



HIGHBURY
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Updated: 25 May 2022

Equality Policy

POSITIONING STATEMENT

Highbury is a Christian school and cherishes the values that are aligned with Christian principles. We believe that all people are created equally by God and that it is our responsibility to promote a culture that ensures human dignity, respect and equal treatment of all members of our community. As a school, we are committed to the Constitution of the Republic of South African and believe that through education, we play a critical role in building a united and democratic South Africa that is intentional about healing the divisions of the past and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Highbury believes that racism, injustice and discrimination are unethical and unacceptable. Highbury rejects racism and is committed to anti-racism. As a school we stand strongly against any forms of discrimination. Highbury values diversity and is committed to promoting a safe, caring, diverse and non-racist environment for all pupils, parents and staff based on equality, justice and mutual respect.

At Highbury we aim to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment where:

- Individual differences are appreciated, understood, accepted and respected.
- Individuals respect each other.
- Discrimination is reported and the necessary steps are taken to eliminate such behaviour.
- All staff and pupils are not subject to fear of bullying, harassment or victimisation because of their gender, race, ethnic origin, culture, language, sexual orientation or disability.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Highbury community takes collective and individual responsibility to adhere to the principles, procedures and measures set out in this policy.

All employees and pupils, together with all visitors and parents whilst on the Highbury property, are subject to this policy and must comply with it. This policy also applies to Highbury boys, staff and parents when they are representing the school off the Highbury premises.

All employees are required to attend any race, diversity, transformation and social justice workshops organised by the School during their employment to enhance their understanding of and compliance with this policy.

Members of Manco and Exco have the following responsibilities:

- To monitor the working environment to ensure that the acceptable standards of conduct are observed at all times
- When managers observe unfair discrimination in the workplace, Manco and Exco should take the necessary steps to ensure that it is appropriately dealt with.
- To demonstrate and project appropriate behaviour themselves, including ensuring that they do not engage in conduct that may breach the policy and procedures set herein.
- To ensure employees, pupils and other relevant persons understand the policy and procedures set out herein.

All employees and boys of Highbury have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that they do not engage in any unfair discriminatory behaviour, unfair practices and/or vilification and/or breach of this policy;
- Treat all members of the school community with respect and kindness, to be polite and well-mannered, not to use any offensive language and not to tease, bully or humiliate any member of our community;
- Report any incident of discrimination;
- Offer support to anyone who is being discriminated against and direct them to sources of help and advice; and
- Maintain complete confidentiality of information and co-operate during the investigation of a complaint.

PROCEDURES

Breach of this policy and commission of the listed acts of misconduct will initiate a disciplinary process which could include restorative justice, disciplinary action or conflict resolution.

Any complaints involving pupils may be made to their Teacher/Phase Deputy/ Phase Head or the Headmaster who will investigate the matter. Racist/Discriminatory behaviour is considered as serious misconduct and will be treated as such. The Highbury Disciplinary Code and Pupil Charter view racist/discriminatory conduct as a Level 2 misconduct. The Disciplinary Code for Pupils and the Pupil Charter can be found on the school website.

Any complaints concerning a member of staff (academic/administrative/support) may be made to a member of MANCO. The Highbury Staff Code of Conduct states: '*Any unacceptable or intolerant behaviour, harassment, hate speech or discriminatory conduct by an employee will be treated as serious misconduct.*'

The Highbury School Staff Disciplinary Code identifies '*Harassing behaviour, rude, abusive, insulting behaviour or language which imposes on the dignity of others*' as serious misconduct which may result in Dismissal or a Final Warning at a disciplinary hearing as explained in the Highbury Discipline Policy and Procedures for Employees. This policy can be found on the shared Google Drive in the Human Resources Folder.

The expectations laid out in this policy apply to visiting adults and Highbury parents. Complaints involving parents, visitors and independent contractors must be submitted to a member of MANCO. In the case of poor parental or contractor's behaviour, a member or members of the Highbury Board may be included in the disciplinary committee.

Potential Offences

These points are designed to raise awareness of what *could* constitute Unfair Discrimination either in person or in any form of communication, including social media.

