



AL-ISLAH GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Pupils do not experience inappropriate discrimination because of differences arising out of gender, pregnancy or maternity, disability, race, religion or belief, cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.

Policy Statement

“Allah commands justice and fairness...” (16:90)

* Al-Islah Girls High School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils, parents, staff, trustees, visitors and volunteers all of whom form part of the **school community**.

School's position

The school recognises the benefits of having a diverse school community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Pupils will be taught to value and respect others. The school is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the school community. Taking into account the school's designation as an Islamic school, in the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

Gender; pregnancy or maternity; disability; race; religion or belief; cultural background; linguistic background; special educational need; academic or sporting ability or any other form of discrimination above and beyond the scope of **standard 16**

The school also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The school aims to ensure that all policies and practices confirm with the principle of equal opportunities.

The school believes that no child, individual or family should be excluded from an activity on the grounds of age, gender, class, family, status, disability, colour, ethnic origin, cultural beliefs or any other difference.

The school aims to ensure that all who wish to work in the school or volunteer to help, have an equal opportunity as taking into account the school's designation as an Islamic school.

The school will communicate the commitment of the School to the promotion of equal opportunities.

Admissions

* The school is open to every Muslim family in the local community, wider communities and international communities.

* Every attempt is made to accommodate children in the catchment area of Blackburn.

Behaviour

The school will

* Not accept any discriminatory behaviour (including all those mentioned within standard 16) from pupils and from any member of staff in any circumstances.

* Initiate formal disciplinary procedures in the case of members of staff displaying such behaviour.

* Carry out intensive one-to-one counselling with pupils displaying such behaviour; this will be aimed at helping them to understand and overcome their prejudices.

The Curriculum

The school will

* Respect and recognise every pupil's individuality and will develop their potential to the maximum.

* Plan activities and play that offer pupils opportunities to develop in a prejudice-free environment.

* Give pupils the opportunities to explore, acknowledge and value the similarities and differences between themselves.

Education

The full and effective participation and progression of all pupils at Al-Islah Girls High School will be achieved by:

- * Upholding Quranic and Prophetic guidance concerning equality and the rights of those seeking knowledge.
- * Acknowledging and valuing the diversity of experiences, interests, social, and cultural backgrounds of the pupils of Al-Islah Girls High School.
- * Using such differences constructively, to raise confidence and self-esteem.
- * Reminding pupils that whilst the above stated differences do exist, the fact is that all Muslims are equal and belong to one nation, the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
- * Ensuring access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies; lesson planning should set high expectations and provide appropriate learning opportunities for all pupils.
- * Providing texts from a range of cultures, which are free from discrimination and stereotyping, and which reflect the school's Islamic ethos.
- * Providing resources to support those with specific learning difficulties, where appropriate.

Employment

The school will

- * Fill employment opportunities with the best person who fits the essential criteria as decided by the Senior Management Team.
- * Apply identical selection criteria to a prospective applicant who is a relative of an existing member of staff at the school.
- * Adopt clear and transparent procedures that do not allow relatives of staff members to act as sole participants in disciplinary matters and other matters that require impartiality, in order to minimise the chances of unequal or unethical opportunities being received by members of staff,

Food and other cultural requirements

- * Al-Islah Girls High School will ensure that all members of staff are able to meet the medical, cultural and dietary needs of all the pupils at the school.

Language

Al-Islah Girls High School will

- * Ensure that all written and verbal communication is fully understood by all parents and pupils.

* Ensure that all members of staff can communicate with parents and pupils to provide equal access.

Meetings

* Al-Islah Girls High School will ensure that the timings, place and manner in which meetings are conducted do not exclude any section of the community.

Pupils related to members of staff

The school will

* Ensure that pupils related to members of staff are recipients of the same opportunities as any other pupil, and at the same time, safeguarded from being discriminated against by fellow pupils or non-related staff.

* Adopt clear and transparent procedures that do not allow relatives of pupils to act as sole participants in disciplinary matters and other matters that require impartiality (e.g. reward systems, invigilation arrangements, matters that deem parental contact in the first instance), in order to minimise the chances of unequal or unethical opportunities being received by pupils who are related to members of staff.

* Ensure that, in case of the Headteacher being a relative of a pupil, the Headteacher will take her concerns to her line manager or deputy, who will deal with matters pertaining to such a pupil. The line manager/deputy will normally choose another non-relative member of staff to deal with the matter.

Resources

The school will

* Ensure that any resources chosen reflect a balanced view of the world and the rich diversity of the society that we live in.

* Avoid resources that contain stereotyping or offensive pictures/messages about any group or people.

* Ensure there are no latent messages transmitted to pupils contradicting the principles of equality and freedom of thought.

Special Needs

The school

* Recognises the wide range of special needs pupils and families in the community, and will consider what part it will play in meeting those needs.

* Will take into account these special needs when planning for people with disabilities. At present, our facilities physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited, however we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone.

Reasonable adjustments

The school has an ongoing duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils.

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- Making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room;
- Allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam;
- Re-arranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building etc.

The school is not legally required to make adjustments which include:

- Physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities etc..

The Equality Act 2010 will in due course require all schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled people. In the meantime, if parents are willing to pay for auxiliary aids and services, the School will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided.

Monitoring and review

The Head teacher is responsible for:

The ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of this policy and its effectiveness with respect to admission and selection

Taking of appropriate steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination

Discussing this policy and reviewing with staff annually

Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination

If you have any concerns or have any questions regarding this policy or its application then please contact the Head teacher of the school

The school takes this policy very seriously and anyone is entitled to raise their concerns relating to discrimination with the Head teacher who will maintain a log with outcomes of all complaints raised.

Policy reviewed and amended 1st October 2012