EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN HARINGEY: AN EDUCATION SERVICE POLICY STATEMENT

1. Scope

1.1 This statement of policy and implications seeks to recognise the range of the Council's interests and responsibility as a Local Education Authority. The scope of the statement encompasses all Council employees in maintained establishments with the Education Service, and all potential employees. It applies also to the organisation and content of provision made by the Education Service, including curricular activities in colleges, centres and schools.

1.2 The Education Committee expects all educational establishments and services to review their aims and objectives, their employment, organisational and curricular practices to secure on a whole institution basis an effective framework to combat disadvantage and provide equal opportunities.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT

2.1 Haringey Council's Policy Statement

"This Council declares its intention to become an equal opportunities employer. The Council is opposed to discrimination on any grounds. In particular we oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, age, religion, and discrimination against lesbians and gay men, the unemployed and people with disabilities. The aim of our policy is to prevent racism, sexism, hetrosexism, age-ism and other forms of discrimination against people from these groups, and to take affirmative action to ensure that they are represented as employees in all departments and at all levels. In particular, we are committed to action to ensure that the ability and potential for the job are the only criteria, and that this Council through all policies and actions does achieve an accurate reflection in its workforce of the community it serves".

3. Responsibility for Implementing an Employment Policy

3.1 For teachers, the Education Committee is both the employing Committee and the Committee responsible for employment policy and conditions of service..

3.2 For officer and manual staff, conditions of service and the formulation of employment policy rest with the Personnel Services Committee whose decisions are implemented through the Head of Personnel Services. The Education Committee is the employing Committee..

3.3 The Education Committee is responsible, as the employing Committee, for the implementation of employment policy in respect of all categories of staff within the Education Service.

3.4 This responsibility is discharged through formal delegation to sub-committees and governing bodies, and through the Chief Education Officer. Within individual

institutions, the responsibility for implementing the employment policy is discharged through the head of the institution. In all cases, this is shared with every employee performing staff supervisory duties.

3.5 The Education Service recognises that all members of the responsible committees, governing bodies, and managerial structures must have an adequate awareness and understanding of the policy and its implications to enable them to discharge their responsibilities in the area of employment policy, and that this will require a commitment to meeting the training needs which arise.

4. Employment Policy (Teachers)

4.1 The statutory framework of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976 defines as unlawful direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of racial group, sex, or marital status. Affirmative action is nevertheless possible within this statutory framework. An employer may take positive steps to ensure that applicants from disadvantaged groups are recruited to training schemes. Employers are also enabled to take positive steps to encourage applications for employment from members of a particular sexual or racial group if it is under-represented within the workforce. Discrimination in favour of an applicant from a particular sexual or racial group at the point of selection for appointment is not lawful.

4.2 The Education Committee seeks to ensure within the terms of it s policies that employment is provided on an equal opportunities basis. The Service recognises that over and above the statutory framework there is a need to address other areas of potential disadvantage and discrimination which are not related to job performance.

4.3 In particular, the Education Committee opposes discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex marital status, age, religion, and discrimination against lesbians and gay men, the unemployed and people with disabilities.

4.4 The Education Committee is committed to action to ensure that only job-related criteria are used to recruitment and other employment procedures and practice.

4.5 This commitment is intended, with affirmative action, to remove those unjust discriminatory influences which have hindered the recruitment and development of the Council workforce reflecting the diversity of the community it serves.

4.6 The Education Committee formally and actively adopts this policy in respect of the employment of teachers.

5. Recruitment

5.1 Role Description

A clear statement of the particular nature and duties of the post should be drawn up before other recruitment procedures are initiated.

5.2 Candidate Specification

Having regard to the role description, a statement should be developed specifying the nature and level of the qualifications, abilities and experience sought.

5.3 Recruitment Advertising

5.3.1 Advertisements should convey to potential applicants key information about the post. The media placement of advertisements should be kept under review including the use of minority ethnic press. Further particulars provided to respondents should

include reference to the Council's equal opportunities policy, and to the means of complaint if an applicant believes that unfair discrimination has occurred.

5.3.2 Recruitment advertising materials should explicitly welcome applicants from disadvantaged and under-represented groups, assuring them that their applications will be considered without regard to their race, sex, marital status, their sexuality as lesbians or gay men, their socio-economic status, or other unacceptable grounds for discrimination.

