



Business &
Enterprise



APPLIED
LEARNING

ST ALBANS GIRLS' SCHOOL BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE COLLEGE

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

St Albans Girls' School is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all and recognises the requirements of all relevant legislation.

The School will not tolerate any unjustifiable discrimination, on any grounds, including those of ability or disability, age, ethnic origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation or social class.

Our aim is to provide a working environment for students and staff free from harassment, or victimisation of any kind. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community (management, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/carers, students and governing body) to uphold the policy and put it into practice.

AIMS

- To ensure that all students have equal access to all the learning experiences provided for them at school.
- To provide an environment that is safe and welcoming and where there is respect for oneself and others.
- To encourage an ethos where all staff and students are valued in a supportive community.
- To value the diversity of the school community and to value different environments, societies and cultures throughout the world.
- To provide the conditions where all students can develop a positive self-image, regardless of their ability.
- To enhance awareness amongst all members of our school community of the many faces of discrimination and the need to ensure that students are equipped to recognise and confront it.
- To ensure all sectors of the school community regularly review their current practice in the light of this policy.

Curriculum

The curriculum and how it is delivered can be a powerful vehicle either for reinforcing prejudice and stereotyped thinking or for challenging and changing attitudes.

All students have equal entitlement to participate in a broad, balanced curriculum, suitable for all abilities in its content and delivery.

It is particularly important for students' self-esteem that they perceive that their individual qualities and achievements are valued.

The curriculum should:

- encourage and continue to provide opportunities for students to develop and pursue interests and skills in 'non- traditional' female/male areas.
- encourage awareness and study of languages, sciences, arts and other cultural forms throughout the world.
- address the political, social and economic causes of all forms of discrimination.

Course design - resources and delivery

The key resource is the teacher. The values a teacher holds can be very influential when using resource material and in delivery of the curriculum. Teachers need to recognise that the views and expectations they hold of their students can have a significant effect on their achievement and how they see themselves.

Students' experience is another valuable resource and teachers should encourage students with first hand knowledge of other cultures or family groupings to contribute to lessons where this is appropriate.

Courses should where possible integrate and promote awareness of the perspectives and contribution of historically marginalised groups. Resources should reflect these general aims. Opportunities for critical assessment of bias should be an integral part of teaching. Negative or stereotyped images of different social groups should not be given credibility. Where possible resources should be chosen, as well as for their general excellence, for their positive non-stereotypical representations.

Teachers should encourage the participation of all students within the classroom and aim to divide their time fairly between students according to their needs. Teachers should take account of students' age, attainment, gender and competence in English, through the use of appropriate teaching methods and materials. They should be aware of the different learning and language needs within their classrooms paying particular attention to students for whom English is an additional language or those with special needs. (See Special Needs policy)

Bilingualism should be regarded as a positive asset and where students do not have English as their first language they should be encouraged to develop their first language. All students should feel that their languages, dialects and accents are valued in the school.

Care should be taken in the organisation of teaching groups in order to ensure equality of access and opportunity.

Displays should demonstrate the variety of talents, interests and achievements of the whole school community, as should participation in school functions.

Methods of assessment should aim to avoid all forms of bias.

Extra-Curricular activities

While encouraging participation in after-school activities, everyone should be aware of students' and staff members' responsibilities at home.

Cultural and Religious Issues

The school community reflects the multi-cultural nature and religious pluralism of our society. Religious and cultural celebrations should acknowledge and welcome the richness of this diversity which students and staff bring to the school. Staff and students should aim to be sensitive to the needs of various groups, in particular minority groups. Such needs include religious observances, dress, recording of names, dietary and curriculum requirements.

Awareness of these needs should be developed particularly as they help to define and preserve a student's identity.

Parents need to be kept informed about the nature of school worship, assembly and Religious Education, their rights of withdrawal, and of supplementary provision. RS should be in accordance with the Hertfordshire agreed syllabus, which is multi-faith in emphasis. (See Religious Studies & Collective Worship policy).

School worship/assemblies should be used as a forum to promote the school's equal opportunities issues.

Communication

School communications should be made accessible to all parents/carers and where necessary every effort should be made to provide oral or written translation and to encourage school/home links. Where appropriate, an interpreter should be present at interviews and at parent/carer/teacher consultation evenings.

Respect for people is shown by the correct use, pronunciation and spelling of names and forms of address.

Access

The school should try to ensure that the needs of students and staff continue to be met in terms of access to the building and its facilities. Where necessary reasonable adjustments should be made to arrangements in order not to disadvantage disabled staff, students or visitors.

Staff Development and Appointments

An employee or job applicant should not be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

All job applicants with a disability who meet the short-listing criteria will be interviewed. Should a disabled person be appointed, reasonable adjustments should be made to provide access to the school.

Interview procedures, formal or informal, the compiling of references or other forms of reporting on staff, should reflect equal opportunities criteria.

In-service training should be provided to enable staff, governors and students to move from policy to practice.

All staff should have access to positive support from colleagues and management, especially when experiencing difficulties.

Implementation

Every department should devise a policy relevant to their subject area, using the school Equal Opportunities Policy as a guide. This should inform the planning of courses and schemes of work.

Policies should be regularly and systematically reviewed and practice monitored.