



NORTHFIELDS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Our Vision

We are committed to empowering learners to reach their full potential through a holistic education. Our students develop an appreciation for cultural diversity while being prepared to become confident, responsible and active global citizens.

Our Mission

We achieve this by:

- Providing our pupils with learning opportunities that maximise their potential through a structured programme of academic and extra-curricular activities.
- Offering challenging, internationally recognised programmes and qualifications.
- Emphasising the development of socially conscious and environmentally aware global citizens, with a compassion for others and the courage to act on their beliefs.
- Nurturing the growth of principled future leaders.

POLICY NUMBER	ISSUE DATE	VERSION	CUSTODIAN	APPROVED BY
ED.09.01.2020.1.HR	09/01/2020	Version 1	HR	Corporate Governance, Ethics and Nominations Committee



Northfields International School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff. The school's objective is to create a supportive and inclusive working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

All staff should understand that they, as well as the Senior Management Team and the Board of Directors, could be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

The School commits to:

- take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the School related activities;
- make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the School;
- review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law;
- monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the policy;

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

1. Staff Complaints and Grievance Policy
2. Whistleblowing Policy
3. Code of Ethics
4. Data Protection Act 2017
5. Equal Opportunities Act 2012 (amended in 2017)
6. Workers' Rights Act 2019

Purpose

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time;
- not unlawfully discriminate due to '**status**' (meaning age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex, or sexual orientation as per the Equal Opportunities Act of Mauritius);
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities;
- All staff have a duty to act in accordance with the policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff regardless of their status.



Scope of the policy

The Equality and Diversity Policy covers Directors, Northfields staff including all subsidiaries, volunteers and the community in which it operates.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors	The Board of Directors have the ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy.
Corporate Governance, Ethics and Nominations Committee	The Board of Directors have delegated the monitoring function of this policy to the Committee considering the terms of reference that govern the Committee.
Senior Management Team	The Senior Management Team has the responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law.
Human Resources	The HR manager is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy, the day-to-day operational responsibility and the review of this policy.
Line Managers	All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviours, lead by example, and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote the purpose, School's ethos and code of ethics.
Employees	Staff members should be aware of and personally responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the policy and promote the School ethos and the Code of Ethics with regards equal opportunities.

Forms of Discrimination

Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct Discrimination

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person discriminates directly against another person on the grounds of status where the aggrieved person is treated less favourably compared to another person he/she would treat differently as per their status.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same 'status' at a particular disadvantage.



Victimisation

Victimisation against another person happens when there is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment or supported someone else's complaint.

Harassment

Harassment includes any unwanted conduct towards the worker, whether verbal, non-verbal, visual, psychological or physical, based on status.

Furthermore, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. Sexual harassment under the Equal Opportunities Act, Part V – Sexual Harassment which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to the status – is a criminal offence.

Breaches of this policy

If you believe that you may have been discriminated against or subject to harassment, you are encouraged to raise the matter through our staff Complaints and Grievance form.

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourable as a result. False allegations, which are found to have been made with an ill intent, will be dealt with under the disciplinary guidelines.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviours may constitute a gross misconduct and consequently may result in termination of employment as per the Workers' Rights Act 2019.

Policy review

Monitoring will also include assessing how the Equality and Diversity Policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them every two years, and considering and taking action to address any issues.