5.4 **Selection Criteria**

Having regard to the role description and the candidate specification, selection criteria should be drawn up, to take into account all stages in he shortlisting and selection process, having regard to the involvement of headteachers, officers, inspectors, Governors and/or Members. Particular regard should be paid to the development of objective criteria in requesting references or other evidence to be used in the selection process.

5.5 **Interviews**

5.5.1 Interviews should be conducted in a manner which makes clear that ability and potential for the job are the only criteria to be considered. Factors such as personal family commitments and arrangement for dependants, religious or other personal beliefs, unrelated to the performance of the duties of the post, should play no part in the appointment process and should not be raised at interview.

5.5.2 The Education Committee will prepare guidelines and develop training activities in support of selection and interview arrangements and procedures.

5.6 **Decisions**

The grounds for the decision of the appointing body should be recorded and retained for a period of at least six months from the date of the decision.

5.7 **Support**

Application forms, requests for references and related documentation should be kept under review, with specific regard to the equal opportunities policy. A range of training opportunities should be provided to assist in the preparation of role descriptions, candidate specifications and advertisements and to develop the skills of those involved in the selection process.

6. **Promotion**

6.1 Agreed procedures provide for the promotion of teaching staff to the next salary scale without advertisement under certain specified circumstances. Governing bodies are asked to specify the particular grounds on which the promotion is supported if they recommend the promoted appointment to the Education Committee. Governing bodies are asked also to consider the recommendation formally from an equal opportunities policy perspective.

7. **Training and Development**

7.1 The Education Committee recognises the training needs which arise from the establishment of an equal opportunities employment policy. These include the provision of an appropriate support for Members and Governors and training for staff to enable them to discharge their responsibility in designing role descriptions, candidate specifications and advertisements, and undertaking selection processes

including the conduct of interviews in accordance with the principles which promote equal opportunities.

7.2 In preparing staff development and in-service training programme, specific consideration should be given to the training needs of particular groups, e.g. women and to the programme arrangements made, to provide equality of opportunity for access to training by those with identified needs.

8. **Conditions of Service**

The provisions of the conditions of service will be kept under review, seeking to ensure that they do not discriminate unfairly and that their implementation is in accordance with the principles of equal opportunities.

9. **Grievances**

9.1 It will be open to applicants for appointment to submit a complaint to the Chief Executive of the Council if they believe they have been unfairly discriminated against in the consideration of applicants for the post.

9.2 Any other grievances relating to the equal opportunities policy, instituted by an employed teacher, may be submitted under established grievance machinery. The initial stages of the grievance procedure provide for attempts to resolve difficulties at an informal level. Any teacher who believes that he or she has been subjected to racism, sexism, hetrosexism, or any other unacceptable form of discrimination in employment should raise the issue of concern under the procedure so that they may be investigated and considered in a positive context, in conjunction with appropriate trade union representation.

10. **Discipline**

10.1 It is the Education Committee's policy to promote equal opportunities in all aspects of its work. The Education Committee expects all its employees to perform their duties in accordance with and in furtherance of this policy. Wilful breaches of policy may result in disciplinary action.

10.2 The Education Committee will not tolerate instances of harassment of persons on sexual or racial grounds, or on grounds of lesbianism or homosexuality and will view very seriously any harassment by offensive or derogatory behaviour or language. Such behaviour will result in disciplinary action.

11. **Review**

11.1 The Education Committee recognises that this policy statement and its implementation require regular monitoring, evaluation and review at all levels.

11.2 The Education Committee acknowledges the commitment to equal opportunities by the recognised professional associations and will review the employment policy and its implementation on a joint basis with those associations.

11.3 **An Equal Opportunities Employment Monitoring Group (EOMEG) will be established to consider inter alia:-**

(a) the terms of the Equal Opportunities Policy Statement;

(b) the outcomes of specific monitoring exercises;

(c) employment procedures and related documentation;

(d) employment practises;

(e) matters referred by the Education Committee, Sub-Committees, or the Joint Consultative Committee (Education).

11.4 Monitoring systems will be designed to safeguard at all times the confidential nature of personal records of individuals, and the anonymity of individuals within the presentation of monitoring outcomes.

11.5 While monitoring processes may be continuous, the Education Committee will undertake "equal opportunities" assessments from time to time to provide firmer benchmarks against which to assess the direction and nature of change in the composition and pattern of the workforce.

11.6 The EOMEG may report and make recommendations to the Joint Consultative Committee (Education) on any matter related to the equal opportunities employment policy.

