

Equal Opportunities for Students policy

Action	Policy to be reviewed annually		
	Owner	Date	Completed
Review	Director of Inclusion	February 2023	✓
Approved	Senior Management Team	March 2023	✓

To be published on the following:	
Staff Portal	✓
School website	✓



Equal Opportunities for Students policy

What this policy is for

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of St Paul's Girls' School. The school recognises the benefit of having a diverse school community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Students will be taught to value and respect others. The school is committed to being an equal opportunities school and is committed to equal treatment for all students, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity ("protected characteristics").

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

- Communicate the school's commitment to promotion of equal opportunities for its students
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics
- Promote equal treatment for all members of the school community
- Create and maintain an open and supportive environment, free from discrimination
- Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued
- Comply with the school's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010
- Remove or overcome barriers for students where they already exist
- Enforce that all discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

All members of the school community are expected to comply with this policy and treat others with dignity at all times. All parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

Legal framework

- Equality Act 2010
- 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 & Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England (2014)
- Working Together with Safeguarding Children (July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022)

Other relevant school policies

- Admissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Expulsion, removal and review policy
- Safeguarding (child protection) policy
- Gender identity policy
- Learning support policy
- Relationships and sex education policy
- Accessibility plan (including disability policy)
- Anti-harassment policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities policy
- Equal opportunities for staff policy
- Complaints policy

Content of policy

1. Introduction
2. Educational Services
3. Admissions
4. Religious belief
5. Reasonable adjustments for students with disability
6. Monitoring and review
7. Breaches of this policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of St Paul's Girls' School. The school recognises the benefit of having a diverse school community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Students will be taught to value and respect others. The school is committed to being an equal opportunities school and is committed to equal treatment for all students, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity ("protected characteristics").

2. Educational services

2.1 The school affords all students 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 student on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

2.2 The school will:

- Treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity and seek 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 students with English as an additional language and students with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support
- Monitor the admission and progress of students from different backgrounds
- Challenge inappropriate and unacceptable discriminatory behaviour by students and staff
- Encourage children to work and play freely and have respect for all other students irrespective of any protected characteristic
- Offer all students 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 and PSHE to:
 - Promote tolerance of and respect for one another, paying particular regard 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.
 - Encourage children to question and challenge assumptions and stereotypes in order to better understand discriminatory behaviours and bias.
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2.3 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 (including cyberbullying) are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

3. Admissions

3.1 The school treats every application for admission in a fair, open-minded and equal way in accordance with this policy and the school's Admissions Policy. Although St Paul's is an academically selective school, each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with school's selection

criteria based on an applicant's ability, aptitude and character. The school accepts applications from, and admits all prospective students (should they meet the academic selection criteria), irrespective of any protected characteristics.

3.2 Please see the Equal Opportunities for Staff Policy in relation to our approach to staff recruitment and selection.

3.3 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 schools so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the child is not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other children. The school will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the school cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

3.4 The school offers bursaries (means tested awards) to those who meet the school's admission criteria but would otherwise be unable to attend the school due to financial hardship. Details of our bursary program can be found on the school website.

4. Religious belief

4.1 The school is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the school community.

4.2 The Governing Board, through the Senior Management 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.

5. Reasonable adjustments for students with disability

5.1 The school has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other students, including during the admissions process.

5.2 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 being put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other students. The school will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a student'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).

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

6. Monitoring and review

6.1 The Head regularly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy and reports to the governors annually on the policy's effectiveness in practice.

7. Breaches of this policy

7.1 Students who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

7.2 If you believe that a child has received less favourable treatment as a result of a protected characteristic, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to a child's detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the school's complaints procedure (see Complaints Policy which is available on the School Website).

Availability of this policy

A copy of this policy may be downloaded from our [website](#) or is available request from the school office, St Paul's Girls' School, Brook Green, London, W6 7BS (tel: 0207 603 2288). This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.