Cothill Policy Documents

ISSR 17 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy Pupils & Staff

NMS for Boarding: 16.1

Date: September 2026
Next review: September 2027

The Radley Schools Group Equality Policy is on the RSG Staff Intranet site here

Aims

Cothill is committed to promoting equality and diversity and promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the way we learn. The School aims to be an inclusive organisation, where diversity is valued, respected and built upon.

Cothill is also committed to compliance with relevant equality legislation, the Equality Act 2010, Codes of Practice and relevant best practice guidance. This policy pursues and builds on the statutory position to ensure effective policies and practice of promoting equality.

Cothill aims pro-actively to tackle discrimination or disadvantage and aims to ensure that no individual or group is directly or indirectly discriminated against for any reason with regard to employment or accessing its services.

Given that a high percentage of pupils board, boarders *per se* are not discriminated against. Like all schools, Cothill is becoming increasingly multicultural and broader in its intake. Regard is therefore paid to the protected characteristics (set out in the Equality Act 2010) of all pupils and Staff, who are not discriminated against for their cultural background, linguistic background, special educational needs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment nor academic or sporting ability.

Issues regarding bullying are covered in the School's Bullying Prevention Policy.

The Definition of Equality and Diversity

Diversity can be described as celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences. By respecting this everyone can feel valued for their contributions as beneficial not only for the individual but for the School.

Equality and Diversity are not interchangeable but are interdependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and taken account of.

Cothill is committed to ensuring that its pupils are treated fairly in an environment which is free from any form of discrimination, including disability, race (includes colour, nationality and ethnic origins), religion and sexual orientation.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting either a pupil or job applicant because of their religious views or sexual orientation.

Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that 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 would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

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.

Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or 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.

Employment of Staff

See Radley Schools Group Staff Intranet here

The Trust is fully committed to upholding the principles of equal opportunities in employment and in the provision of its services. In particular, the Trust opposes discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as “Protected Characteristics”).

Each individual associated with Radley Schools Group (whether or not an employee), is individually responsible for implementing the Trust’s commitment to the principle of equality.

Employees must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, pupils, parents, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace, and on work-related trips or events including social events.

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying and should include a short policy statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy will be made available on request.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

Individuals who are disabled or become disabled, are encouraged to tell the Trust about their condition so that it can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Radley Schools Group takes a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If an Employee believes that they have suffered discrimination, they can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

Employees must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith may lead to a misconduct tribunal.

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