



Cambridge
Education
@Islington

Equality and Diversity Policy

Cambridge Education @ Islington
November 2008

Foreword

In accordance with the law, all public authorities, or organisations acting as public authorities, have a legal duty to actively promote equality in the following areas:

Race
Disability
Gender

In addition, the government is currently considering strengthening existing legislation with a Single Equalities Bill. As well as race, disability and gender, this would also extend to:

Age
Sexual Orientation
Belief

Cambridge Education @ Islington is committed to ensuring that everyone is treated equally, with dignity and respect. In accordance with Human Rights Act 1988, promoting equality and diversity is central to Cambridge Education @ Islington's core values, leading the way in the delivery of services and in devising policies and procedures.

As a borough, Islington has a very diverse community of staff, pupils, parents, community groups and other stakeholders in education. Our role is to make sure that we listen to the needs of those communities, provide leadership and actively promote community cohesion and partnership.

The Benefits

In promoting equality, many improvements will be made to

- Policies and practices
- Representation of different communities at all levels
- Customer satisfaction within all communities
- Involvement of all communities
- Targeted services and information about public services
- Accessibility of all services

In terms of employment functions, we will

- Achieve a more representative workforce
- Attract and keep able staff
- Improve staff morale and productivity
- Identify and develop good practice
- Identify discriminatory outcomes
- Avoid claims of unlawful discrimination

Background

Islington's school population is extremely diverse: over 70% of pupils are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups; 118 languages are spoken; 21% of pupils are from refugee and asylum seeking families.

Islington also has very high level of economic polarisation: owner occupiers' annual gross income averages £50,000, whereas council tenants' annual gross income averages merely £6,000.

In addition, one fifth of residents of working age are claiming benefits, a much higher rate than London or national percentages. 48% of children in the borough are affected by poverty. The majority of claimants (9.1%) are on incapacity benefits in comparison to a rate of 6.2% in London and 7.2% in Great Britain. 16% of residents describe themselves as having an impairment or a disability.

Islington is also estimated to have the third highest percentage of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) residents of all London boroughs.

Cambridge Education @ Islington is proud of its diversity and will challenge discrimination in all forms. Cambridge Education @ Islington promotes the values of respect and diversity across the organisation, to schools and school communities and all stakeholders in education.

Cambridge Education @ Islington will promote equality for all groups but will especially target discrimination based on age, disability, gender, race, belief and sexual orientation. The issues facing these groups are discussed later in this document. Cambridge Education @ Islington's approach is set out in further detail in corporate and departmental equality action plans.

In general, Cambridge Education @ Islington will

- Work to improve the educational achievement of all young people in schools
- Encourage the participation of excluded groups
- Promote community cohesion by promoting shared community values
- Promote the welfare of its employees by keeping the workplace free from bullying, harassment or other forms of discrimination.

Cambridge Education @ Islington's Policy

Cambridge Education @ Islington's policy is that everyone should be treated fairly and without discrimination, so that:

- Staff experience fairness and equity of treatment in the workplace
- Schools and other stakeholders receive fair and equal access to services
- Staff and customers are treated with dignity and respect.

Cambridge Education @ Islington will actively remove discriminatory barriers that can prevent people from obtaining the employment opportunities and educational opportunities to which they are entitled. Cambridge Education @ Islington will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying through prejudice, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.

All employees are expected to promote these values at all times and to work within the policy. Employees found to be in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action.

To comply with this policy, managers will:

- Actively promote equality both within Cambridge Education @ Islington and in work in support of schools, including demonstration of this in service plans
- Ensure that the working environment is free of discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying
- Undertake training on equality and diversity issues on a regular basis (at least once every three years)
- Ensure that staff, including new staff and external consultants attend diversity training
- Make clear to staff that discrimination is unacceptable and that it will be treated seriously and is a disciplinary offence
- Deal promptly and thoroughly with any complaint of discrimination including harassment, victimisation and bullying. Record all incidents
- Ensure equity and fairness of treatment in all employment practices
- Take appropriate action against any customer or stakeholder in education who harasses or acts in a discriminatory way towards other customers or members of staff.

