



# Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Wycombe Abbey. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if pupils are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing. Our commitment to Equal opportunities enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual and on providing a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each pupil feels valued and can flourish. The School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, learning difficulty, body image or social background.

1.2 This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and advice of the Department for Education (Equality Act 2010 'Advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities', published February 2013). The School will treat every application in a fair and open minded way.

## 2. Admissions

2.1 We are an academically selective, single sex school. Our admissions process is based upon the Schools selection procedure as set out in the admissions policy and is committed to equal treatment for all regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, learning difficulty, body image or social background.

2.2 We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible and from pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, and refer parents to our policies covering Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Admissions. All policies are available on the Schools website.

2.3 Generous bursaries are offered in order to make it practicable for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School. Details of our provision for bursaries can be found on our website or obtained from the Bursar's office.

2.4 As a school Wycombe Abbey is a single sex school providing education for pupils between the ages of 11 and 19. It is expected that the sex of all pupils on entrance would be female. The school would take all reasonable measures to support a current pupil through the process of gender transition during their time at Wycombe Abbey. The School has set out detailed guidance related to transgender pupils in the document "Wycombe Abbey: guidance and procedures to support transgender pupils."

## 3. Code of Conduct

3.1 The School does not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any form. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation in all their forms are unlawful and unacceptable; our Behaviour, Rewards and Discipline Policy and our Anti-Bullying Strategy policy contain clear procedures for dealing with these. Both Policies are published on the School website.

3.2 The Headmistress, the Executive Leadership Team, Housemistresses, the Chaplain and the medical staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the School's policy on equal opportunities. In assemblies, tutor periods, chapel services and enrichment events, as well as academic lessons and co-curricular activities (e.g. Wellbeing, Religious Studies, Drama, English), we aim to:

- promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the School's community;
- promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues;
- foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures;
- help pupils to understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour;
- help pupils to understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and guardians, and full acceptance of the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

## 4. Uniform

4.1 Parents should be aware that all pupils at the School are required to wear a uniform until the end of LVI (Year 12). The Headmistress will consider written requests from parents regarding variations to the uniform where necessary and will act reasonably through consultation and in dialogue with parties concerned.

4.2 Variations to the uniform will have to be consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on health and safety. The Headmistress may take expert advice, and will normally arrange to meet the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

## 5. English as an Additional Language

5.1 In order to manage the high academic and social demands of Wycombe Abbey, pupils must be fluent English speakers. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parent's expense. Further information can be found in the EAL Policy.

## 6. Special Dietary Requirements

6.1 All pupils are expected to eat school meals, but individual requirements based upon attested medical grounds will be catered for. The School is also sensitive to the need of dietary requirements based on religion and will meet these where possible. Further detail is available in the School's Catering and Food Hygiene Policy.

## 7. The School's Christian Ethos

7.1 Although the School has a Christian foundation and values, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and we welcome pupils of all faiths and none. We offer the opportunity for each pupil to practise their own faith so far as is possible within the constraints of the school day.

7.2 Parents should also be aware that all pupils are expected to attend School chapel services on weekday mornings, whole school singing on a Friday evening, and Sunday Chapel unless alternative arrangements are in place. There are other occasions as well when all pupils would be expected to attend chapel services (e.g. whole School Carol Services). Pupils from religious backgrounds other than Church of England are given the opportunity to pursue their religious beliefs. In particular, the School arranges for Catholic pupils to attend Sunday Mass and take Confirmation classes, and arranges Jewish instruction for its Jewish pupils.

7.3 Saturday School is compulsory for all pupils, though special arrangements can be made for pupils to celebrate important religious festivals (e.g. Yom Kippur).

## 8. Monitoring

8.1 Wycombe Abbey monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy regularly and reports to Council in order to ensure its effectiveness. As part of that process, we invite all pupils to complete an ethnic monitoring survey. The survey uses the same ethnic categories as the Government uses in the national census.

We hope that all pupils will feel able to participate in the ethnic monitoring scheme.

8.2 The School's Privacy Notice for Parents and Pupils is available on the school website.

## 9. Complaints

9.1 We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our Equal Opportunities Policy; but copies of the School's complaints procedure is available on the school website.

Member of staff	Deputy Head (Pupils)
Last review date	July 2018
Next review date	July 2019
Member of Council	SD & S Committee