



## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR STUDENTS

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all students.

We adhere to the national legislation of the Equality Act 2010 and we do not discriminate on the basis of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

All staff and students have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat one another with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of the School community.

Each member and prospective member of the school is valued as an individual and we strive to provide a welcoming environment in which all students are positively encouraged to achieve their full potential. We seek to promote the principles of equality through the academic curriculum, assessment procedures, Personal Development and General Studies programmes, pastoral care and careers advice.

See also Admissions, Accessibility, Anti-bullying, Curriculum and Behaviour policies.

### 2. AIMS

- To ensure respect and acceptance for others.
- To ensure that discrimination, victimisation or harassment against an individual or group is dealt with appropriately and will not be tolerated.
- To ensure that all students have access to a balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum.
- To recognise and seek to counter inequality.
- To promote an understanding of the multicultural society in which we live.
- To demonstrate that society is strengthened and enriched by cultural diversity.
- To challenge the processes which lead to stereotyping and to encourage a critical understanding of the causes and assumptions underlying prejudices.
- To ensure that all school literature reflects our philosophy.

### 3. FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

**Direct discrimination:** someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics.

**Associative discrimination:** direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

**Discrimination by perception:** direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination:** when a rule or policy applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular protected characteristic.

**Harassment:** a person harasses another if they engage in unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, or engage in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, and this conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the other person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.  
Someone may complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

**Victimisation:** someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under the Act.

4. **PROCEDURE**

- 4.1 If any pupil believes that they may have been discriminated against or that they may have been subject to harassment they should speak to their HoS. If a pupil raises a concern with their tutor or another member of staff, the pupil should be directed to speak to their HoS, and the member of staff should check the pupil has done this.
- 4.2 The allegation will be investigated in confidence by HoS, and full notes/statements taken. DoS and Headmistress will be informed. Students who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with according to the Behaviour policy.
- 4.3 If the allegation refers to the Joint Bus Service or joint teaching in the Sixth Form, DoS will liaise with Abingdon School.
- 4.4 If the allegation is upheld, the appropriate action will be taken, which can include a school-based action/sanction or, in serious cases, referral to the Police. Parents will be informed. The Chair of the Risk and Compliance Committee will be informed.
- 4.5 It will also be raised at the weekly Pastoral Committee meeting for learning points which will be reported to SMT

Policy last reviewed: ..... Trinity 2016

Next review due: ..... Trinity 2020

Person responsible for review: ..... Headmistress

Audience:..... Staff/Parents/Pupils

## **APPENDIX: ASPECTS OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN PRACTICE**

### **Disability/SEN**

Disabled students and applicants are not treated less favourably. While we select students by ability and aptitude, this is not done as a way of excluding students with a disability. See Admissions Policy. We seek to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled students are not put at a disadvantage to students who are not disabled. This includes improving ways in which written information is provided to students who are disabled and making reasonable adjustments to the physical environment of the school, so that disabled students are able to take full advantage of the education and associated services offered.

We recognise our duties towards disabled examination candidates, including our duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service we provide to disabled candidates.

### **Race**

Racism could be actual physical assault or threat, racial name-calling, teasing or abuse, expressions of prejudice or misinformation about minority groups, or graffiti on the school premises.

The curriculum reflects the fact that Britain is a multicultural society and since we regard all students as being of equal value, racism must be opposed because it is diametrically opposed to this belief. Our commitment to multicultural education is a whole-school policy, which sets out to ensure that students appreciate racial and cultural diversity. Anti-racism is the responsibility of all members of the community who have a responsibility to challenge racism whenever it occurs.

### **Religion**

The Religious services are Christian but inclusive, allowing students of all faiths or none a period of quiet reflection; see Assembly and School Services Policy.

### **Sexism**

We recognise that sexism, the irrational discrimination and stereotyping of people according to their gender, inhibits the social, academic and personal development of individuals.

### **Sexual orientation and gender reassignment**

The School is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community are treated equally, regardless of sexual orientation or gender reassignment, and understanding and acceptance is promoted. Arrangements will be made to support any student experiencing gender dysmorphia or identifying as male eg lavatories and changing facilities, sensitivities around language and dress.

Some useful websites:

[www.genderedintelligence.co.uk](http://www.genderedintelligence.co.uk)

[www.mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk)

All these issues are explored throughout the curriculum and through PD and General Studies sessions.