

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Statement

The Queen's School is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities for every member of the school community.

Aims

We aim to provide an environment in which no child or adult is prevented from taking a full part in the life of the school as a result of:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- gender
- gender reassignment
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

In order to create and maintain this environment we aim to:

- achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning for everyone, irrespective of ethnicity, religious belief, age, gender, ability or disability or social background
- encourage respect for and understanding of the beliefs, doctrines and personal circumstances of individuals
- seek to promote the welfare in school of individuals who have specific physical, emotional, learning and religious needs
- deal swiftly, effectively and firmly with comments and incidents that are detrimental to the well-being of others.

Objectives

- To ensure that each member of our community is valued as an individual and all staff act as role models, promote positive attitudes towards equality, avoid stereotypical ideas and challenge prejudice.
- To recognise that all members of our community are citizens and have rights and entitlements and that all members of our community have an equal right to be valued and listened to.

This policy also covers Early Years Foundation Stage pupils in this school.

The school fully recognises its duty to promote equality of opportunity and oppose racism. It aims to meet the requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) the Race Relations Act (1976, amended 2000) and the Equality Act (2010).

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Equality of opportunity: Ethnicity and social circumstances

The school aims to foster an environment in which racist and negative social assumptions, attitudes and behaviour are always challenged.

It seeks, not simply to avoid discrimination or prejudice, but to promote an ethos where each girl feels equally valued, regardless of her ethnic origin or social background.

We aim to achieve this by:

- ensuring that, where appropriate, subject schemes of work have relevance for pupils from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- recognising that achievements, ideas and aspirations from a wide range of cultures should be represented in teaching materials
- ensuring that expectations of pupils from all social and ethnic backgrounds should be equally high
- taking particular care that advice and guidance offered to students is free of bias and will not restrict future opportunities and choices
- identifying and counteracting any students' attitudes which might limit ambition or perception

In addition:

- all staff appointments and promotion procedures will be based solely on objective and job-related criteria to ensure equality of employment opportunities.

Equality of opportunity: Gender

Many of the issues which might normally arise in a school context eg: balancing the curricular experience of boys and girls, ensuring equality of expectations, addressing the needs of both sexes, do not apply in a single-sex learning environment.

However, the school recognises the need to counteract any possible stereotyping and to provide as wide a range of educational experiences as possible for the girls, in order to ensure the fullest development of the potential and talent of every pupil.

The school aims to encourage girls to take a balanced range of subjects and to ensure that subject choices are not distorted by a false sense of what is appropriate for girls.

Awareness of issues of gender and ethnicity

The Headmistress will ensure that all members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in respect of equal opportunities and discrimination on grounds of gender (including gender reassignment) and ethnicity.

Pupils will be made aware through the PSHE programme of the conduct expected of them and of the school's condemnation of discrimination based on gender and ethnic background.

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Physical ability / Physical Disabilities

The school aims to ensure that every child, regardless of their physical ability, has full curriculum access. When pupils have an injury which restricts their mobility every effort is made to re-room their lessons to the ground or first floor at the Senior School. The school is aware of the constraints of the stairs in both the Lower and Senior School. In the case of long term physical disability, the school will make reasonable adjustments to support the learning of the individual pupil.

The School will make reasonable adjustments to enable access to suitable working accommodation for adults who have physical disabilities.

Learning Disabilities and Abilities

The school aims to promote inclusion and access to the curriculum, whilst embracing diversity and caring for the needs of the individual.

The school does not discriminate against girls with disabilities or special educational needs in the education it provides, and takes all reasonable steps to ensure they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. For further information please refer to the SEN Policy.

The school has a policy for More Able and Talented pupils and every department is expected to provide activities and support to enable girls with particular abilities in their areas to learn and progress.

Religion and belief (including non-belief)

The school aims to ensure that every member of our community respects and values the religions and beliefs of others (including non-belief). All pupils receive instruction in different world religions during the course of their studies at school, and tolerance and understanding of a wide variety of recognised religions and religious philosophies is promoted and encouraged.

The school will make reasonable adjustments to enable staff and pupils to participate fully in times of religious observance, be suitably catered for at school, and to enable pupils to fully access the curriculum.

Age

The school is aware of its duty to its staff under the terms of the Equality Act (2010).

Useful websites:

The Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

The Equality Act 2010: what do I need to know?

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/equality-act-guidance/individual-rights1?view=Binary>