

Including Sandford, our Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Equal Opportunities Policy

Authorised by	resolution of the Board of Governors
Date	Autumn 2010
Reviewed	Spring 2013 Autumn 2014 Spring 2017 (1-0-0) Spring 2019 (1-0-1) Autumn 2019 (1-0-2)
Circulation	Published on the School's Website

This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010.

Aims

St Gabriel's recognises that direct and indirect discrimination might take place and therefore sees the need for a positive and effective equal opportunities policy.

- we will promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the organisation, both for those adults within the community of the school and for all pupils;
- we seek to develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities;
- we will promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities;
- we will enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others.

School's position

The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse School Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Pupils will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and employer and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the School Community. In the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes and seeks to eliminate discrimination on the basis of:

- gender
- marital or civil partnership status
- any gender reassignment
- race
- SEN and disability
- sexual orientation
- religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief)
- cultural background
- linguistic background
- age

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- pregnancy and maternity.

The School also opposes all bullying and discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The School's Aims and Objectives all accord with the equal treatment of people promoted by these laws and regulations, and the rights enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will monitor and review the working of the policy and procedures.

The Executive have responsibility for the Equal Opportunities Policy, and for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents.

The Principal will present general reports, statistics and incident reports to the Board of Governors and its committees as necessary.

The Director of Teaching & Learning, Director of Curriculum, Head of Junior School and Co-ordinator of Individual Needs are, together, responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum including Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 (see Early Years Foundation Stage Equal Opportunities Appendix 1).

All staff are responsible for following the policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the Principal.

Employment of Staff

Appointments

- St Gabriel's welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of sex, race, religion, disability or age;
- People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment;
- Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only, i.e. skills, qualifications and experience in selection for recruitment;
- The school will make and keep information about the sex, ethnic background, disability and age of candidates for appointments, and actual appointments;

Staff Development

- All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion;
- All members of staff will be offered induction training which will include a reference to the organisation's equal opportunities policy;
- Staff development opportunities will be monitored and discussed with the Vice-Principal;
- People becoming disabled while in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs or to be considered for redeployment if that is necessary.

Admission of Pupils

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions Policy. Although St Gabriel's is an academically selective school, each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the School's selection criteria based on an applicant's ability and aptitude. The School accepts applications from, and admits, prospective pupils irrespective of their protected characteristics as above, whilst noting that the Senior School and Sixth Form admit only girls.

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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 for or meet their needs.

Bursaries are means tested awards offered to those who meet the School's admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the School due to financial hardship. Details of our provision for bursaries can be obtained from the bursar's office.

Educational services

The School affords 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 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 pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support. The school's commitment to full educational inclusion is detailed in the SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds. School and subject development plans will act to improve the learning of pupils according to this analysis
- Challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff. The Behaviour Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy and the ICT Acceptable Use for Pupils encourage understanding and tolerance towards race, culture, religious, gender, sexuality and ability/disability
- Offer all pupils appropriate access to all areas of the curriculum according to aptitude and ability and a range of extra-curricular activities. All subjects will have equality of opportunity at their core and make explicit references to differentiation within schemes of work.
- 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 PSHEE to:
 - Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, 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.
- We will actively promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and take steps to ensure access to facilities, courses and student life. The Examinations Officer and Coordinator of Individual Needs are familiar with equality legislation and will provide the help, support and guidance needed for a smooth transition into full participation of courses and examinations.

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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.

Religious belief

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 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. The governing body, through the 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.

Requests for variation in the school uniform

All pupils are required to wear a uniform (with Year 12 and 13 having a dress code). The Principal 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.

Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability

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 being 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 SEND Policy and the Accessibility Plan.

The School's notes that these reasonable adjustments may include adjustments where a tendency to physical abuse of others is part of a disability (e.g. an autistic child who lashes out at care staff). In this case the school would adjust the application of its Behaviour Policy in an appropriate way and seek to avoid the behaviours arising by using for example de-escalation strategies.

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.

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Racist or Homophobic Bullying

- All staff have a legal duty not to bully or otherwise harass other staff;
- Where staff come across incidents involving racist or homophobic bullying, they must report these to the appropriate senior member of staff;
- The Governing Body monitors any incidents and actions taken, of racist or homophobic bullying;
- All incidents of racist bullying amongst pupils will be taken seriously, and must be dealt with appropriately and reported to the Principal.

Administration

- Venues for meetings will take account of the needs of all participants; and
- Venues for teaching and learning will take into account the particular needs of the learners and teacher/teaching assistant.

