Equal Opportunities Policy

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Approved By:	CEO	Date:	
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1. Introduction

Hamwic Education Trust (HET) is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, whether temporary, part time or full time, and in all dealings with pupils, parents and the wider community.

2. Scope

This policy focuses specifically on the employment of staff in the Trust. HET recognises the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce, and this policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with HET, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for this policy and any necessary training on equal opportunities.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

3. Equal Opportunities Statement

HET is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment and all job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**Protected Characteristics**).

HET will not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, parents, students, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with parents, students, suppliers or other work-related contacts, and on work-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.

- **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified.

- **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.

- **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.

- **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

4. Recruitment and Selection

a. Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted based on merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting will be done by more than one person where possible and in line with the HET Recruitment & Retention Policy & HET Safer Recruitment Policy.

b. Vacancies will generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

c. In order to promote internal talent, some vacancies may only be advertised internally within Hamwic Education Trust.

d. Job applicants will not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic, for example, applicants will not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

e. Job applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law, for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions will be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which will not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

5. Disabilities

If an employee is disabled or becomes disabled, HET encourages them to tell HET about their condition so that any reasonable adjustments can be considered or support that may be appropriate.

6. Part-time and Fixed-term work

Part-time and fixed-term employees will be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate) unless different treatment is justified.

7. Breaches of this Policy

- HET take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Policy. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

- If anyone believes that they have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through the HET Grievance Policy or HET Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

- No-one must be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy.

8. Links to Other Policies and Documents

- HET Recruitment & Retention Policy
- HET Safer Recruitment Policy
- HET Disciplinary Policy
- HET Grievance Policy
- HET Anti-harassment & Bullying Policy

Version	Updates	Approved Date