To comply with this policy, staff will:

- Ensure that they treat everyone fairly and with respect, both within Cambridge Education @ Islington and in their work in support of schools
- Undertake training on equality and diversity issues on a regular basis (at least every three years)
- Not use discriminatory practices in the workplace or elsewhere

- Ensure that customers, schools and other stakeholders in education are treated fairly and equally
- Report and record any incident of victimisation and harassment
- Not use discriminatory behaviour or practices when providing services

To support policy compliance, Cambridge Education @ Islington will actively promote equality and compliance with current legislation both within Cambridge Education @ Islington and in our support to schools. To this end, we will:

- Impact assess key strategies, corporate plans and individual service plans
- Ensure corporate and departmental equality action plans are in place and are regularly monitored and reviewed
- Provide support and guidance for policy writing, impact assessment and action planning in schools
- Ensure procedures and practices are fair so that the workforce can better reflect the community it serves
- Target recruitment and retention practices to strengthen under-represented groups
- Consult with representative groups to receive feedback on policies, practices and services
- Run training and development programmes raise staff awareness about equality issues
- Support staff who experience discrimination in the course of their work
- Provide clear information about where and to whom staff, parents, pupils and other stakeholders should complain
- Listen to complaints and comments and act upon them
- Use complaints to improve awareness of equalities
- Support and promote diversity events in schools.

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED IN 3 YEARS' TIME

Discrimination and the Law

What the law says about **AGE**

From 1 October 2006, there is legal protection against age discrimination.

Age discrimination regulations have been introduced because there is a need for age-related employment equality in the same way as we already have equality for sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

Society is changing and the working population as a whole is getting older. The number of people aged under 50 is set to fall by two per cent by 2016, while the number aged between 50 and 69 is set to increase by 17 per cent. Better health standards mean that some people are choosing to work longer.

The new laws help ensure that people are no longer denied jobs or harassed because of their age, and in most cases, workers of all ages will have an equal chance of training and promotion.

- Staff have the right not to be discriminated against on grounds of age: this applies both to the young and the old. It applies to:
 - recruitment
 - terms and conditions
 - promotions
 - dismissals
 - training
- Staff have the right to request work beyond the normal retirement age
- Employers must ensure the right to request to work beyond retirement age is considered.

What the law says about **DISABILITY**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 defines disability as any physical, sensory or mental impairment which seriously affects a person's day-to-day activities. This applies both to people who currently have a disability and to those who have had a disability in the past. The DDA aims to protect disabled people from discrimination in employment and access to goods, facilities and services.

The social model of disability, as promoted by the Disability Rights Commission, underpins Cambridge Education @ Islington's approach to service provision. This model is based on the understanding that the poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairment or medical condition, but rather stems from the way society is organised.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on public authorities, and those acting in place of a public authority, to actively promote disability equality. Cambridge Education @ Islington is required by law to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and others
- Eliminate disability related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation of disabled people in public life.

What the law says about **BELIEF**

Islington's 2001 census shows that just over half of the resident population declared themselves as Christian, one third either declared no belief, or declined to make a statement about belief. After Christianity, the next most practised belief was Islam, with 8% of residents. The school population is not completely representative of this picture however, as it has a higher proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic pupils: currently 70% BME in schools, compared with 24.7% of Islington residents (according to 2001 census). Many pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic communities have beliefs other than Christianity.

Many people suffer discrimination and prejudice because of their beliefs.

A number of legislative acts provide protection for individuals on the grounds of religion and belief. The original Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations (2003) ensured that people were not discriminated against in terms of employment on grounds of religion or belief, but did not provide for individuals who are discriminated against in the areas of goods, services and facilities.

