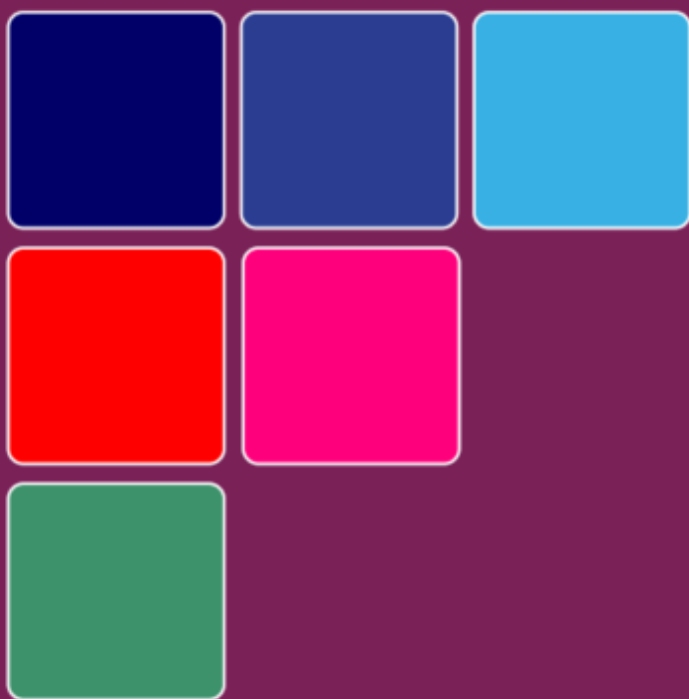


Dudley Council

Equitable Policy



Working as One Council in
the historic capital of the Black Country



If you require an accessible version of this policy, please contact edi@dudley.gov.uk



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1. Equality, diversity and inclusion

We recognise that discrimination can be a barrier which makes it difficult for people to integrate into employment. This could be linked to age, race, sex, gender re-assignment, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

We are therefore committed to:



Striving to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities.



Providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoid unlawful discrimination in employment and against our pupils by giving our workforce appropriate and relevant advice and support in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Principles

We view diversity as a strength and aim to create an inclusive workplace culture that respects and values differences.

We recognise that individuals still experience discrimination and inequality in our society. We, therefore, as an employer, take a proactive approach to identifying and addressing this within the workplace.

We are clear that we will not tolerate harassment, bullying, discrimination and victimisation of any kind that may constitute gross misconduct under our Disciplinary process and could lead to dismissal.

Responsibilities

All employees are required to assist the school to meet our commitment to provide equal opportunities in both employment and school community and avoid unlawful discrimination.

2. Dignity at work

We believe that every colleague has the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work. We are committed to providing a working environment where individuals feel safe and welcome, free from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

We adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination, whether that is direct or indirect harassment or victimisation, on grounds of any protected characteristic.

This includes discrimination by association or due to perception.

Unacceptable Behaviour

It is unacceptable for any colleague to act in a way that is intended to result in physical, mental, or psychological harm or distress. Such behaviour is contradictory to our values and diminishes the dignity and respect of all colleagues.

Bullying, discrimination, harassment and victimisation can be an isolated incident or a series of events.

Examples of bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation may include:

- Social isolation and/or deliberate exclusion
- Abuse or misuse of power or authority which causes the recipient to feel denigrated, embarrassed or humiliated.
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Offensive and/or personalised jokes, remarks, statements and name-calling
- Intimidating behaviour, either physical or non-physical
- Pressure/coercion into participating in or relinquishing membership of political/religious groups.
- Unwelcome sexual advances including physical contact.
- Intrusion by stalking, pestering or spying.
- Persistent unjust criticism
- Verbal or written harassment
- Racist, sexist, ageist, or homophobic jokes and/or banter
- Pressure to hide or disclose information relating to personal circumstances.
- Display of offensive materials

This list is not an exhaustive list.

The basics you should follow are:



Treat all your colleagues with dignity and respect.



Help create and maintain a work environment free of bullying, discrimination, harassment and victimisation.