1. This section breaks down offences of unfair discrimination. These may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Written Unfair Discrimination (e.g. graffiti);
- Provocative behaviour (e.g. wearing discriminatory badges or insignia);
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussions;
- Discriminatory comments made anywhere on the campus property;
- Ridicule of an individual's characteristics, history, pronunciation, accent or social, linguistic, religious or cultural heritage or preferences; ;
- Attempts to recruit other individuals into exclusive groups on prohibited grounds;
- Physical assaults;
- Any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference made by a person in an authoritative position who uses unfair grounds to distinguish, exclude, limit or prefer certain persons from being part of sporting codes, education, positions, activities or benefits of any kind meant for any person within the school environment.

2. This section breaks down more specific examples of potential offences in the categories of Unfair Discrimination:

On the grounds of race, religious, linguistic or cultural association:

- Dissemination of any propaganda or idea, which propounds the racial superiority or inferiority of any person, including incitement to, or participation in, any form of racial violence;
- Engagement in any activity which is intended to promote, or has the effect of promoting exclusivity, based on race, religion or culture;
- Exclusion of persons of a particular race, religious, linguistic or cultural group under any rule or practice that appears to be legitimate but which is actually aimed at maintaining exclusive control by a particular racial, religious, linguistic or cultural group;
- Inferior treatment of a specific racial group, compared to those from another racial group;
- Denial of access to opportunities, or failing to take steps to reasonably accommodate the needs of such persons based on their racial, religious, linguistic or cultural identities;
- Use of derogatory language to undermine a certain racial, religious, linguistic or cultural group;
- Making fun of clothes, food or physical appearance of people from a different racial, religious, linguistic or cultural context other than your own;
- Having lower expectations for students of different cultural or racial groups;
- Telling or sharing jokes directed against people from particular racial, religious, linguistic or cultural groups;
- Using insulting language against particular religious, linguistic, cultural or racial groups;
- Making fun of peoples' accents or names;
- Demonstrating a lack of tolerance for understanding peoples' accents
- Refusing to work or play with or sit next to other people who are from a different religious, linguistic, cultural or race group or who speak a different language;
- Telling people to 'go back to where they came from' or making similar derogatory remarks;
- Allocating tasks or classes to teachers or students according to their religious, linguistic or cultural background;
- Laughing at a racist or sexist joke;
- Not reporting racist behaviour;
- Promoting publications online that are opposed to, or insult, others based on race, religion, language or culture;
- Wearing clothes with slogans that would offend any religious, linguistic, cultural or racial group;
- Suggesting that a member of a particular race, religion, language or cultural group only got to where they are because of their race; religion, language or culture;
- Associating the presence of any group of people with racial religious, linguistic or cultural stereotypes;

ON THE GROUNDS OF GENDER:

- Dissemination of any propaganda or idea, which propounds the objectification of women, including incitement to, or participation in, any form of sexual violence;

- Dissemination of any propaganda or idea, which propounds the abuse of any person based on his/her sexual identity, including incitement to, or participation in, any form of such abuse – emotional, physically or psychological;
- Inferior treatment of any person due to his/her gender or sexual orientation;
- Use of derogatory language to undermine a person based on his/her gender or sexual orientation;
- Telling or sharing jokes directed against females;
- Undermining a person by making sexist jokes or innuendos;
- Mocking or belittling someone because of his/her sexual identity;
- Gender-based violence and other forms of sexual harassment;
- The denial of fair access to opportunities, or failing to take steps to reasonably accommodate the needs of such persons;
- Undermining the contribution of women.

ON THE GROUNDS OF DISABILITY:

- Mocking or belittling someone because of his/her disability.
- Inferior treatment of any person due to his/her disability;
- Use of derogatory language to undermine a person based on his/her disability;
- Telling or sharing jokes directed against disabled people.

COMMITMENT

Highbury is committed to ensuring that our school sends a strong message that we stand against racism and discrimination.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Headmaster's Regulations and Parent Contract
 Staff Contracts
 Pupil Charter
 Disciplinary Code for Pupils
 Code of Conduct for Staff
 Highbury School Staff Disciplinary Code