

VIET NAM TINH HOA

Supported by NLCS International 

Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Lead	John McEnhill
Reviewed By	Erika Wilkins/Lien Nguyen
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This policy applies to the whole School.

1) INTRODUCTION

The School: Vietnam Tinh Hoa is a school for students aged from 6 to 12 years at the current time. The School welcomes staff, workers, volunteers, students, parents, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. The term School Community includes the leadership team, staff, board of governors, students, parents, visitors and volunteers.

School's position: The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse School Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Students will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the School Community. In the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under best international practice and local legislation or regulations and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

- Disability
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the School Community) marital or civil partnership status
- Age (except where Vietnamese law prevents the acquisition of a work permit for foreign nationals above a particular age)

These are called the 'Protected Characteristics.' The School also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a Special Educational Need (SEN) or learning difficulty.

The School aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunities. The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, through the supportive School culture and through the School's policies.

The Equal Opportunities Policy is consistent with all of the School's policies, including the Admissions Policy, Anti-bullying Strategy, Behaviour Policy and the Special Educational Needs Policy.

2) POLICY STATEMENT

Scope: This policy applies to all members of the current and prospective School Community.

Policy aims: Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- Communicate the commitment of the School to the promotion of equal opportunities;
- Promote equal treatment within the School for all members of the School Community;

- Create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination;
- Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School;
- Be alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties, and respond as appropriate;
- Remove or help to overcome barriers for students where they already exist;
- Ensure there is no unlawful discrimination, against any person, based on any of the protected characteristics;
- Make it clear and ensure that all discriminatory words, behaviour and images are treated as unacceptable; and
- Take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments' duty).

3) FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Types: Discrimination may be direct or indirect, arise from a disability and may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic. For example, rejecting an applicant of a particular race because it is considered they would not "fit in".

Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a student is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that student.

Indirect discrimination: Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with gender, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of gender.

Discrimination arising from disability: Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, where a student with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will be unable to attend a school trip because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

4) ADMISSION

Applicants: The School accepts applications from, and admits students irrespective of race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or special educational needs and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered, subject to the section regarding 'Disability and Special Educational Needs' as seen on pages 5-6. The School will treat every application in a fair and open-minded way.

Selection: Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the student's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of excluding students with a disability or special educational needs, subject to the section regarding 'Disability and Special Educational Needs' as seen on pages 5-6.

Admissions Policy: The School's Admissions Policy reflects the School's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this policy.

5) EDUCATION AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES

Equal access: The School will afford all students equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare as set out in the section regarding 'Positive action' seen below, and the section regarding 'Disability and Special Educational Needs' as seen on pages 5-6.

Positive action: The School may afford students of a particular group, or students with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the students in that group.

Exclusions: The School will not discriminate against any student by excluding them from the School, or by subjecting them to any other detriment, on the grounds of their race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or special educational needs, subject to the section regarding 'Disability and Special Educational Needs' as seen on pages 5-6.

Teaching and School materials: Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

Student interaction: All students are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other students, irrespective of their race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and students will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

Bullying: The School will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason. Specific types of bullying include:

- Bullying relating to race, religion, belief or culture
- Bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or disabilities
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying relating to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist or sexual bullying

The School's Anti-bullying policy contains more details about the School's anti-bullying practices.

6) SCHOOL UNIFORM

Symbols of faith: Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle worn by Sikhs, and certain items of headwear, such as headscarves, may be worn by students when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs, or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the student or their parents to the Head of School, whose decision will be final, subject to the Complaints procedure.

Disabled students: Reasonable adjustments may be required to the school uniform for disabled students who require them. The student or parents should refer the matter to the Head of School to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the student.

7) RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Religion: The School's does not have a religious ethos. School timetables are set in accordance with the Vietnamese government, but the School respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith, subject always to their respecting the rights and freedoms of the School Community as a whole and considerations of safety and welfare.

8) DISABILITY AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Our approach: We are an inclusive School which welcomes members of the School Community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of people with disabilities and those with special educational needs, in all activities of the School, and will not treat a member of the School Community less favourably on these grounds without justification. We will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children who have disabilities, and to comply with our legal and moral responsibilities under best international practice and local regulations or legislation in order to accommodate the needs of prospective applicants and students who have disabilities for which, after reasonable adjustments, we can cater adequately.

