

Company Name:	The Staff Room (“the Company”)
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Policy Statement

The Staff Room Agency Ltd is committed to encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination in both its role as an employer and as a provider of services. The Staff Room Agency Ltd aims to create a culture that respects and values individual differences that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential. We are committed, wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce that broadly reflects the diverse community in which we operate.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and in the provision of employment services and not to discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age.

The Staff Room Agency Ltd opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

All employees, teachers, support staff and individuals / school, organisations, to which we provide our services, be they clients or candidates, part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion and training or any other benefit will be on the basis of skills and ability.

Principles

The Staff Room Agency Ltd commitment to Equality and Diversity is:

- To create and promote an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our employees and individuals / organisations, to which we provide our services, whether clients or candidates, are recognised and valued.
- To create and promote a working environment that promotes dignity and respect for all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- To ensure that training, development and progression opportunities are available to all.
- To promote equality in the workplace as good management practice.

- To regularly review all employment practices and procedures to ensure that no job applicants or staff are treated less favourably than others.
- To regularly review services in order to ensure that they are accessible and appropriate to all groups within society.
- To treat breaches of the equality policy seriously and to take disciplinary action when required.
- To provide information and training to all employees so that they are fully aware of the issues relating to Equality and Diversity and their responsibilities relating to it.
- To ensure the policy is fully supported by the Directors and Senior Management.
- To monitor and review the policy annually.

Procedures

Positive action

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will act positively in using the Equality and Diversity Policy as a means of making public its commitment to provide equal opportunities to all present and future employees.

The Staff Room Agency Ltd encourages all employees and individuals to which we provide our services, be they clients or candidates, to apply for suitable opportunities and to seek training for promotion or in particular skills.

The Equality and Diversity Policy forms part of the Staff Handbook and Contract of Employment.

Training in Equality and Diversity is provided as part of the staff Induction Programme.

Any form of discrimination by an employee or individual or organisation, to which we provide our services, be they clients or candidates, is treated very seriously and where appropriate will be dealt with using the Disciplinary Procedure.

The Staff Room Agency Ltd aims to ensure that its employees reflect the diversity of the population, within its various locations.

Positive Discrimination

Positive discrimination is illegal and the recruitment of 'quotas' of particular groups is also illegal.

Discrimination in selection to achieve or secure a balance of persons of different racial groups is also not allowed under the Race Relations Act 1976.

There is an exception, however, which may be appropriate for certain posts in The Staff Room Agency Ltd, i.e. when a genuine occupational qualification (GOQ) is necessary or desirable for a particular group or sex. Both the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 allow these exceptions.

Recruitment

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Job descriptions and person specifications are prepared for all posts. The job description indicates the responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the job holder. The person specification describes the qualifications, skills and abilities required.

A list of preferred criteria may also be prepared. Care will be taken to ensure that neither the description nor the specification are discriminatory on the grounds quoted in the Policy Statement.

Advertising

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will use a range of advertising methods in order to attract the widest pool of appropriate applicants. Vacancies for new and existing jobs will normally be advertised internally and externally. All our advertising will:

- Contain the statement 'Organisation Name is an 'Equal Opportunities Employer'.
- Ensure that we do not exclude, discriminate against, or discourage any particular group from applying nor make it difficult for anyone from such a group to apply.
- Refer to the job description and person specification in order give information about the requirements of the job.
- Give clear instructions about obtaining the application pack.

Applications and Shortlisting

All applicants will be asked to fill out an application form which contains only information essential and relevant to the appointment. Different formats will be made available. Applications will be shortlisted by at least two people. Shortlisting will be performed on the basis of objective criteria and the extent to which candidates have shown, in the application form, that they meet the required person specification, and can carry out tasks and responsibilities required of the post-holder. Formal qualifications and standards of literacy and numeracy will only be taken into account when they are recognised as necessary for a particular job.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview. Staff and members of The Staff Room Agency Ltd responsible for shortlisting, interviewing and selection of candidates will be:

- Clearly informed of selection criteria and the need for their consistent application;
- Given guidance on the effects which generalised assumptions about people from groups quoted in the Policy Statement can have on selection decisions;
- Made aware of the possible misunderstandings that can occur between persons from different cultural backgrounds.