12 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN SERVICE PROVISION

12.1 Responsibility for Implementing Service Policy

12.11 The Education Committee is responsible as the Service Committee for the development of Council policy in all aspects of educational provision. In all areas of policy consideration, the Education Committee recognises its responsibility to ensure that aims and objectives, organisation and delivery of the service are compatible with the principal of equal opportunities.

12.12 Governing Bodies, heads of institutions, and heads of educational support services have particular responsibilities for the development of an appropriate policy framework for the institution or support service, and for maintaining an effective monitoring and evaluation of policy in practice.

12.13 All staff - teachers, inspectors, officers, and manual workers - have responsibilities, within their own sphere of work, to contribute to reviews of their organisation and procedures, attitudes and practices, and to implement the Council's equal opportunities policy.

12.14 The Education Committee recognises its responsibility actively to promote the supportive training and development of all staff to assist them to implement the Council's policy. In addition to the provision of training programmes, the Education Committee will make available clear policy statements and guidelines to exemplify good practice.

13 Institutional Arrangements and Resourcing

13.1 The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Race Relations Act 1976, provide a statutory framework defining as unlawful direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of racial group, sex, or marital status, and placing on local authorities a general statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity.

13.2 The Education Committee will seek to ensure that the Service is provided on an equal opportunities basis for all members of the community it serves, opposing and seeking to eradicate discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, class, age, religion, and discrimination against lesbians and gay men, the unemployed and people with disabilities.

13.3 The Education Committee, recognises that equal opportunities in provision will not be achieved by passive institutional arrangements, and that positive steps need to be taken whether defined in relation to access to particular educational experiences, educational welfare provisions, other support services, or employment.

13.4 The nature and content of the service provided should actively seek to meet the needs of all members of the community on an equal opportunities basis. The Education Committee will therefore keep under continuous review its own policies, practices and procedures, and will develop guidelines to assist similar processes across all areas of potential discrimination within educational institutions and in support services.

13.5 Each educational establishment and service is expected to draw up its own statements of policy to combat discriminatory attitudes and practices, whether these are expressed by individuals or through institutional practices.

14 The Curriculum

14.1 The Council has determined a curriculum policy statement for schools which includes the following aims:- "An understanding of an commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all pupils should inform all aspects of curriculum planning, delivery and monitoring throughout the whole school. Equal opportunities principles are fundamental to educational provision and should permeate the curriculum rather than be perceived as separate and specific policies to be added onto existing provision".

14.2 The principles underlying these aims apply to all aspects of curricular provision at school, and at other stages of provision, within further and adult education, and the youth service.

The principles clearly relate to countering educational disadvantage based on race, gender, class, and disability, while the curriculum is recognised also as a vital means by which positively to develop understanding of and respect for individuals and groups, whose cultural and linguistic heritage, religious beliefs, or whose sexuality might be different.

14.3 The Education Committee will monitor and evaluate educational provision and practice, supporting curricular reviews and advising institutions and individuals on developments and specific action to enhance the quality of educational opportunities available to all.

14.4 Curricular reviews should provide for consideration of the content and expression of the curriculum, including book and non-book resources, to ensure that they are compatible with the promotion of equal opportunities. It will be necessary for the nature and extent of provision, accessibility and use of resources, whether in the form of books, other materials, or persons within the institution or from within the wider community, to be the subject of continuous review.

14.5 The implementation of an equal opportunities policy, either specifically or as integral to other considerations of curriculum, organisation, and practice will be included within programmes of in-service education and training at all levels, including the induction of new staff. All staff should thereby be invited to contribute to the continuous reviews of policy and practice.

15 Information

15.1 A copy of this Equal Opportunities Policy Statement is to be made available to:-

a) every elected Member of Council, and all co-opted members of the Education Committee and its Sub-Committee;

b) every Governor of all County and Controlled primary, secondary and special schools;

c) every Council employee engaged in the Education Service, including

all new staff on appointment;

d) the Secretaries of the recognised Trade Unions;

e) the representatives of parents' organisations, HCRC, and other individuals and organisations on request.

15.2 Employees are advised that information on equal opportunities is available from:

a) the Chief Education Officer, and specialist inspectors and officers within the Council's service;

b) trade union or professional association representatives;

c) national organisations such as:-

The Commission for Racial Equality
Elliott House
10/12 Allington Street
London SW1E 5EH

The Equal Opportunities Commission
Overseas House
Quay Street
Manchester M3 3HN

Director of Education Services