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act (2006) amends the Public Order Act (1986) and ensures that protection is given against harm because of religious beliefs (or lack of).

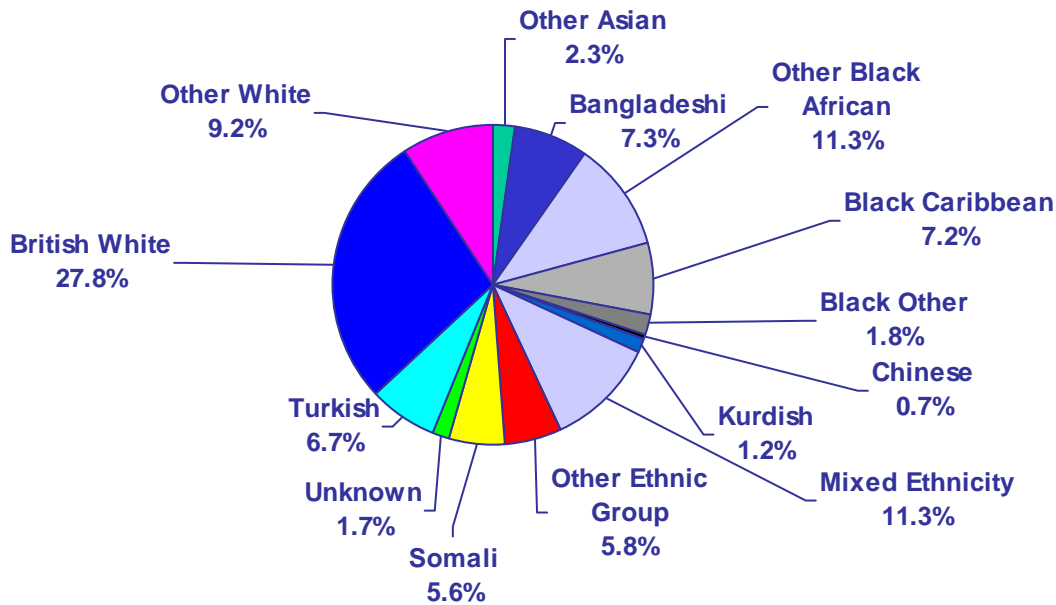
The Equality Act (2006) became an Act of Parliament in 2007. Part 2 deals with religion and belief and has items to protect individuals (regarding religion and belief) in the areas of goods, services and facilities.

There are special 'exceptions' to the legislation which mean that, for example, 'faith schools' do not have to adapt their admissions policies nor any of their ways of proceeding.

The way in which the requirements of the religion and belief legislation will be balanced against, say, the sexual orientation legislation, has yet to be tested.

What the law says about **RACE**

Pupils in Islington schools June 2008



Islington schools are extremely diverse, with over 70% pupils from BME backgrounds. Although some of the highest achievers at GCSE are from BME backgrounds, e.g. Bangladeshi and Black African pupils, there are persistent inequalities for some groups which must be addressed, for example Black Caribbean and Turkish pupils. Also, the ethnic profile of school staff and those at Cambridge Education, particularly at higher levels, does not match that of the pupil population.

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 public services have a statutory general duty to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equal opportunities and
- promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

Under the duty, public services must:

- **prepare and maintain** a race equality policy and action plan
- **have in place systems for assessing and monitoring the impact** of its race equality policy on people from different racial groups
- **report the results** of its assessment and monitoring to staff and SMT at least annually
- **consult** with stakeholders on the impact of its race equality policy
- **report racist incidents** to the LA
- **state what the service will do** if there is a **breach of the policy**
- **review at least every three years.**

A race equality policy is a description of how you intend to prevent racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good race relations across all areas of your school's activity.

