



Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils

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. We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, 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 *The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice for School Leaders, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities*, May 2014) and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014).
- 1.3 All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy and all parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and our ethos of trust, encouragement and mutual respect.

2. Admissions

- 2.1 We are an academically selective, single sex school. Our admissions process is based upon the selection procedure as set out in our admissions policy and each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with our published admissions criteria. We will treat every application for a place at the School in a fair and open-minded way.
- 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 website.
- 2.3 Bursaries are means tested awards offered to those who meet our admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the School due to financial hardship. Bursaries are therefore offered in order to make it possible for as many pupils as possible who meet the admissions 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 We provide education for girls between the ages of 11 and 19. We will take all reasonable measures to support a current pupil through the process of gender transition during their time at Wycombe Abbey.

3. Code of Conduct

- 3.1 We afford all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). We do not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any form, whether or not it was intentional. Discrimination, harassment and victimisation in all their forms are unlawful and unacceptable. Our Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy and our Anti-Bullying Strategy policy contain clear procedures for dealing with any misconduct or bullying type behaviour amongst pupils, which is related, for example, to a pupil's race, ethnicity or SEND. Both Policies are published on the website. Staff who act in breach of this policy will be managed in accordance with our Disciplinary procedures.
- 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 our 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, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- 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 how we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

4. Uniform

- 4.1 Parents should be aware that all pupils are required to wear a uniform until the end of LVI (Year 12). The Headmistress will consider requests from parents and pupils regarding variations to the uniform where necessary (such on religious grounds) 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 our ethos and policy on health and safety and be reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Headmistress may take expert advice, and will normally arrange to meet the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

5. Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils with a Disability

- 5.1 We have an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. Where we are required to consider our reasonable adjustments duty, we will consult with parents as appropriate about what reasonable adjustments, if any, we are able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. We will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School. Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy is available via the School's Website.
- 5.2 We have an Accessibility Plan in place, available on request from the Bursar. The plan sets out to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum, to improve the physical environment for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided, and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

6. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

- 6.1 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, available on the website.

7. Special Dietary Requirements

- 7.1 All pupils are expected to eat school meals, but individual requirements based upon attested medical grounds will be catered for. We are also alive to those with dietary requirements based on religion and will meet these where possible. Further detail is available in our Catering and Food Hygiene Policy.

8. Christian Ethos

- 8.1 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. We also actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 8.2 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 Full Boarders are expected to attend Sunday services. There are other occasions as well when all pupils would be expected to attend chapel services (e.g. whole School Carol Services). Day Boarders are welcome to attend Sunday services. Pupils from religious backgrounds other than Church of England are given the opportunity to pursue their religious beliefs. For example, we arrange for Catholic pupils to attend Sunday Mass and take Confirmation classes. There is an active Islamic Society within the School.
- 8.3 Saturday School is compulsory for all pupils; though special arrangements can be made for pupils to celebrate important religious festivals.

9. Monitoring

9.1 We monitor the Equal Opportunities Policy regularly and report 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.

9.2 The Privacy Notice for Parents and Pupils is available on the website.

10. Complaints

10.1 We hope that parents and pupils do not have any concerns or complaints about the operation of our Equal Opportunities Policy. If parents do have any complaints, these will be managed in accordance with the Complaints Procedure (which is available on the website).

Member of staff	Deputy Head (Pupils)
Last review date	May 2019
Next review date	May 2020
Member of Council	EP&B Committee

Version - EQUL/17a/v6/19

Related Policies:

Admissions
Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions for Pupils
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
Expulsion, Removal and Review of Pupils
Anti-bullying Strategy
Three-year Accessibility Plan
Catering and Food Hygiene
Equal Opportunities for Staff