

Equal Opportunities Policy (Employees)

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	CSF Whistleblowing Policy



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Purpose and Scope

CSF (“we/us”) is committed to a policy of equality and aim to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin) civil partner or marital status, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, disability or religious belief. Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual’s rights on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of CSF community.

We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated. We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school’s ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

This policy and procedure apply to all teaching and support staff within CSF, regardless of length of service, whether full-time, part-time, permanent or fixed term.

This policy will be applied fairly to all employees taking into account any Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

This policy does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time, following consultation with our recognised Trade Unions.

Aims

It is important to have policies and procedures which assist in setting standards of conduct and ensure order and fairness in the treatment of individuals and aim to:

- carry out their legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (including but not limited to the Equality Act 2010);
- reinforce the school’s position as a provider of high-quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities; ensure that equality remains high on the school’s strategic agenda;
- establish good people management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response;
- aim to have a staffing composition that reflects the composition of the local community; ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil.
- ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals;



- ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g., complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the disciplinary, grievance or anti-harassment procedure as appropriate).

Equality Act 2010

Protected groups are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as:

1. Sex
2. Gender Reassignment
3. Marriage or Civil Partnership
4. Pregnancy or Maternity
5. Race (including Ethnic or National Origin, Nationality or Colour)
6. Disability
7. Sexual Orientation
8. Age
9. Religion or Belief. CSF respects all religious and philosophical beliefs, as well as the lack of religion or belief, and the right of all members of its community to discuss and debate these issues freely. It is expected that such discussion at all times reflects the expectations outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct.

These are known as "**Protected Characteristics**". Whilst not covered under the Equality Act 2010, CSF also strives to protect people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Recruitment

All staff appointments are based on selecting the best candidate during the recruitment process. No candidate will be disadvantaged based on a Protected Characteristic. CSF will make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process where necessary to ensure that all candidates are able to fully participate.

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from HR or UK Visas and Immigration.

Family Friendly Policies

CSF is a family-friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, flexitime where appropriate, carers' leave provision).

CSF acknowledges that employees without children should not be disadvantaged as a result of this.



Training and Development

The success of the Equal Opportunities Policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training. CSF will endeavour to:

- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status;
- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs;
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils can make;
- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally.

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self-development, encouragement and motivation. CSF places great importance on the relationship between Line Managers and their teams and will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development.

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The Executive and the Governors have a duty to ensure that policies are regularly monitored and reviewed. Monitoring is an essential aspect of this policy, as it should provide important information by which the school can measure its performance against its aims and objectives. Statistical information can also enable CSF to detect where potential or actual imbalances exist and to take steps to correct them.

Monitoring with respect to employment will be undertaken in the following areas on at least an annual basis by sex, race, disability, grade and subject area:

- composition of CSF staff;
- take up of training opportunities;
- promotion patterns;
- use of complaints procedure;
- use of grievance, disciplinary, harassment etc.;
- use of sanctions;
- take-up of family-friendly policies, e.g., flexible working arrangements where suitable;
- recruitment trends.

Exit interviews can also provide further helpful information and feedback. The employee may choose to have their Line Manager conduct the exit interview or ask for HR to conduct this. Wherever possible, the employee's choice will be accommodated. Employees have the right to withhold the contents of the exit interview until they leave.



Discrimination, Victimisation and Harassment

CSF Employees must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former staff, job applicants, parents, pupils, suppliers and visitors. Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures. There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

- **Direct Discrimination:** This means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances because of a Protected Characteristic.
- **Indirect Discrimination:** This means applying a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic and is not justified.
- **Victimisation:** Retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment. This includes where someone mistakenly believes that the person victimised has done so.
- **Harassment:** This includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. It can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it. Coventry School Foundation will also consider continuous bullying as a form of harassment.
- **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.

Breach of Policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination and victimisation may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If an employee believes that they have suffered harassment, bullying or discrimination, they can raise the matter [through our Grievance Procedure and through our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy, as appropriate]. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about or report discrimination. If an employee believes they have been victimised for making a complaint or report of discrimination or have witnessed it happening to someone else in the workplace, they should raise this through our Grievance Procedure.

If an employee feels that the principles of this policy are not being adhered to, in the first instance they must raise this matter with the Headteacher, their Line Manager or the Head of HR.



Following this, if the action is not acceptable, further guidance can be found in the Grievance Policy or the Whistleblowing Policy.

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