



WELLINGTON SCHOOL, AYR

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

UPDATED 17 NOVEMBER 2009

Wellington School aims to provide equality of opportunity for all children with no regard to gender, race, religion or disability. We want all of our pupils to achieve their full potential during their time with us and we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, and practices do not prevent any child from reaching their potential.

Gender Equality

In accordance with our school's aims, The Equality Act (2006) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), Wellington School has a General Duty to

- Eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination
- Eliminate sexual harassment
- Promote gender equality

By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly. Indirect discrimination means that a particular policy or practice may impact more negatively on one gender than on the other, or may favour one gender to the disadvantage of the other.

By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator. See also our Anti-Bullying policy.

We understand 'sex' to refer to the **biological** differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider **social** roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognize and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.

We understand that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to treat girls and boys, and women and men differently, if that action is aimed at overcoming previous, current or possible future disadvantage.

We will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where we are uncertain whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice.

We understand the three parts of the duty to be different, but that they should normally support each other. However, we are aware that achieving one may not lead to achieving all three. In taking due regard we will exercise the principles of proportionality and relevance.

Specific Duties

To meet the specific duties, and guided by the Code of Practice prepared by the Equal Opportunities Commission, we have prepared, published and implemented, and will maintain, a Gender Equality Action Plan which contains our current objectives.

In order to develop our understanding of the gender equality issues in our functions and services, we:

- Collect and analyse school data and other gender equality relevant information
- Consult all staff, pupils, parents and relevant local communities
- Review all our policies and practices to assess how they might impact on gender equality
- Ensure all in our school community understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality
- Assess and address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Publish and implement the Action Plan with our proposed objectives and actions

We will:

- Set out the results of reviews, consultations and impact assessments
- Report on progress annually and set further objectives where necessary
- Review and revise the Policy and Action Plan at least every three years

Responsibilities

All governors, staff, volunteers, pupils and their families need an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the school's Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan. In addition:

School Governors are responsible for ensuring that the School prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews a Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Duty.

The **Headteacher** works with the **SMT** to ensure that –

- the Policy and Action Plan are implemented
- staff recruitment, training opportunities and conditions promote gender equality
- all staff, pupils and their parents are consulted regarding, and are aware of the school's responsibilities to meet, the Gender Equality Duty
- existing and planned policies are assessed for their impact on gender equality
- curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities take account of the need to promote gender equality
- incidents of gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Anti-Bullying policy
- visitors to the school should be aware of the Gender Equality policy and action plan

All staff have a responsibility to deal with incidents of sexual harassment or bullying; help eliminate unlawful discrimination; prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, school journeys and extended school activities (including work with parents) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote gender equality.

Pupils and parents have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with the policy, as do **visitors** to the school.

Single Sex Provision

Where we provide for one sex only, this is to help meet the different needs of boys and girls where there is an issue of physical intimacy or embarrassment. We do not provide activities, classes, facilities, benefits or services for one sex only if this would amount to less favourable treatment of the other sex, or where it would promote gender stereotyping and gender inequality. We do not deny one sex the same opportunities as the other and where we provide for one sex only we ensure there are equivalent and proportionate facilities, benefits or services for the other sex. We do not offer different curriculum choices to boys and girls, and where there are curriculum options we ensure that these are not offered in such a way that boys and girls are steered into making choices based on gender stereotypes. If requests for additional single sex activities or provision which maintain or promote gender inequalities come from pupils, families or the community, these will be considered and legal advice sought.

Breaches of the Gender Equality Policy

We understand that eliminating gender discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality is in part an education function and a matter of cultural change. Where possible, breaches of the policy will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the level of the breach, and with the intention of bringing about the relevant changes. More serious breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our school's anti-bullying and harassment procedures, and the disciplinary procedures for staff. Safeguarding issues coming to the attention of the school will be dealt with according to our Child Protection procedures.

Raising Awareness

This policy is available in the office, on our website, and school network. A summary of the main points of the policy is available in age-appropriate ways to our pupils. A summary may be available in the home languages of our major ethnic groups. We will continue to develop awareness of what constitutes unlawful gender discrimination and harassment, and of the need to eliminate this and to promote gender equality.

Approved 1 Dec 2009, Board of Governors, Wellington School):

Date: 17 November 2009. [Gender Equality Policy review date: *before 16 Nov 2012*]



WELLINGTON SCHOOL, AYR

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

UPDATED 17 NOVEMBER 2009

Wellington School aims to provide equality of opportunity for all children with no regard to gender, race, religion or disability. Under the school Gender Equality Policy, we are required to Publish and implement an Action Plan.

We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by his/her environment and so we aim to enhance children's self esteem and self confidence by positively working to reduce any gender bias and promoting equality. At the same time we are aware that, as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop, their perception of sex roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer groups and the media.

Active Promotion of Gender Equality

The School will promote gender equality actively in a number of ways, including:

- Equality of access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. This includes both the Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets within all years from 3-18 under 'A Curriculum for Excellence'.
- Equality of access to extra-curricular activities. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.
- Efforts are made to ensure that staff are alerted to the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and teaching styles.
- Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotyping and gender bias.
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to male and female pupils.
- All pupils are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes.
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and non-teaching staff of both sexes.
- Teaching and other groupings, such as lunch queues, assembly lines, lines for dismissal, classroom seating and playground areas are organised on the basis of other criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship etc.
- Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.
- Discipline procedures – rewards and sanctions – are the same for both sexes.
- Pupils and staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative relationships, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other.
- Any differences involving gender which arise inside and outside the classroom are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.
- All teaching posts and non-teaching posts are not sex-specific. Both men and women are encouraged to teach all age groups and stages according to qualifications and experience.
- All members of staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.
- Practices and approaches involving equal opportunity in terms of gender issues are regularly reviewed by the management of the school.

Specific duties

- AHT Pupil Welfare maintains an overview of Gender Equality for pupils within the school.
- The Head, Bursar and Board should ensure that developments serve both genders (e.g. development of rugby pitches, hockey Astroturf and pavilion).
- The Head, Bursar and Board should monitor appointments to ensure gender equality.
- The Head and others delivering Assemblies will ensure that gender equality is shown as being important seen as important and relevant, and there is reference to role models of both sexes with themes supporting gender equality (e.g. champions of women's rights).
- The Head, Deputy Head and SMT should ensure that the School Rules, policies and practices do not discriminate against gender.
- SMT promote an awareness of gender equality through department links.
- The Head and AHT should ensure balanced genders at points of entry.
- AHT SQA/Curriculum should inspect course uptake at Option Choice points (e.g. S2>S3, S4>5, S5>6) to monitor gender equality.
- AHT SQA/Curriculum and HoDs should inspect Course performance (from STACS) and highlight any imbalance or anomalies.
- AHT Pupil Welfare should ensure that the School Council gender balance is representative of the year gender balance in the school.
- AHT S6 should ensure that there are equal gender opportunities in S6 (e.g. Prefects, Heads of House) and monitor any imbalance.
- Heads of Department should ensure that their courses endorse and promote gender equality. Displays should aim to break down stereotypes, where possible (e.g. posters of women chemists).
- Staff i/c activities (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Science Club, Art Club, boys/girls football etc) should ensure equality of access for both genders, and monitor uptake.
- Head of Careers (with AHT S5/6) should monitor the advice given and take-up of courses with respect to gender balance, to identify and/or avoid stereotyping.
- Head of Games should monitor delivery and opportunities within sports (e.g. rounders and new image rugby to include boys and girls).
- Librarian (with AHT Pupil Welfare) should ensure a balance of books appropriate to all tastes, avoiding stereotypes.