



## Woodbridge School Equal Opportunities (Pupils) Policy (Whole School including EYFS)

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<b>References (including legal and others eg ISBA).</b>	ISI Handbook; Equality Act 2010; KCSIE & DfE Prevent Duty Guidance for Schools
<b>ISI Reg:</b>	17
<b>Other related policies and documents:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessibility Plan</li><li>• Admissions</li><li>• Anti-Bullying (Pupils)</li><li>• Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions</li><li>• Disability Inclusion, SEN and Learning Support including EAL</li><li>• Safeguarding</li><li>• PSHCEE</li></ul>

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### 1. Introduction

This policy is a legal requirement and an ISI Reporting Standard and applies to all pupils, including EYFS and boarders.

#### Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's obligations under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This policy has regard to the following statutory guidance and advice:

- Equality Act 2010 explanatory notes
- Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England (2014)
- Working Together with Safeguarding Children (July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Related Policies/Documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying (Pupils)
- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions
- Disability Inclusion, SEN and Learning Support including EAL
- Safeguarding
- PSHCEE

### 2. Policy Statement

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Woodbridge School. We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches 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.

Woodbridge School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's age, race, sex, disability or special educational need, religion or belief, cultural or social background, sexual orientation, gender identity or reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership status (this list is not exhaustive). We are an academically selective school and we believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

We welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities, and refer parents to our Admissions policy and the policy covering Special Education Needs (SEN), learning support, and disability. Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in 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 disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School cannot adequately cater to or meet their needs.

Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible 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.

### **3. Code of Conduct**

The Head, or the Head of Woodbridge School Prep, the senior leadership team, pastoral staff, and the medical staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of Woodbridge school's policy on equal opportunities. Use is made of assemblies, PSHE, PRE, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the school community free from discrimination
- Acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions
- Encourage mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Understand the problems of identifying and combatting discrimination (based on protected characteristics listed 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 and Woodbridge School will not tolerate discriminatory behaviour or derogatory language. It will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. The School will also review, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parent and guardians, and full acceptance of the School's ethos of tolerance and respect and Relationship and Sex Education programme (RSE).

#### **4. English as an additional language**

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Woodbridge School pupils must be adequate English speakers for the subjects they wish to study. The school may recommend that some children, whose first language at home is not English, receive individual tuition in English as an additional language. More information is available in the Admissions policy and the EAL policy.

#### **5. Faith**

Woodbridge welcomes pupils from all faith communities and we enjoy diversity and the opportunity to share others' beliefs and world views. Religious belief is not a criterion for admission. The governing body, through its senior leadership team, actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

#### **6. Collective Worship**

Woodbridge School is a Christian (Church of England) foundation and traces its patterns of worship to the very beginnings of the Seckford vision for the School. Senior School and Prep pupils attend Chapel regularly which, in an open and inclusive short service, celebrates achievement, examines and promotes British Values and tries to interpret challenging events. Sensitively recognising the spectrum of religious belief in our pupils (including those with no formal or established beliefs) we aim to introduce Christian themes and interpretations to equip pupils to be comfortable with patterns of worship and belief that they will find elsewhere in life.

When prayer is offered it is done so for the whole community, recognising that some with other beliefs may choose not to say Amen.

Hymns are a useful and enjoyable component of community life and support community cohesion and can be a useful skill for later in life at significant events.

British ceremony and occasions often take place within a Christian structure. Familiarity with these expressions helps to shape confident future leaders who have had the opportunity to examine their own beliefs and practices. British Values, and the ethos of the School, are supported and promoted by our collective worship.

#### **6. Requests for variation of school uniform**

The Head or the Head of Woodbridge School Prep will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender identity or reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided that they are consistent with the School's ethos and its 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. The Head or the Head of Woodbridge School Prep may take expert advice, and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request. Parents should be aware that all pupils are required to wear a uniform until the end of Year 11, and that a strict "business dress" code operates for Years 12 and 13.

## **8. Provision for pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs**

Appropriate consideration will be given to boarders and day pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs and all reasonable effort will be made to meet these needs either in school or through arrangements made within the local community.

## **9. Disability**

Woodbridge School will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with pupils and applicants who are not disabled, including during the admissions process. More information is available in the School's policy on SEND.

## **10. School behaviour and discipline**

Pupils are taught through the curriculum and other activities the importance of respecting each other and behaving towards each other with courtesy and consideration. The school's behaviour policies make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment in all its pernicious forms, including racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, gender-related, sexual orientated homophobic, disabled and cyber. Considerable teacher time is expended in preventing bullying, victimisation and harassment and in dealing with it when it occurs. All pupils understand that the school has a zero tolerance policy on bullying and that bullies can expect strong sanctions to be applied to them. More information is available in the School's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

## **11. Complaints**

Copies of the School's Complaints Procedure are available on request.

## **12. Policy Review**

The School is committed to the continuing development and review of its policies and practices to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment of those who are, or seek to be, its pupils. The School will also, where suitable, initiate new policies and practices. In meeting these commitments the School will take due account of any duties or obligations imposed by law.

## **13. The role of governors**

In this policy statement the Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally. The Governing Body will ensure that no-one is unlawfully discriminated against whilst in the school on account of their age, race, sex, disability or special educational need, religion or belief, cultural or social background, sexual orientation, gender identity or reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

## **14. Compliance and Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be subject to a thorough review process including consideration at the Compliance and Risk, and Education Committees on an annual basis. This will ensure that practice across the whole school is in line with this policy, the Complaints procedure and with current guidance and legislation.