



The Dean Close Foundation

Independent, Co-educational, Day and Boarding Schools, Nurseries and Administrative Support Functions

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (W012)

At the Dean Close Foundation our aim is for every individual to Flourish, and our core values, Love, Courage and Contribution, serve as the cornerstones of the organisation. The Foundation is committed to fostering an educational and workplace culture built on integrity, openness, and mutual respect, ensuring that everybody feels valued, supported and challenged. We believe that each pupil, parent, employee and volunteer have the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the community, develop their expertise, take thoughtful risks, and drive positive changes. By upholding and embodying these values, which spring from the Christian ethos of Dean Close, the Foundation creates an environment where everyone can thrive and succeed, and which makes a positive impact on the wider community.

Registered Charity No: 1086829

THE DEAN CLOSE FOUNDATION

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

- This policy has been authorised by the Board of Trustees of the Dean Close Foundation (“the Foundation”) for all of its schools, nurseries and anyone in an administrative or support function.
- This policy will be reviewed periodically by the HR Team on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- This policy is intended for guidance purposes only and does not form part of any contract of employment or agreement. It is designed to outline expectations and best practices, but it does not create any legally binding obligations on the Foundation or its employees. The Foundation reserves the right to amend, update, or withdraw this policy at its discretion as needed.

The Dean Close Foundation is an equal opportunities employer. This means it is our policy that there should be no discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any employee, former employee, job applicant, customer, service provider or member of the public because of any of the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race (including, colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. These are known as ‘protected characteristics’. The Foundation will oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination in all areas of employment, such as, pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and disciplines, dismissal and redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities.

This policy provides equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time.

We are fully committed to providing, so far as it is practicable, a good and harmonious working environment that offers equal treatment and opportunities for all our employees, and where every employee is treated with appropriate respect and dignity.

1. Purpose and scope

In issuing this policy we have four main objectives:

1. For our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society and our customers, and for each employee to feel respected and able to give their best;
2. to encourage employees to take an active role in combating all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
3. to deter employees from participating in any such unlawful behaviour; and
4. to demonstrate to all employees and others who engage with us that they can rely upon

our support in cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Whilst we recognise that overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy lies with the Executive Team. All employees, whatever their position within the Foundation, have some measure of responsibility for ensuring its effective implementation. All employees should also understand they, as well as the Foundation, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination in the course of their employment against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

In this respect they should ensure that they:

- co-operate with any measure introduced to develop equality, diversity and inclusion;
- refrain from taking discriminatory actions or decisions which are contrary to either the letter or the spirit of this policy;
- do not treat, harass, abuse or intimidate other employees, former employees, job applicants, customers, service providers or members of the public in a manner contrary to the letter or the spirit of this policy;
- do not instruct, induce or attempt to induce or pressurize other employees to act in breach of this policy;
- advise the Foundation if they are aware of any discriminatory conduct, either against themselves or any third party, so that the Foundation can take steps to deal with it at an early stage.

2. Types of discrimination

Various actions, omissions or behaviours will amount to unlawful discrimination if they relate to someone's protected characteristic:

- **direct discrimination** - treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic, e.g. rejecting a job applicant because of their race, or failing to give someone a promotion because of their gender.
- **indirect discrimination** - applying a provision, criterion or practice which applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular protected characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time may adversely impact an under-represented group. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- **harassment** - unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (including sexual harassment), which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- **victimisation** - retaliating against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment – e.g. refusing to give them a reference after they have left our employment.

- **disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

It is possible to discriminate against someone even if they do not actually possess the protected characteristic in question. For instance, it is unlawful to discriminate against someone because they are associated with another person who has a protected characteristic – e.g. they are married to someone of a different race. Similarly, what counts is your perception of their protected characteristic, even if that perception is incorrect. So, it is still unlawful to discriminate against someone because you believe they are gay, even if they are not.

3. Reasonable adjustments for disability

Disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

If an employee believes they may be disabled within this meaning, please let your line manager know so that reasonable adjustments can be made and support provided to overcome any disadvantage encountered. Please contact the HR Team for support and advice on this.

4. Part-time and fixed-term employees

The Foundation policy is to treat part-time and fixed-term employees the same as full-time or permanent workers, and to afford them no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate).

5. Breaches of this policy

Breaches of this policy are taken very seriously and will be dealt with using The Foundation Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations under the Amendment of Equality Act 2010.

If an employee believes they are being harassed, victimised or otherwise discriminated against, they should raise a grievance in accordance with the Foundation's Grievance Procedure. However, employees are reminded that this policy does not protect them from ordinary incidents of working life, in particular reasonable guidance or reprimand in the course of performance management or disciplinary procedures, or generally where their concerns arise from treatment which is not because of any protected characteristic.

The Foundation takes complaints seriously and seeks to deal with them promptly and confidentially. If a complaint is upheld, then the employee will be notified of this. The details of any action taken against the perpetrator as a result are usually confidential between that person and the Foundation.

The Foundation recognises that some complainants may prefer not to have their names used in the course of any formal process. The Foundation will seek to accommodate such requests as

far as practicable, but employees will appreciate that if the names are not disclosed, this may limit the ability to investigate the complaint with the alleged perpetrator. Similarly, it may be found impracticable to investigate complaints made long after the events in question, and in this case, employees are encouraged to raise complaints at an early stage.

Every effort will be made to ensure that any employee who makes a complaint in good faith will not suffer any further detriment or be victimised because of making such a complaint. Any complaint of victimisation will be dealt with seriously, promptly and (so far as practicable) confidentially. By contrast, making a malicious allegation will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

6. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored from time to time to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

Employees are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved, by contacting the HR Team (Hr@deanclose.org.uk).