents) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote gender equality.

**Pupils and parents** have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with the policy, as do **visitors** to the school. These and other responsibilities are set out in our Gender Equality Action Plan which is attached to and forms part of this policy.

We believe that having this gender equality policy and action plan will:

- support us in our decision-making and policy development
- give us a clearer understanding of the needs of staff, pupils and their families
- enable us to provide better quality services which meet varied needs
- help us target our resources more effectively

- help promote increased confidence in our school
- make more effective use of our workforce

We recognise that both sexes can suffer from sexual stereotyping and that sometimes the same policies and practices can impact differently on men and women and boys and girls. We will make appropriate adjustments if this is found to be the case with any of our policies and practices. We also recognise that girls and boys, and women and men, can experience different forms of discrimination depending on, among other things, their ethnicity, belief, sexual orientation, age or disability and we will take this complexity into consideration. In these ways we will strive to improve the situation for, and the relationships between, men and women and boys and girls within our school and wider community.

### **SINGLE SEX PROVISION** (where relevant)

Where we provide for one sex only, this is to help meet the different needs of boys and girls (men and women), needs often arising out of historical and current stereotyping and unjust gender discrimination, or where there is an issue of physical intimacy or embarrassment to be considered. We do not provide activities, classes, facilities, benefits or services for one sex only if this would amount to less favourable treatment of the other sex, or where it would promote gender stereotyping and gender inequality.

We do not deny one sex the same opportunities as the other and where we provide for one sex only we ensure there are equivalent and proportionate facilities, benefits or services for the other sex. We do not offer different curriculum choices to boys and girls, and where there are curriculum options we ensure that these are not offered in such a way that boys and girls are steered into making choices based on gender stereotypes.

If requests for additional single sex activities, facilities or provision which appear to maintain or promote gender inequalities come from pupils, families or the community, these will be considered and legal advice sought.

### **BREACHES OF THE GENDER EQUALITY POLICY**

We understand that eliminating gender discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality is in part an education function and a matter of cultural change. Where possible, breaches of the policy will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the level of the breach, and with the intention of bringing about the relevant changes. More serious breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our school's anti-bullying and harassment procedures, and the disciplinary procedures for staff. Where safeguarding issues based on sex and gender come to the attention of the school these will be dealt with according to our child protection procedures.

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with governors, staff, pupils, parents and members of our local community. These consultations have contributed to developing the awareness among governors, staff, pupils and parents of the ongoing

need to eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination and harassment and to promote gender equality. This policy supports, and is supported by, the school's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement.



<b>KEY ISSUE</b>	<b>ACTION POINTS</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>
Identify any gender issues relating to the attainment of boys and girls.	Analyse data sources, including RAISE online, continuous assessments and internal examinations along with predictions to determine any gender differences and take appropriate action.	September each and monitoring throughout the year.	SLT/SLs/YLs	Any anomalies/differences identified and action formulated to address these.
Ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all students and does not disadvantage either gender.	Continually monitor gender issues when formulating curriculum plans and when devising option systems so that equality of opportunity is maintained.	Jan/Feb annually and ongoing.	SLT	Analysis of option processes and students satisfaction with process, demonstrates equality of opportunity
Address any bullying issues that arise related to gender, including homophobic and sexist bullying.	Promote equality and respect throughout the curriculum and use opportunities presented in curriculum content to reinforce positive attitudes with respect to gender issues. Follow up any instances of such bullying in accordance with the anti-bullying policy.	Ongoing	SL Citizenship  All staff  FTs/YLs	Gender-related bullying or harassment is minimal. Students indicate satisfaction with resolution of difficulties.
Ensure that boys and girls have an equal voice in student contributions to school development.	Ensure the representation on the School Council has both male and female. Ensure that student groups , such as senior students and those involved in interviewing have a gender balance.	Ongoing	SLT/YLs/FTs	Monitoring reveals gender balance is in place and maintained.
Ensure that the appointments process regarding posts at the school is free from gender bias.	Ensure that all advertisements, documentation, interviews are free from gender bias.	Ongoing	Headteacher/Governors	Process is free of gender bias.
Ensure that all issues relating to pay are free from gender bias.	Ensure that support staff pay is in accordance with the Modern Reward Strategy.	Ongoing	SLT	Support staff pay is fair and equitable.