- 1.1** The policy essentially packages the specific duties into a coherent strategy and action plan. It should cover all relevant functions and policies, bringing them within a single framework. A policy must make clear how a service plans to meet both its general and specific duties. Ideally it should summarise the service's overall approach to racial equality and how this links to its corporate aims and objectives. The race equality policy should be a written statement of responsibilities and commitments. It could be linked to an action plan for putting the policy into practice. It should also be part of the planning arrangements you already make.

What the law says about **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, 2003 make it unlawful to discriminate in employment or training on grounds of sexual orientation.

The new regulations apply to all aspects of employment and training, including recruitment, promotion, terms and conditions (including pay) and dismissals. It defines three types of discrimination: direct, indirect and harassment.

- **Direct discrimination** is where one person is treated less favourably than another person has been treated or would be treated in a comparable situation on grounds of sexual orientation.
- **Indirect discrimination** is where a policy or practice is applied which disadvantages people of a particular orientation unless it can be objectively justified. It is defined more broadly in these regulations than in current race discrimination law and there is no requirement to demonstrate the disadvantages through statistics.
- **Harassment** is defined as unwanted conduct, which takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, 2007 make it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. This includes discriminating against children, their families or associates because of sexual orientation for example in relation to:

- School Admission
- Participation in school trips
- Homophobic bullying
- Sex and relationship education

The Civil Partnership Act, 2004 makes it a legal requirement for organisations to offer civil partners the same rights/benefits as married couples

The Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill received Royal Assent on 8 May 2008 and provides new legal protections against incitement to hatred on grounds of sexual orientation.

Cambridge Education @ Islington **must**:

- Report and take action on homophobic language and incidents in line with the Council's 'Dignity for All' policy and harassment procedures to ensure comprehensive and effective harassment monitoring
- Ensure LGBT employees have the same terms and conditions and benefits as heterosexual staff

- Afford civil partners the same benefits as married couples e.g. parental leave, special leave to look after same-sex partners, maternity/paternity leave, pension and occupational insurance schemes etc
- Ensure LGBT employees have equal access to training and promotion opportunities
- Ensure when procuring services contractors have an equality statement that includes LGBT
- Provide support and training to schools on safeguarding pupils from all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying
- Not discriminate against pupils, parents/carers on the grounds of their sexual orientation
- Not discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation in recruitment and/or retention of employees, volunteers and visitors

What the law says about **GENDER**

Legislative Context

The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). It added to the duty to eliminate sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, the duty to promote gender equality.

The General Duty

In compliance with the General Duty, we have due regard for the need to, and work to:

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

The Specific Duties

We welcome the responsibility to think and act more strategically about gender equality. 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 Policy and Action Plan which contains our current objectives. We are working to develop our understanding of the major gender equality issues in Cambridge Education @ Islington's functions and services. In order to do this we:

- Assess and address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Collect and analyse schools' data and other gender equality relevant information, including data about our local area
- Consult staff, pupils, parents and relevant local communities
- Review all our policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on gender equality
- Ensure governors, staff, pupils, parents and others in our schools are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality
- 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.

APPENDIX: reference documents

Cambridge Education @Islington Ethnic Minority Achievement Strategy -

http://www.islingtonschoolsemas.net/performance_and_data.htm

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service website

http://www.islingtonschoolsemas.net/race_equality_training.htm

Fairness and Freedom: The Equalities Review (February 2007)

<http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/equalitiesreview/>

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/Lsc/National/nat-singleequalityscheme-30apr07.pdf>

Our Shared Future – Commission on Integration and Cohesion (June 2007)

<http://www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/>

Guidance for Local Authorities on Translation of Publications – Communities and Local Government (December 2007) www.communities.gov.uk

Equality Standard for Local Government – Improvement & Development Agency (2001 and updated 2007) <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/6531086>

London Enriched: the Mayor's draft strategy for refugee integration in London

<http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities/immigration/strategy.jsp>

Sustainable Community Strategy and Islington Borough Profile – Islington Strategic Partnership (October 2007)

<http://www.islington.gov.uk/Community/islingtonstrategicpartnership/scs.asp>