



# **Woolwich Polytechnic School**

## **PolyMAT**

### **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy**

Reviewed August 2016

Approved by Governors: 31 October 2016

Revision due September 2017

## **Policy Statement**

Equality of opportunity at Woolwich Polytechnic School is based on the following core values.

The aims and ethos of the school supports the development of self-respect and self esteem in all pupils, staff and the community it serves. The school aims to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make the best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit. We place a high value on diversity and treat every member of the school as an individual while being committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity.

This Policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of any employee's employment with the School and is not intended to have contractual effect. However, it reflects the School's current practices and employees are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with its content.

The school does not discriminate against staff on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age (the protected characteristics).

All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity, non-discrimination and equality of opportunity; and of the need to prepare pupils for life in a pluralist society.

Woolwich Polytechnic is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Our policy endorses the three principles of inclusion in the National Curriculum:

- i. setting suitable learning challenges;
- ii. responding to pupils diverse learning needs;
- iii. overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.

All Staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the School's

aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Staff will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice.

### **Forms of Discrimination**

Discrimination by or against a member of Staff is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not “fit in” would be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.

Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in the School’s Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.

Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who had complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else’s complaint.

### **Attainment and Progress**

1. Our aim is to ensure all pupils achieve standards of the highest levels. Pupil’s achievement is monitored by formal and informal procedures. It is analysed by ethnicity and background.
2. Any pattern of underachievement of a particular group is addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.
3. The school will ensure, where possible, that assessment is free of cultural and social bias. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils.

4. All children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and their progress.
5. Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.
6. All forms of achievement are recognised and valued.

### **Attitudes and Environment**

1. The school promotes positive approaches to difference, fostering respect for people and property. Language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any group, will not be tolerated.
2. There is high expectation of all pupils with regard to behaviour and attendance.
3. All forms of harassment, including racism, sexism and homophobia, are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.
4. Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures should incidents of harassment arise and all staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.
5. The school works in partnership with parents and the community to tackle specific incidents of harassment and to development positive attitudes to difference.
6. Staff members receive regular training and are encouraged to explore their own views and attitudes to difference and to monitor their practice in relation to this policy. Adults in school take care to lead through example, demonstrating high expectations of all children.
7. It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
8. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

### **Admission, attendance discipline and exclusion**

1. Exclusions and attendance are monitored by ethnicity, special educational need and background.

2. The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.
3. Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical and learning needs, diet is included on all admission forms.

### **Teaching**

1. All children are encouraged to become responsible for their own learning.
2. Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles in order to engage all pupils.
3. The teacher ensures that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which children feel all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalized, the teacher takes positive steps to include them.
4. Teaching styles include collaborative learning so those children appreciate the value of working together. All children are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.
5. Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied.
6. Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.
7. Resources and displays reflect the experience and background of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotype in all curriculum areas.
8. All resources are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

### **Curriculum**

1. Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes.
2. All pupils have access to mainstream curriculum.
3. The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately:
  - For pupils with English as an additional language
  - For pupils from different ethnic groups, where necessary

- For pupils with Special Educational Needs
4. The content of the curriculum reflects and values cultural diversity.
  5. The curriculum encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.
  6. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.
  7. Extra curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.
  8. Informal events are designed to include the whole school community but at times will target individual groups.

### **Policy, Leadership and Management**

1. All school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities.
2. The management of the school and the governing body set a clear ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to all its pupils and staff.
3. Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and wider community.
4. All staff members are consulted in the decision making process.
5. Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for Traveller pupils and for those with English as an additional language) are appropriately targeted and monitored.

### **Staffing – Recruitment and Selection**

The School aims to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics above. The School's recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate.

Job advertisements will avoid using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. A short policy statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy shall be sent on request to those who enquire about vacancies.

The School will take steps to ensure that its vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in the School.

Applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which the School may use, for example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments);
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment;
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons;
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

Applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment without first considering whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account.

The School is required by law to ensure that all members of Staff are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective members of Staff, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in the School, the School will monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information will be removed from applications before shortlisting and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us to take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

### **Staffing –Training, conditions of service and Professional Development**

1. All staff, including non-teaching and part time staff are given status and support.
2. The induction of new staff addresses issues of equality.
3. Staff training and handbooks include equal opportunities issues.
4. Staff training needs will be identified through informal and formal staff appraisals.
5. All Staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the School and all promotion decisions will be on the basis of merit.
6. All members of staff have access to INSET, which will enable professional development.
7. Staff reflects ethnic and gender diversity at all levels.
8. The skills of all staff members are recognised and valued and staff are encouraged to share their knowledge.
9. Staff and visitors provide a wide a range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.
10. There is a named senior member of staff responsible for equal opportunities in the school (Ms G Ward, Deputy Head Teacher).
11. The School's conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are available to all Staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

### **Recruitment of ex-offenders**

The School is an organisation that uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess candidates' suitability for positions of trust working in an environment with children and young people. The School complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all candidates fairly.

