



Equal Opportunities for Staff

Date	Review Date	Headmistress	Proprietor
February 2023	February 2026	Zoe Sylvester	Brian Berkery

This Policy forms part of a set of documents and policies that relate to the safeguarding responsibilities of the School with special regard to the EYFS, PSHEE, SEND, Behaviour, Whistleblowing, SMSC and Anti-Bullying Policies.

LEGISLATION

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the latest government guidance, The Equality Act 2010. The Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

It provides Britain with a discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS OF THE POLICY

The School believes that no one should be discriminated against on the grounds of their age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant

or having a child, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, sex, or sexual orientation. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and covers both direct and indirect discrimination and these are called 'protected characteristics'.

The School acknowledges that it is wrong to discriminate against, harass or victimise any individual in relation to their employment, in how it provides education, benefits and services, rewards and sanctions. The school acknowledges that it is unlawful to discriminate against a member or prospective member of staff on the grounds of protected characteristics: sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy or maternity; this also includes discrimination by association or perception.

Although Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is not statutory for independent schools, the School seeks to apply its good practice to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

The School gives due regard to these three elements. It is inherent in our aims and objectives that we value the individuality of all members of our community. We are committed to giving all our employees every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of people's varied experiences and needs. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all members of our community matter. This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all, irrespective of any protected characteristics.

We take regard of:

- direct discrimination: when one person treats another less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. This describes the most clear-cut and obvious examples of discrimination, for example if a school were to refuse to let a pupil be a prefect because she was religious
- indirect discrimination: when you apply a provision, criterion or practice in the same way for a group of pupils or employees but which has the effect of putting pupils or employees sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage, and you cannot justify the practice as being 'a proportionate means of justifying a legitimate aim'
- harassment: unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour but potentially extends also to actions that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic. Thus, if a teacher is belittled and is held up to ridicule in the School because of a disability she has, this could lead to a court case alleging unlawful harassment
- victimisation: when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a protected act") in connection with the Act. As well as it being unlawful to victimise a person who does a protected act, a child must not be victimised because of something done by their parent or a sibling

Staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

Equal opportunities in practice

- we are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment
- all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law, in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy
- we are also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the School reflects the diversity of our community
- as an employer, we strive to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce by ensuring that all appointments procedures are in accordance with the Equality Policy, so that no-one is discriminated against
- we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice
- we ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams
- should a member of staff become disabled, the School will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements, or to the premises, to enable them to continue in post

Headmistress:		Date:	
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