

## 17a EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

*Our mission is to develop happy, confident and successful children who are well prepared for their future.*

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Westbrook Hay Prep School. We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. Diversity is rich in our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

Westbrook Hay Prep School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, parents and members of the school community regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity ('protected characteristics').

### Compliance

This policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 and has been written with references to the following guidance and documents.

- SEND and Inclusion policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- Admissions policy
- Accessibility plan
- Recruitment policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Pupil Attendance Policy

### AIMS

The aims of this policy and the school's ethos as a whole is to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics.
- Promote equal opportunities for all members of the school community.
- Comply with the School's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010.

All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy. All parents are expected to support the aims of the policy and the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

### ADMISSION

The school treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and School's Admissions policy.

Children from many different ethnic and racial groups, religions and backgrounds are welcomed at Westbrook Hay and each application will be considered on its merits, in accordance with the school's selection criteria based on the applicant's ability and aptitude. The school encourages applications from all prospective pupils, irrespective of their gender, gender

reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief), disability or special educational needs.

When submitting a registration form, parents are asked to give details of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance and the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. The school will not offer a place to a child with a special educational needs and/or disability if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the school cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

### EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The school aims to give all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The school will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The School will:

- Treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity and speak to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination.
- Endeavour to meet the needs of all children and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics.
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and pupils with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) receive necessary educational and welfare support.
- Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds.
- Challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff.
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities.
- Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School.
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices.
- Use the curriculum, assemblies, SCARF/PSCHEE, RE, Drama, English and all other lessons to:
  - Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, with particular regards to the protected characteristics set out in 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. Bias should be recognised.
  - Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour.
  - Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our behaviour and anti-bullying policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination. All our staff receive anti-discrimination training. Staff attend regular inset sessions on the subject.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

### **The role of teachers**

- Teachers endeavour to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.
- When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups, or of boys and girls. All staff ensure that the language they use does not reinforce stereotypes or prejudice.
- We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues. All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents in the school log book and draw them to the immediate attention of the Head of Pastoral care/ Deputy.

### **The role of the Leadership Team**

It is the Leadership's role to:

- ensure that the school's policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations;
- promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils, and in providing opportunities for professional development for staff;
- promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life;
- manage all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due seriousness, and in line with this policy.

### **The role of governors**

The governing body is committed to the principles of equal opportunity detailed in this policy. It will be provided with data to monitor that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving.

The relevant school data may include:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

## FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

**Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as set out above. Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity).

**Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race.

**Discrimination arising from disability:** Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

## PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH PARTICULAR RELIGIOUS, DIETARY, LANGUAGE OR CULTURAL NEEDS

Although the school's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, the school is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals and other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject and considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the school community.

All members of staff and school leadership seek to actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The school is keen to respect individual needs and the school will actively:

- promote racial equality and good race relations;
- promote equality of opportunity and access;
- oppose all forms of prejudice and negative discrimination.

**Catering:** We can provide for most special dietary requirements whether allergen, intolerance or for religious or cultural reasons. We also comply with the EU law which came into effect in December 2014 which lists 14 allergens that need to be identified if they are used as ingredients in a dish. Individual care plans are created for pupils with food allergies and the weekly menu **is emailed to families on request, where their child has food allergies. The catering team know what ingredients are used in all dishes on offer and pupils are encouraged to seek advice from them if unsure.**

**Religious and cultural needs:** The school, through the pastoral structure, will make every effort to support individual pupils with particular cultural needs (religious, ethnic, creative, etc.). We will grant requests of absence wherever possible on grounds of belief in accordance with the Pupil Attendance Policy.

**Language:** The school attempts to use succinct and straightforward language whenever possible. The school will also make reasonable adjustments to ensure that parents and pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) will be able to access school material. Pupils for whom English is not a first language receive support, as appropriate, from the teachers and the Learning Support Department.

### **REQUESTS FOR VARIATION IN THE SCHOOL UNIFORM**

All pupils are required to wear a uniform. The head will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the school's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the school's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

### **SPORT- EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We have a 'Sport for All' program in place here. Every pupil is coached and taught a variety of sports, regardless of ability, with all our pupils from Year 3 upwards representing the school in fixtures. Our aim is for every child to leave school with a passion for sport as well as building a catalogue of traits including confidence, resilience and leadership.

### **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR PUPILS WITH SEND**

The school has 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 the School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make to avoid their child put at a substantial disadvantage. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School. Further information on the school's reasonable adjustments duty can be found in the school's SEN and Disability Policy.

The school has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the school website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the school's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

### **RESIDENTIAL TRIPS**

Children on a Residential trip are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, or because of their cultural background, linguistic background, Special Educational Needs, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of resident children, so that care is sensitive to different needs.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

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.

The leadership team, monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy and reports to the governors about its effectiveness in practice. As part of that process, we invite all parents of candidates for our entrance assessments, together with all parents who accept places at the school their child to complete an anonymous ethnic monitoring form. The form uses the same ethnic categories as the Government uses in the national census. When the completed forms arrive at the school, they are separated from any other material that might identify the individual child. The data is logged onto a computer spreadsheet by year of both entrance examination and entry. The individual forms are then shredded.

Under no circumstances would we link our ethnic monitoring data with a pupil records. We hope that all parents feel able to participate in the ethnic monitoring system.

**This policy is reviewed every two years by the SENCO and Head of Pastoral care.**

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The school will have due regard to any request by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

## COMPLAINTS

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 can be sent upon request.

## BREACH OF THIS POLICY

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

Reviewed by Governing Body January 2020

Next Review by Governing Body due January 2022