Interviewing

All interviews will be carried out by Staff Room Employees that have successfully completed Safer Recruitment in Education Training. The names and gender of interviewees will be made available in advance.

The questions asked will seek to gather objective evidence in support of the job description and person specification.

The same questions will be asked of all candidates applying for the job. Disabled candidates will be asked if they need support during the interview process or adjustments should they be offered the position.

Notes will be taken and evidence gathered against the job description and person specification.

All candidates will be asked about their eligibility to work.

Selection

Offers will be made to successful candidates, subject to satisfactory references and other checks, where required.

All unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the result of their application and offered brief feedback.

DBS Policy

For certain positions, we will request enhanced disclosures for all employees. This requirement will be clearly stated during the application process.

Ex-Offenders

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will not discriminate against ex-offenders. All applications will be considered on an individual basis.

Induction and training

All employees will be required to follow an appropriate induction process to ensure they are equipped to do the job.

All employees will receive training on the Equality and Diversity policy.

Flexible working

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will consider all requests for flexible working arrangements constructively and creatively, taking account of balancing the needs of the organisation with the needs of the individual employee.

Promotion

All vacancies will be advertised internally and externally, where appropriate.

Training

All employees will have access to a wide range of training opportunities.

Special needs and requirements for people with disabilities or caring responsibilities will be taken into account whenever practicable and methods sought to help them overcome disabilities in taking up training opportunities.

Staff with management, recruitment and selection responsibilities will be given guidance in the implementation of the Equal and Diversity Policy to ensure that they understand their position in law and under the Organisation's policy.

Induction training will include an explanation of the Equality Opportunities Policy and a requirement to undertake formal training within the probationary period of employment.

Terms and Conditions

Annual Leave and Religious Holidays

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will not ask about an employee's religion and will not discriminate against anyone wishing to celebrate their festivals. Employees are required to use part of their annual holiday entitlement to cover time off for these and must follow the normal holiday booking procedure.

Cultural and Religious Needs

Where employees, trustees or volunteers have particular cultural and religious needs, The Staff Room Agency Ltd will consider whether it is reasonably practicable to meet these needs while maintaining the efficiency of the business.

People with Disabilities

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will make genuine efforts to recruit people with disabilities and take reasonable steps to make the workplace and individual jobs accessible to people with disabilities.

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will regularly review its facilities for disabled employees and will try to overcome any problems faced wherever practicable and within reasonable resources available.

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will ensure that people have maximum access to employment opportunities and to meetings and events, regardless of any disability.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will take seriously any complaints of discrimination and will not victimise people who make such complaints.

Staff will be made aware as part of the induction process of their responsibilities in relation to Equality and Diversity and that discriminatory behaviour will be fully investigated and dealt with using the Disciplinary Procedure.

Bullying and Harassment

The Staff Room Agency Ltd upholds the right of all employees and volunteers to be treated with respect and dignity and to work in an atmosphere free of bullying and harassment.

All employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour is sensitive to others and for ensuring that they do not condone or support the bullying or harassing behaviour of others.

All complaints of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously and should be raised using the Grievance Procedure. All complaints will be investigated and where appropriate, the Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

Service Provision

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will continue to take a leading role in combating any form of discrimination.

The Staff Room Agency Ltd will work with others to ensure that the diversity of the population in its various locations is recognised and celebrated.

Responsibility

It is the Directors' responsibility to ensure the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy. Appropriate funds will be sought to implement approved aspects of the Policy which require special and additional resources.

All employees have an individual responsibility to:

- Follow procedures introduced to ensure equal opportunity and non-discrimination;
- To draw the attention of management to suspected or alleged discriminatory practices;