Documents

- Language used in documents will reflect and promote equal opportunities and font style and size will take account of the full range of readers. The Coordinator of Individual Needs will be instrumental in helping the Executive to implement the above.
- As outlined in our SEND Policy, access to documentation will include alternative formats such as tape, disk, large print and languages other than English if necessary.

Reports to the Police

Incidents that involve racist elements which need to be reported to the police will be reported by the Principal, in consultation with the Chairman of Governors.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and improved and developed as appropriate. In particular the review will focus on the effectiveness of inclusive practices where appropriate.

Appendix 1 Early Years Foundation Stage

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) believes in valuing and celebrating the diversity within our community. We aim to develop good practice and positive attitudes in the Early Years and encourage an anti-discriminatory approach to the world in general, and other human beings in particular. We believe that all people should have equal opportunities to learn, develop and grow with dignity in a community of mutual respect. This Appendix must be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities Policy.

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Implementation of the Policy and Early Years Foundation Stage Appendix

The Principal and Vice-Principal ensure that:

- New members of staff, including students and volunteers, have access to copies of the Equal Opportunities Policy and EYFS appendix and this availability is discussed with them during their induction meeting
- The Equal Opportunities Policy and EYFS appendix is made available to all parents and carers (on our website and in the School Office upon request)
- The Co-ordinator of Individual Needs and all Sandleford staff are involved in the implementation of the policy
- Parents who are experiencing problems with the English language, both spoken or written, are offered support
- Every effort is made to use the child's first language. When this is not feasible, the setting involves other agencies or takes advice and assistance wherever possible
- Every effort is made to obtain suitable specialist equipment, aids or resources
- Reasonable adjustments are made to the premises to cater for anyone with any form of disability
- Volunteers, local speakers or personalities who reflect the diversity of the local community are invited to visit the setting
- Parent groups who wish to hold classes or discussion groups on the premises are offered support and encouragement through the Bursar's Department

Our Practice

- The Equal Opportunities Policy and EYFS Appendix applies to every member of staff, parent, carer and child. Each person is valued as an individual, with differing social, intellectual and cultural backgrounds. Different needs, likes, dislikes, similarities and differences are respected and accounted for.
- Nobody in our setting is subjected to discrimination, racist comments or gender bias. Cultural or religious diversity is respected.
- We hold an interview with parents before their child starts the setting to establish their concerns about their child's specific emotional, medical, cultural or religious needs. This is part of the admissions process. The parents' contribution is recorded and relayed to other members of staff at a relevant staff meeting.
- We value parents as their children's first educators, and staff work closely with parents to share information, experiences, conversation and quality time, thus promoting positive role models for their children.
- The Catering Department is able to cater for cultural, religious and medical differences at mealtimes.
- We celebrate a variety of festivals and special events each year from cultures represented within our community and outside.
- Our curriculum plan takes into account each child's individual route to learning.
- We give the children equal opportunities and equal access to the full range of activities available, including visits and trips outside the setting.
- We monitor activities on a regular basis to ensure that every child has freedom of choice, time for discovery, and support, when it is necessary.
- During play we encourage the children to respect and value each other. We discourage them from making hurtful and unkind remarks. Staff ensure that children are helped towards understanding that it is wrong to judge someone because of their gender, colour, beliefs, disability or social background. We explain why, talk things through and praise positive behaviour.
- We challenge and deal with inappropriate practices and attitudes promptly.
- We record any inappropriate racist or sexist comments made by the children and staff, including volunteers and students.

Staff Training

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- We take great care to apply the Equal Opportunities Policy when advertising for, interviewing and appointing staff.
- Staff are kept informed and updated on new legislation and trained accordingly. We take note of information on new national initiatives and Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCP) courses.
- We give the opportunity to attend courses for staff who:
 - Have identified an area in which they wish to improve their own knowledge and expertise
 - Have been identified through an inspection or appraisal as having a training need
 - Want to further their own personal development
- We expect all staff to behave in a professional manner, follow the above policy and try to be consistent, sensitive and fair. We expect them to challenge others who made inadvertent racist, sexist insensitive or discriminatory remarks.

Equipment

We purchase, organise and monitor equipment, toys, books and resources to reflect diversity in the immediate and wider society. We display positive images of differing races, cultures, religions, social groups, physical abilities and disabilities and gender in and around the setting.

Date	Version	Changes
Spring 2019	1-0-1	Updated to reflect changes in policy names Additional detail in Educational Services, Religious Beliefs and Variation in Uniform added.
Autumn 2019	1-0-2	Updated to reasonable adjustments paragraph re physical violence