Make it clear that harassment and bullying is unacceptable. Intervene and/or report where necessary.



You will not bully, discriminate, harass and/or victimise other colleagues or the public to whom you provide a service.



Be aware of how your behaviour may affect others and adapt it if necessary.

The basic requirements your line manager will follow are:



Set appropriate workplace standards and set a good example through their own behaviour.



Ensure the working environment is free from bullying, discrimination, harassment and victimisation.



Ensure that you and your colleagues are treated fairly and with respect.



Support anyone experiencing bullying, discrimination, harassment and victimisation.



Intervene to stop and provide support to victims as necessary.



Promptly and appropriately deal with any complaint and ensure that the complainant is not victimised for making such a complaint.

Raising a Concern

If you have a concern in relation to bullying, discrimination, harassment or victimisation you should speak with the individual and ask them to 'stop'. The individual may not know that their behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting and a conversation may help them to understand the effect of their behaviour.

Where possible, keep a record containing dates and content of conversations in case you need to make a formal complaint or raise a concern.

If the unacceptable behaviour does not stop or you feel you cannot speak to the individual, raise the matter formally in the first instance with your line manager as soon as possible. You can also use the Grievance Procedure which can be found in the Employee Conduct Guidance notes.

3. Whistleblowing

The school is committed to all employees displaying the highest level of standards of openness, accountability and behaviours which accord with our values.

An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve their employer and not disclose confidential information about the schools affairs. Nevertheless, where an individual discovers information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the school then this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal. There should also be an arrangement to enable this to be done independent of line management (although in a relatively minor instance, the line manager would be the appropriate person to be informed).

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers because of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns.

It should be emphasised that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It is not designed to question financial or school decisions nor should it be used to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under harassment, complaint, disciplinary or other procedures.

Scope of Policy

This policy is designed to enable everyone to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon those concerns. It provides avenues to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken. It also aims to ensure that individuals receive a response to any concerns raised and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied. It also reassures the individual that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation.

If you have concerns about your own employment, then you should use the Grievance policy detailed in the Employee Conduct Guidelines

4. Anti-slavery and human trafficking

If you have a suspicion, report it to:

West Midlands Police – Call 999 in an emergency

For all other matters please visit WM Police Online at <https://www.west-midlands-police.uk/>

Modern Slavery Helpline – Call 08000 121 700

They can provide help, advice or information and the helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

5. Transitioning

We are committed to being an equitable, and inclusive employer and will not discriminate against an applicant, employee or third party who identifies as trans.

Trans employees are entitled to be treated with respect and permitted to perform their roles free from harassment and unfair discrimination. Any such behaviour is unacceptable and will be met with a 'zero tolerance' response.

The basics which you need to follow are:



Take personal responsibility to look after your own health and wellbeing and keeping your line manager up to date with your action plan covering your period of transition.



Contribute to an inclusive, respectful, and supportive working environment so that the subject of transition is treated and discussed with respect and individual confidentiality is maintained.



Be open and inform your line manager and colleagues how you wish to be referred to, including name, title, and pronouns; and



Be aware of the support mechanisms available.

The basics which your line manager will follow are:



Ensure all employees are aware of the support available to them if they are transitioning.



Have an awareness and understanding of transitioning and how it can affect individuals in the workplace. This includes issues specific to a relevant protected characteristic.



Be ready and willing to have an open, sensitive discussion with you about your action plan in a safe place where strict confidentiality and discretion can be maintained.



Ensure all employees who are in a period of transition are not treated less favourably in any way if they take up any support available.



Signpost you to other appropriate sources of help and advice; and



Support you in informing your colleagues about the situation if appropriate and with your permission.



Equitable Policy




Purpose of Policy:
How, as a school, to deal with Equal Opportunities



Policy Author:
YourHR



Policy Date:
April 2025



Policy applies to:
All employees of the school



Unions:
GMB, Unison, NASUWT, NEU, NAHT & ASCL have all been consulted on the policy updates & changes



Review Date:
April 2028

People & Inclusion

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YourHR