The School undertakes not to discriminate unlawfully against any candidate who is required to provide information (a check) through this process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent a candidate from working with the School. Whether or not it does will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.



The School's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders will be made available to all candidates at the outset of the recruitment process. The School will ensure that it makes any candidate who is subject to check aware of the DBS Code of Practice and will provide a copy of the Code on request.

As a check is part of the School's recruitment process, the School requires all candidates called to interview to provide details of any criminal record at any early stage of the application process. The School requests that this information is sent under separate confidential cover to a designated person, in this case the Business Manager of the School. The School guarantees that only those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process will see this information.

Unless the nature of the position is such that the School may ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record, the School will only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The School will ensure that it discusses with the candidate the relevance of any offence to the job in question. A candidate's failure to reveal information directly relevant to the job could result in withdrawal of an offer of employment.

### **Parents, Governors and Community Partnership**

1. All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.
2. Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.
3. We will ensure that governor support is appropriate for all ethnic groups.
4. We will encourage people from ethnic communities to become school governors.
5. We will strive to work closely and in particular with local ethnic and religious community organisations.

### **Disability Discrimination**

If a member of Staff is disabled, or becomes disabled, in the course of his or her employment with the School, he or she is encouraged to tell us about his or her condition. This is to enable us to support the member of Staff as much as possible.

If a member of Staff experiences difficulties at work because of his or her disability, he or she may wish to contact their Line Manager/Head of Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments to his or her working conditions or duties which he or she considers to be reasonable and necessary or which would assist in the performance of his or her duties.

The Line Manager/Head of Department may wish to consult with the member of Staff and his or her medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. Careful consideration will be given to any such proposals and they will be accommodated where reasonable, practicable and proportionate in all the circumstances of the case.

Nevertheless, there may be circumstances where it would not be reasonable for the School to accommodate a particular adjustment and in such circumstances it will ensure that it provides the member of Staff with its reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether they place disabled Staff, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other Staff. Where reasonably practicable and proportionate the School will take steps to improve access for disabled Staff and service users.

### **Termination of employment**

1. The School will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
2. The School will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties applied are without discrimination, and are carried out fairly and uniformly for all Staff, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

### **Fixed-Term Employees and Agency/Temporary Workers**

1. The School will monitor its use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service to ensure they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. The School will also, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

## **Part-Time Workers**

1. The School will monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. It will also ensure that requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under the School's Flexible Working Policy.

## **Monitoring and Review**

All members of staff and the governing body have the responsibility of implementing this policy.

## **Complaints of Discrimination, Victimisation and Harassment on the Protected Characteristics**

The School will treat seriously and will take action where appropriate concerning all complaints of discrimination, harassment or victimisation on any of the protected characteristics made by any of its Staff, students or other third parties.

Any member of Staff who considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, victimised or harassed within the meaning of this policy should discuss the matter in the first instance with their Line Manager/Head of Department or, if inappropriate under the circumstances of the case, with the Headteacher. In some cases it may be possible to resolve the matter informally and reach a satisfactory resolution.

If a member of Staff wishes to make a formal complaint then he or she should follow the School's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

If an employee is accused of unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment, the School will investigate the matter fully. In the course of the investigation the employee will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation and provide an explanation for his or her actions.

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

If on the other hand the School concludes that the employee's action amounts to unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment he or she may be subject to disciplinary action under the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, up to and including summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

### **Monitoring of the policy in relation to pupils should include**

- Analysis of examination results to include attainment and value-added of the various ethnic, social and learning ability groups
- Analysis of punishment and reward records
- Analysis of exclusion
- Analysis of racism, racial harassment, sexism and bullying
- Analysis of Post 16 destinations
- Analysis of parental involvement in the life of the school (including membership of the governing body) by ethnicity, gender and social class

Monitoring of the policy in relation to staffing should include:

- A breakdown of staffing structure by ethnicity, gender and disability
- A breakdown of professional development activities undertaken, by ethnicity, gender, disability – as well as department

### **Reporting on the impact of the policy**

To ensure that our policy is being deployed as it should, to raise attainment and expectations for all, it is suggested that the school reports it's monitoring to the Governing body on at least on an annual basis, perhaps to coincide with the reporting of the examination results. The effectiveness of the policy should be evaluated on an annual basis.