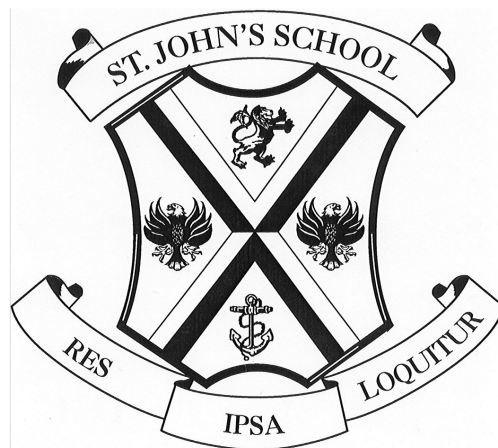


St. John's Prep. & Senior School



Equality Policy

Last reviewed by the leadership team	Last reviewed by the advisory board
January 2017	November 2018

Introduction

Our school's aims statement values the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well being of all our children matter. This Equal Opportunities Policy extends to adults: staff and parents alike.

This policy is written and implemented in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In accordance with the Act, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with '**protected characteristics**', in terms of:

- **gender**
- **race**
- **disability**
- **sexual orientation**
- **religion/belief**
- **age**
- **gender reassignment**
- **pregnancy/maternity**
- **marriage/civil partnership**

How these specifically apply in each instance will vary, depending upon the context, and whether it is concerning pupils, staff or those using the school's facilities. Proportionality and due regard will apply when giving due consideration to what is required.

We see our first task as equipping pupils with awareness of an increasingly diverse society. On such foundations, pupils will develop their own attitudes to a pluralistic society. We aim to make our pupils aware of the persistent problems of inequality in the world outside of school, and to develop in them sympathy, understanding and concern for people who in some way are different from them.

As well as promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, we encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to all the protected characteristics listed above.

Key principles:

The key principles on which this policy is based are:-

- a) Every effort will be made to ensure that there is no discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics, either within the school community or in its dealings outside of it.
- b) Equal opportunity practices should be evident in all school activities, i.e. providing the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, inter-personal relationships and the ethos of the school.
- c) Adults in the school should be role models of exemplary behaviour.

- d) We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups of pupils.
- e) We aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- f) Children and teachers will contribute towards a happy and caring environment and show respect for and appreciation of each other as individuals.
- g) All children have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum which requires differentiation according to their individual needs. They have a right to equal access to educational opportunities and resources, according to their needs and abilities.
- h) In keeping with the school's aims and philosophy, we recognise the dignity and worth of all individuals.
- i) The principles and practice of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community, pupils, all staff, parents and visitors.
- j) Particular care in adhering to this policy will be taken with regard to employment terms and conditions, recruitment, and access to facilities and opportunities, whether by pupils, public or staff.
- k) Curriculum teaching resources, books etc. should reflect the diversity of the school community and of society generally – locally, regionally and nationally.
- l) We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are often caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.
- m) Change is managed for the benefit of all.

The school will endeavour to tackle discrimination through the curriculum, its ethos and directly wherever it emerges. Under the law, there are different categories of discrimination:

Direct discrimination: When a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a special characteristic such as sex, race or a disability. In the case of direct age discrimination, this is unlawful only if it cannot be objectively justified.

Indirect Discrimination: In essence occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has a different impact on members of one or more protected groups, of which the complainant is one, and is placed at a disadvantage as a result. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless it can be justified for reasons unrelated to the characteristic in question.

Victimisation: Treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination.

Harassment: Unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on grounds of one of the relevant seven characteristics outlined on the first page.

Gender

Under the Equality Act passed in April 2010, schools have a general duty to promote equality of opportunity between men and women, boys and girls, and to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment.

At St. John's Prep. & Senior School, we aim to provide equality of opportunity for all children whatever their age, ability, gender, race or background. We want all our pupils to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, and practices – in particular those relating to gender – do not prevent any child from reaching their potential.

We recognise that a child's self perception can be influenced by his/her environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence by positively working to reduce any gender bias and promoting equality of opportunity. At the same time we are aware that as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop; their perception of sex roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer group and the media.

Children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. This includes both the Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets for the National Curriculum subjects; other subject areas currently outside the National Curriculum and areas such as extra-curricular activities. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

- Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles
- Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and non-teaching staff of both sexes

Teaching and other groupings, such as dinner queues, assembly seating, lines for dismissal, classroom seating and playground areas are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship.

Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.

- Discipline procedures – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for both sexes
- Our school uniform policy reflects equality of opportunity for all children
- Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other

Any differences involving gender which arise inside or outside the classroom are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.

All teaching and non-teaching posts are not sex-specific. Both men and women are encouraged to teach all age groups and each Key Stage. All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.

Racial equality

In our school we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi-cultural society.
- We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures (see our behaviour policy).
- We endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Disability non-discrimination

Some children in our school may have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged compared with non-disabled children.

Our school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children and adults to the necessary areas on the school premises.

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, ensure access, modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities if children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

Sexual Orientation

At St. John's Prep & Senior School, we recognise that discrimination in connection with the provision of education on grounds of sexual orientation is generally unlawful under the provisions of The Equality Act 2010.

The school will make no assumption about the sexual orientation of any of the members of its community, including its pupils, teaching staff or those who use the schools facilities.

In the curriculum, sexuality is taught within the context of loving relationships. Whilst heterosexual relationships are the most common in our society, we acknowledge that some pupils may develop a homosexual or bisexual orientation and that during development many will be still questioning their sexual orientation. Pupils' questions will be answered as they arise, honestly, factually and non-judgementally.

Derogatory name-calling (of any sort) is unacceptable under any circumstances. Matters arising in relation to name calling which relates to a pupil's sexuality or perceived sexuality

will be taken seriously and action taken where necessary to remove this behaviour from the school environment.

Religion/Belief

In The Equality Act 2010, religion means any religion and reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion. Similarly, belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.

Our school ethos is mainly Christian based and we attend our local Church in Potters Bar on several occasions during the year. Having said that, however, our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups and teaches pupils about all the major world religions. So, for example, in the curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children learn the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

Age

Age discrimination is a difficult area for schools, which have long-arranged classes and phases by chronological age more than by ability or achievement. However, age discrimination in schools and in local authority provision of schools is not restricted by The Equality Act 2010. The school will put procedures in place to ensure that no-one is denied a job, an equal chance of training or promotion or suffers from harassment or victimisation because of their age.

Gender Reassignment

The Equality 2010 Act reminds us that gender reassignment is a process and not an event. Discrimination in connection with the provision of education on grounds of past, present or proposed gender reassignment is generally unlawful.

Our school will be supportive of any young person undergoing gender reassignment and will support them to continue effectively with their education during that process.

Our school will ensure that learners undergoing gender reassignment are protected from bullying or harassment relating to this and will work with the young person and their parents/guardians to manage this, including how, what and when to inform other learners and the approach taken.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Our school will be supportive of pupils who become pregnant and will make reasonable and appropriate arrangements to assist them to continue with their education.

As well as normal practice arrangements in terms of maternity leave and employment protection, staff who become pregnant will be supported through pregnancy and maternity leave, with reasonable adjustments made where appropriate and necessary.

Staff who have a pregnancy that ends will be supported through that process, for instance, by being offered compassionate leave. Staff who have a baby born prematurely or with health issues will be supported through that process.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

The school will ensure that equality of opportunity is provided for people applying for positions at the school, regardless of their marital or civil partnership status.

Respect and dignity towards children whose parents who are in a civil partnership will be upheld by pupils, teachers and other school staff.

Parents of pupils who are in a civil partnership will be treated with dignity and respect.