

E-ACT POLICY

PARKWOOD ACADEMY

GENDER, ANTI-AGEIST AND ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA

Date agreed by Governors	
Date of review	
Responsible officer	Principal / Business Director

General Principles

In recognition of the justice of gender equality within and outside the institution, the Academy has a duty to prepare all of our students to play a fulfilling and dignified role within society, building upon the strengths of the equal contributions of women and men of all ages to such society. Such strengths and contribution are irrespective of sexual orientation, which should not be evident either in actions or responses within the institution. The values promoted and actively modelled in everyday relationships and attitudes displayed are an integral feature of our educative purpose that must permeate the practices of the Academy as a reflection of the culture of the organisation. As such, the following statements have significant implication for key individual post holders, Faculties and the Houses of the Academy.

Ethos

The governors require positive support and cooperation by students, parents and staff for these values, which are deemed central to the development of the culture of the Academy. The ethos of the Academy should be one that reflects the needs of all its students and staff. Both sexes are affected by sexism but it is often girls and women who are disadvantaged in society. Similarly, homophobic or ageist behaviour have no place in a civilised society.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in the physical environment.

Displays should take care not to reinforce gender or sexual stereotypes and should provide an opportunity to challenge sexist or ageist assumptions. Facilities and amenities for recreational time should reflect the Academy as a mixed gender environment, striking a conscious balance in the use of space between provisions for significant interest in particular activity and equality of provision for expressed needs arising from the students themselves.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in our values.

Gender and sexual equality should be promoted through form time and PSHE. Assemblies should take account of the achievements and leadership of women of all ages in society and faith. Sex education programmes should take care not to reinforce sexual stereotyping or homophobic prejudice. Opportunities for student and staff leadership should take cognisance of gender balance and role modelling. The role of the Academy Council and procedures for election to representative office should be gender sensitive, alerting students and colleagues to such consideration.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in our activity.

A wide range of activities should be offered to students and staff. Care must be taken not to exclude students or staff from activities because of their gender. Resourcing must facilitate curricular access appropriate to gender issue; e.g. Consideration of the impact of single or mixed sex groups in subjects stereotyping dominated by a single gender such as in technology or computing.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in our procedures and relationships amongst staff and students.

The Academy gender policy should be made explicit to new employees, as well as to parents and carers of all students at the Academy. Inappropriate relationships or overt sexual behaviour or references will be subject to the relevant disciplinary procedures. The organisation and administration of the Academy should not reinforce unnecessary divisions by gender. Staff should be sensitive in their methods of grouping students and avoid gender-

based divisions unless they are particularly relevant to the students needs. In particular, having fewer girls in the Academy. departments should be sensitive to the impact of their groupings in such terms and individual girls should not be isolated as a result of class groupings.

Sexual Abuse or Harassment

Areas of potential abuse or harassment include physical assault, verbal abuse, unwanted attention, sexist, homophobic or patronising behaviour, and offensive graffiti/pictures.

- a) Action on such issues is guided by two major principles, which apply to staff and students alike, supported by an appropriate form of constructive dialogue with those concerned:

To protect the victim of such attacks

- a) To make a strong and immediate response in such a way as to make the Academy's position clear- i.e. that such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- b) In the event of sexual or gender based harassment or abuse by a member of staff, such actions will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Code of the appropriate Conditions of Service.

Language

We need to be aware of the fundamental role which language plays in conveying values. It is important to try to ensure that the words we use do not betray unconscious bias. Awareness raising of the issues and difficulties involved is a feature of staff development. This may be in apparent conflict with some cultural traditions where language has developed alongside cultural attitudes over a long period.

Some obvious points to note would be:

- Use of gender-neutral terms where gender is not significant.
- Care in using gender-specific pronouns implying that certain activities are more appropriate for one sex than the other.
- Care in using adjectives that suggest traditional gender-related characteristics, extreme versions of which are deeply offensive and should never be used.
- Implicit homophobic references.

Curriculum

- a) Staff need to be aware that their own attitudes and expectations play a crucial role in student performance and achievement.
- b) The curriculum should endeavour to avoid all discrimination and sex stereotyping and make equal entitlement a key focus. There is a particular need to raise awareness given the gender imbalance of the Academy student population.
- c) Faculties and Houses should monitor their practices and procedures to ensure that they lead to genuine of opportunity for all students.
- d) Teaching strategies should be developed which enhance a positive self-image for all students.
- e) Assessment procedures should avoid gender bias. Recognition of achievement in terms of extra curricular activities should not disadvantage a particular sex.

Resources

- a) Visual materials should avoid sex stereotyping and should depict women and men equally involved in all roles of society, irrespective of sexual orientation, age or gender.
- b) Sexist assumptions of popular culture and its images in books, magazines and on television should be discussed and challenged. Internet abuse, notably in areas of pornography should be reported immediately in line with the Academy Internet Policy.
- c) Literature by women authors, about women and with women as central characters, in non-stereotypical roles, should be positively sought.
- d) All Academy-generated resources should avoid crude sex or ageist stereotyping.
- e) Care should be taken to ensure that equal time is allotted to girls and boys for the use of resources such as computers.
- f) Opportunities should be sought in engaging with positive role models from the local and wider community illustrative of the contribution and value of older citizens within society.

Staff and Governor Appointments

The issue of Gender equality amongst the whole community of the Academy should be viewed positively. Whilst the prime and clear consideration in making an appointment is that the best person for a post should be appointed, it is important that the balance of employees and governors should reflect the value attached to this policy at all levels and, other factors being equal, this may be a relevant factor in decision-making.

Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy of Equality of Opportunity is the responsibility of the Principal, reporting to the Local Governing Body through committee reports which contain the outcomes of monitoring of the policy. Such routine monitoring duties are assigned to the:

- a) Vice Principal, (Standards & Delivery) in respect of the curriculum.
- b) Vice Principal (Personnel) in respect of personnel matters.
- c) Assistant Principal (Assessment, Recording & Reporting) in respect of learning outcomes.
- d) Assistant Principal (Students & Community) in respect of reportable incidents and the participation of students and community groups in Academy activity.

However, responsibility for the implementation of the Academy's Gender and Anti-Ageist policy must be shared by ALL colleagues in the interests of the nurturing of a positive environment in which all students, families and employees can feel valued and are able to achieve their full potential.