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The British School of Gran Canaria

Gender Equality

Policy Document



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THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF GRAN CANARIA

GENDER EQUALITY

1. Rationale

To establish a clear vision, direction, common language and consistent message for our commitment to the promotion of gender equality, women's and girls' rights, and inclusion.

Gender inequality and exclusion can vary but includes gender-based discrimination, gender stereotyping and an unequal distribution of power between women, men, girls, boys and other genders, as well as exclusion based on additional factors. These additional factors include identities such as race, class, ethnicity, ability, language, sexual orientation, and gender identity. We recognise that individuals have multiple identities that shape their experiences and these must be contemplated when considering each individual, as well as gender issues.

Gender inequality intensifies the negative effects of all other forms of exclusion and as a result, exclusion is different and often worse for girls and women. Girls often face the most significant barriers to exercising their rights among excluded groups, which is why gender equality and girls' rights are so important.

Achieving gender equality, realising girls' rights and fostering an inclusive society are core objectives for BSGC.

2. Scope

The Gender Equality Policy (GEP) applies to The British School staff and students. The core principles are articulated in this formal policy document, which is approved by the Board of Governors, shared on the school website and actively communicated within the institution. The policy forms part of our commitment to gender equality, expressed in explicit actions within clearly established goals and detailed actions and measures to achieve them.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All of BSGC staff, regardless of position or role, are responsible for the implementation of the requirements outlined in this policy. These requirements are reflected in recruitment processes, job descriptions and staff performance reviews at all levels and in the way we hold each other to account.

An Equality Commission is a requirement of the Real Decreto 6/2019 and is established within the school to monitor policies and strategies to promote gender equality. The commission consists of

equal numbers of school and *Comité de Empresa* representatives, as well as the same number of female and male participants. The Committee meets at least twice-a-term.

Senior managers are accountable for this policy; with the Board of Governors monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4. Definitions

These definitions clarify certain terminology that are key in relation to gender, and they also raises awareness of important areas and aspects that have a significant impact on gender inequality, and therefore are the most pressing to address.

Disability – a disability includes long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that hinder the full realisation of the rights or full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Diversity - Diversity acknowledges that each individual is unique. It means recognising, accepting, celebrating and finding strength in individual differences such as gender, age, nationality, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

Empowerment - Empowerment is a strategy to increase women's and girls' agency over their own lives, and their capacity to influence the relationships and social and political conditions that affect them. Lack of power is one of the main barriers that prevents particularly girls and young women, from realising their rights.

Exclusion - Exclusion is the process that prevents certain individuals or groups from fulfilling their rights. Exclusion is caused by inequality in the distribution of resources and power and by the social norms that perpetuate these differences.

Gender Equality - Gender equality means that all persons, regardless of their gender, enjoy the same status in society; have the same entitlements to all human rights; enjoy the same level of respect in the community; can take advantage of the same opportunities to make choices about their lives; and have the same amount of power to shape the outcomes of these choices. Gender equality does not mean that women and men, or girls and boys are the same, moreover they have different but related needs and priorities, face different constraints, and enjoy different opportunities.

Gender Identity - Gender identity refers to how an individual feels about their own gender. Individuals may identify as male, female or as something else and their gender identity may or may not be the same as the sex that they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity and expresses their gender in a unique and personal way.

Inclusion - Inclusion is about bringing people into a process in a meaningful manner. It is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society and to fully enjoy their rights.

Intersecting Identities - People do not fall neatly into single social groups. Each individual can have many identities that impact on how they interact with and are viewed by society. Unpacking these

intersecting identities is key to understanding discrimination and exclusion because a person's experience of exclusion is often greater than the sum of all parts.

LGBTIQ - This includes those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI) or those who have questions about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Q). The full term - LGBTIQ - respects that while some people have a clear sense of 'who and what they are' and are able and comfortable to define their status, many others may be uncertain. In reality, sexual orientation and/or gender identity is a spectrum of identities, characteristics, expressions and behaviours.

Sexual Orientation - Sexual orientation is a continuum that refers to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and/or intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender.

Social Norms - Social norms are a pervasive feature of all our lives. Norms are shared beliefs about what is typical and appropriate behaviour in a group of people, including women, girls, men and boys. Social norms are like informal rules, which also influence (and are influenced by) formal rules such as laws and regulations. Norms shape expectations and attitudes and can sustain gender inequality; social norms on gender can shape the unequal status of women and girls and the expectations of their role in society.

5. Strategies and Actions

Plan de Igualdad – as mandated by the Real Decreto 6/2019 and part of the responsibilities of the *Comision de Igualdad*, a *Plan de Igualdad* was developed based on an in-depth analysis of data and statistics that provided an insight into gender equality within BSGC. The *Plan de Igualdad* is based on the BSGC analysis of gender equality and articulates annual objectives and evaluation targets for the school's work towards more transparent and equitable gender equality.

Data Collection – a key component for evaluating gender equality and monitoring developments is the collection and analysis of data. In BSGC this data includes gender distribution across all posts and positions of responsibility in the school, access to training and promotions, salary levels and access to certain employment opportunities.

Training – raising aware and understanding of the issue of gender equality and highlighting responsibilities and strategies is a key responsibility of the school in this area of staff training. Additionally, steps and strategies must be implemented to ensure that gender reasons (e.g. maternity leave or child care) do not impinge and prevent access to professional developmental opportunities for all staff.

Review of Materials and Resources – an on-going review of school materials and resources is expected to ensure that no gender stereotypes nor biases are projected or inadvertently promoted.

Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision Making – identifying strategies to increase the number and share of women in leadership and decision-making positions within the school. A key part of this strategy is identifying measures to ensure that women can take on and stay in leadership positions.

Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression – undertake a critical review of selection procedures and address any biases to ensure that women and men get equal chances to develop and

advance their careers. This includes establishing recruitment codes of conduct and proactively identifying women for underrepresented fields and areas of work.

Daily School Environment – BSGC will adopt and implement necessary policies to ensure an open and inclusive working environment, the visibility of women in the organisation and externally, and that the contribution of women is properly valued.

Work-life Balance – BSGC will support inclusive work-life balance policies and practices, including parental leave policies, flexible working time arrangements and support for caring responsibilities.