

Equal Opportunities Policy

INTRODUCTION

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Rydal Penrhos School.

The School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender assignment.

This document forms one of a suite of policies considering equal opportunities issues, the other constituents being as follows:

- Accessibility Plan;
- Additional Learning Needs Policy;
- Admissions Policy;
- Disability & Access Policy;
- Inclusion Policy.

DEFINITION

Protected Characteristics:

The Equality Act (2010) elaborated the protection provided by the existing equality legislation. It introduced the term “protected characteristics” as a collective noun to bring together the various characteristics upon which discrimination could not be based, namely age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

AIMS

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

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics;
- to promote equality of opportunity for all members of the School community;
- to comply with the School's equality duties as per the Equality Act 2010.

All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy; equally, all parents / carers are expected to support the aims of this policy and indeed the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

ADMISSIONS

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way, in accordance with this policy and with the School's Admissions Policy; this is not an academically selective School, so each application will be considered on its merits alone. The School accepts applications from, and admits, prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief or lack of religion or belief, or additional learning needs (hereinafter “ALN”).

Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect his or her performance in the admissions process and / or his or her ability to participate fully in the education provided by the School. Should a pupil's parents / carers neglect to mention at the admission stage a known circumstance which has a subsequent impact upon his or her learning, the School cannot reasonably be expected to provide the appropriate support.

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 his or her 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 as a result of financial hardship. Details of the School's bursary provision can be found on the website or can be requested from the Bursary.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The School affords all pupils access to educational provision which includes all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty, as well as considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding him or her, or by subjecting him or her 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 which is free from discrimination;
- endeavour to meet the needs of all of its pupils, and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics;
- ensure that pupils for whom English is not their first language receive any necessary educational and welfare support;
- monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds;
- challenge inappropriate and / or discriminatory behaviour by both pupils and staff;
- offer all pupils access to every area of the curriculum, as well as a full range of co-curricular activities;
- work with parents / carers 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, Chapel, assemblies and PSHE to:
 - promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010;
 - promote positive images and role models so as to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or may arise from disability, whether or not it be intentional. Harassment and bullying in all their forms are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions and Anti-Bullying policies.

RELIGIOUS BELIEF

Although the School's religious ethos is Methodist and as such is based upon Christian values and tradition, the School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or those 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 A VARIATION OF SCHOOL UNIFORM

All pupils are required to wear a uniform until and including Year 11, and a strict "business dress" code operates for Years 12 and 13. The Principal will consider requests from parents / carers and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and / or on religious grounds, provided that they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety, and provided they are reasonable in all circumstances, including with respect to the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITIES

The School has a continuing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability, so as to ensure that they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils.

Where the School is required to consider its duty of reasonable adjustment, it will consult with parents / carers about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make in order to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in the light of a pupil's disability, and with regard to the resources available to the School. Further information on the School's duty of reasonable adjustment can be found in the School's Alternative Learning Needs and Disability Policies.

The School has an Accessibility Plan in place which 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, to improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of the education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School, and to improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

MONITORING & REVIEW

The Principal regularly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy, and reports to the SLT annually on how it is performing in practice.

BREACH OF THIS POLICY

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions Policy.

This policy is subject to review on a biennial basis; however, it may require earlier revision in the light of any regulatory change which may come into force in the interim.

Adopted (SLT):	February 2022
Review date:	February 2024