Definitions: Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a "*substantial and long-term adverse effect*" on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity.

Reasonable adjustments: The School has an on-going duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities and/or special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided, to ensure that such students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other students. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life, for example:

- The curriculum
- Classroom organisation and timetabling
- Access to school facilities clubs and visits
- School sports
- School policies

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- Making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room
- Allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam

- Providing texts in larger print for a child with a visual impairment
- Rearranging the timetable to allow a student to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- Arranging a variety of accessible sports activities

The School is not required to make adjustments which include substantial physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, for example. However, the School has a lift in the main building where the majority of the classrooms are located.

In making "reasonable adjustments" the School is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities where to do so would be reasonable. The School will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

Informing the School:

Parents of students must notify the Head of School in writing if they are aware or suspect that the student (or prospective student) has a disability and/or special educational needs, or anyone in their immediate family have at any time had, or has a disability and/or special educational needs. The school's application form enables parents to give details of their child's disability/and or special educational needs when applying for a place at the School. Parents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the School with such information will enable the School to support the student as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. The School will have due regard to any request made by a parent or student (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

Admission of children with special educational needs and/or a disability: Applications for a place at the School will be considered on the basis that reasonable adjustments have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's special educational needs and/or disability. The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, the School will not be able to provide adequately for the child's physical and educational needs. The School shall inform the parents of the decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or give reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

Existing students: Where the School becomes aware of a disability and/or special educational needs of an existing student, the School will do all that is reasonable to assist the student whilst at the School, which may include making reasonable adjustments. If in the professional judgement of the Head of School, and after consultation with the parents and the student (where appropriate), the School cannot provide adequately for the student's physical and educational needs after all reasonable adjustments have been made, parents will be asked to withdraw the student, without being charged fees in lieu of notice and with the acceptance deposit returned. The School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

Access: The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.

Students with English as an Additional Language

Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are expected to be able to access the curriculum in English. The School will admit students on the basis that it can support them with their EAL needs. The School will consult with the student and the parents as appropriate and advise parents if additional language support is required.

Provision for students with particular Religious, Dietary, Language or Cultural Needs

The School makes provision for students with specific needs as far as is reasonable. For example, absence is granted for religious observance and the catering department takes dietary requirements into account as far as is reasonably possible.

9) RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the School Community are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with dignity at all times.

The Head of School has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination.

Management: Those working at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the School with regard to equal opportunities.

Reporting and Recording Incidents of Discrimination

If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Head of School (Pastoral).

Complaints: If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment based on one or more of the protected characteristics, or if you feel this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's formal Complaints Procedure. For a copy of the Complaints Policy, please contact the school reception. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

Reports: If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint based on the protected characteristics, please contact the Head of School (Pastoral).

Enforcement: We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

Record: All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Head of School

11) RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Commitment:

The School is committed to ensuring that all recruitment, selection, and employment practices are conducted fairly, transparently, and in line with the principles of equal opportunity. No applicant, employee, or worker will receive less favourable treatment or be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be justified on objective grounds.

Recruitment Procedures:

- All vacancies will be advertised internally and/or externally to attract a diverse range of candidates.
- Job descriptions and person specifications will be based only on objective criteria and the requirements of the post.
- Shortlisting and selection decisions will be made solely on merit and evidence of suitability for the role.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made for candidates with disabilities during the recruitment and selection process.
- Employment and appointment of foreign nationals are subject to the legal and administrative requirements of the Vietnamese authorities. In some cases, local regulations governing the issuance of work permits may impose specific qualification or experience criteria that differ from international standards. The organization will comply with all such legal requirements while striving to uphold fairness and equal opportunity in its recruitment and employment practices.

Training and Development:

- All employees will have equal access to training, career development, and promotion opportunities.
- The School will support and encourage the professional growth of all staff, ensuring that development pathways are equitable and inclusive.

10) MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Head of School and SLT will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy, and associated procedures. The Policy will be reviewed every two years (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require) by the Head of School and the leadership team.