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British School of Gran Canaria

Equal Opportunities

Policy Document



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THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF GRAN CANARIA

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff, including teaching and non-teaching, within the British School of Gran Canaria and for all school activities within the school during normal school hours. It is written in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, “The Equality Act 2010 and Schools – Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities” (Department for Education UK, May 2014) and Spanish Law 62/2003 on fiscal, administrative and social measures, Título II, Capítulo III (BOE, 31 December 2003).

This policy applies to:

- education (teaching and learning, enrolment, student management, student services, curriculum development and delivery)
- the provision of goods and services (extracurricular activities, camps, parent–teacher interviews, access to facilities)
- school sport
- employment at the school (recruitment, allocation of duties, employment conditions, access to benefits such as training, promotion and leave).

2. Definitions

Throughout this document the following words, terms and phrases have the following meanings:

Staff – adults who are employed and work within The British School of Gran Canaria.

Normal school hours – refers to the school day which runs from 8.45am to 3.35pm, but also includes Enrichment time after the end of the school day from 3:50-4:50pm.

BSGC – The British School of Gran Canaria.

Pupils – synonymous with students.

Protected characteristics – the personal characteristics to which the law applies.

3. Rationale

BSGC aims to provide a welcoming, supportive, and emotionally and physically secure learning and working environment for every member of the school community. BSGC recognises and promotes human rights, and values the diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, customs, physical and intellectual abilities and life experience of the whole school community.

4. Our commitment

BSGC aims to create an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote student and staff wellbeing and help everyone achieve their full potential. Our school is enriched by and celebrates the diversity of the entire school community. Discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated at BSGC and the school is committed to ensuring that the working environment is one of acceptance, tolerance and respect. BSGC will take action to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimisation and to promote a safe and inclusive school. BSGC will take immediate and appropriate action to address and resolve equal opportunities issues and complaints. BSGC will take action to promote human rights both in terms of school policy and practice and within its educational activities and culture.

This school supports the Equality Act 2010, which says that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone, including students and school staff, because of their actual or assumed:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

The British School of Gran Canaria fundamentally and unequivocally supports this policy, the principles of human rights and the practice of equal opportunity, inclusion and respect for diversity that it articulates.

5. Unacceptable Treatment

No member of the school community will be treated less favourably because they possess any of these protected characteristics nor will such characteristics affect access to benefits and services BSGC

provides. Examples of unacceptable treatment referenced in the Equality Act 2010 are discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and victimization.

Discrimination

Discrimination is unacceptable at BSGC, whether manifested directly or indirectly – both are against the law.

Direct discrimination means treating someone unfairly or less favourably because of one of the characteristics listed above or because of their association with someone identified with one of those characteristics e.g. refusing to enroll a student because he has Hepatitis C, refusing to allow a Muslim student to wear the hijab as part of her school uniform or failing to hire a suitably qualified teacher because of his or her sexual orientation.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic e.g. imposing a requirement that all students take notes from the whiteboard without assistance may unreasonably disadvantage a student with vision impairment.

Harassment

Harassment is unacceptable at BSGC and is the unwanted conduct, related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. This behavior may make school an unfriendly or uncomfortable place by:

- humiliating (putting someone down),
- seriously embarrassing,
- offending (hurting someone's feelings) or
- intimidating (threatening someone so they behave in a certain way).

Harassment can take the form of name calling, stereotyping jokes and offensive comments.

Sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sex or any other sexual behaviour that a reasonable person would know or expect would offend, seriously embarrass or humiliate another. Sexual harassment can take the form of unwanted touching, unwelcome sexual innuendo or jokes, displaying sexually explicit material (posters, emails, internet sites).

Vilification

Racial and religious vilification is unacceptable and is the behaviour (through words or actions) that incites hatred, serious contempt or ridicule of another person or group of people because of their race or religious belief. Vilification might include public threats of harm, encouraging others to hate someone because of their religion, racist statements made in a public meeting or racist graffiti.

Bullying

Bullying is unacceptable and is unreasonable behaviour that is intimidating, threatening or humiliating and repeated over time or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour. Bullying can be physical, verbal or indirect, and creates an unfriendly, threatening or offensive environment. Bullying can include taking or damaging other people's property, excluding or isolating someone, subjecting someone to homophobic abuse based on their sexual orientation, deliberately withholding information so as to affect their work performance, threatening not to renew an employment contract.

Victimisation

Victimising someone who makes an equal opportunities complaint is unacceptable at BSGC. Victimisation means treating someone unfairly or otherwise disadvantaging them because they have made an equal opportunities complaint or might do so in the future.

6. Policy framework

The BSGC Equal Opportunities policy is one component of the school's broader policy framework for the promotion of safe and inclusive schools and protection of human rights. Other relevant and related BSGC school policies include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Concerns and Complaints Policy

7. Rights and Responsibilities

Under this policy, every member of the BSGC has the right to learn and work in a safe and inclusive environment free of discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. Along with this right comes the responsibility to respect and promote human rights and responsibilities by behaving according to this policy.