



Wetherby Senior School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Primary person responsible for this policy: J T Silvester

Job title: Headmaster

Last review date: July 2021 (DAL)

Next review date: June 2022

Relevant ISI coding (if applicable):

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy to be read in conjunction with:

- **Alpha Plus Recruitment Policies**
- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **PHSE Schemes of Work**
- **SENDA/SENDA Accessibility Plan**
- **Admissions Policy**
- **Complaints Policy**

1.1 **Wetherby Senior School** is an independent day School for boys aged 11-18 years. It welcomes staff, workers, boys, parents, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds.

1.2 **The School** recognises the benefits of having a diverse community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Boys will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all its members. The School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes unlawful discrimination on the basis of the following “protected characteristics”:

- gender;
- marital or civil partnership status;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- any gender reassignment;
- race;
- disability;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief);
- age.

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 aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform to the principle of equal opportunities and that the School complies with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, through the supportive School culture and through the School’s policies. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) education, including the promotion of the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs is embedded into the School’s culture and operations.

1.3 Related policies: This Equal Opportunities Policy is consistent with all of the School's policies, including the Admissions Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and SENDA Policy. This Policy and all School policies can be made available in larger print or more accessible format upon request.

2.0 Policy statement

2.1 Scope: This policy applies to all current and prospective members of the School community.

2.2 Policy aims: Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- communicate the commitment of the School to the promotion of equal opportunities;
- promote equal treatment within the School for all members;
- create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination;
- foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School;
- be alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties, and respond as appropriate;
- remove or help to overcome barriers for boys where they already exist;
- ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic listed at paragraph 1.2;
- make it clear that, and ensure, that all discriminatory words, behaviour and images are treated as unacceptable;
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments' duty).

3.0 Forms of discrimination

Discrimination may be direct (including discrimination based on perception and association) or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Discrimination can also arise from disability or a failure to make reasonable adjustments (for disabled people). Harassment and victimisation are also unlawful.

4.0 Admission

4.1 Applicants: The School accepts applications from, and admits all prospective boys irrespective of any 'protected characteristic' or special educational needs and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered, subject to section 8, below. The School will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way.

4.2 Selection: Every application will be considered on his merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the boy's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of excluding boys with any protected characteristic or special educational needs, subject to section 8 below.

4.3 Admissions Policy: The School's Admissions Policy reflects the School's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this Policy.

5.0 Education and associated services

5.1 Equal access: The School will afford all boys equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects, irrespective of any 'protected characteristic' or special educational needs, subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare.

5.2 Positive action: The School may afford boys, for example, of a particular racial group, or boys with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the boys in that group, for example, language training for groups whose first language is not English.

5.3 Exclusions: The School will not discriminate against any boy by excluding him from the School, or by subjecting him to any other detriment, on the grounds of any 'protected characteristic' subject to section 8 of this Policy.

5.4 Teaching and School materials: Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

5.5 Boy interaction: All boys are encouraged to work and socialise freely with, and have respect for, all other boys, irrespective of any 'protected characteristic', subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and boys will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

5.6 Bullying: The School will not tolerate bullying or cyber-bullying for any reason. Specific types of bullying include bullying relating to any 'protected characteristic' or bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or bullying related to appearance or health conditions. See the School's Anti-bullying Policy for more details.

6.0 Dress

6.1 All boys must follow the regulations on dress in the School Rules.

6.2 Symbols of faith: Boys are not discouraged from wearing genuine symbols of faith, providing these do not transgress Health and Safety requirements.

7.0 Religious Belief & Culture

7.1 Religion: The School's ethos is non-denominational and all are expected to respect the rights and freedoms of the School community as a whole and considerations of safety and welfare.

7.2 Prayer: we do not have a dedicated prayer room, however if boys need a quiet space in which to pray during the day then a suitable room will be provided whenever possible. A boy should speak to their Head of Section in the first instance, who will be able to check which room(s) are available.

8.0 Disability and special educational needs

8.1 Our approach: We are an inclusive School which welcomes members of the School community with disabilities and special educational needs. We will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone.

8.2 Definitions: Boys have 'special educational needs' if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a 'substantial' 'long-term', adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act 2010). Not all boys with a special educational need are disabled.

8.3 Reasonable adjustments: The School has an on-going duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled boys in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such boys are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with others. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of School life, for example: the curriculum, classroom organisation and timetabling, access to School facilities, activities and visits, sports. Reasonable adjustments may include:

- making arrangements for a prospective boy in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room;
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic boy to complete an exam;
- providing examination papers in larger print for a boy with a visual impairment

The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a boy's disability.

The School is not legally required to make physical alterations as part of the reasonable adjustments duty, such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, or a new library. However, the School has an Accessibility Plan in place which considers what reasonable and proportionate steps can be taken to alleviate any substantial disadvantage caused to disabled Boys by the School's physical environment.

8.4 Informing the School: In accordance with the School's terms and conditions, parents of boys must notify the Head in writing if they are aware or suspect that the boy (or prospective boy) has a disability or if they (either parent), the boy (or prospective boy), has a learning difficulty. Prospective parents must give details of any special circumstances relating to their child when completing the Registration Form /applying for a place at the School which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. The School requires this information so that the School can consider what reasonable adjustments, if any, can be made in order to accommodate the boy in the admissions process and should an offer of a place be made. Parents/agents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the School with such information will enable the School to make a fair assessment

and support the boy as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a 'need-to-know' basis.

8.5 Admission of boys with a disability: The School will consider what 'reasonable adjustments' (if any) can be made by the School in order to cater for a boy's disability should an offer of a place be made. The School will not offer a place if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School will not be able to cater adequately for the boy's needs. The School shall inform the parents of their decision and give reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

8.6 Existing boys: Where the School becomes aware of a disability of an existing boy, the School will do all that is reasonable to assist the boy whilst at the School, which may include considering what 'reasonable adjustments can be made to accommodate the boy'. Parents will be asked to withdraw the boy, without being charged fees in lieu of notice and with the acceptance deposit returned, if in the professional judgement of the Head, and after consultation with the parents and the boy (where appropriate), the School cannot provide adequately for the boy's needs after all reasonable adjustments have been considered. The School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

8.7 Access: Please see the School's Accessibility Plan. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises.

9.0 Boys with English as an additional language

9.1 Boys with English as an Additional Language (**EAL**) may receive additional learning support as appropriate. The School has appropriate welfare support for all such boys through its supportive culture.

10.0 Provision for boys with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs

10.1 The School will consider all requests from boys with religious, dietary, language or cultural needs and will make reasonable efforts to accommodate these requests where appropriate.

11.0 Responsibilities

11.1 All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with respect at all times.

11.2 Overall responsibility: The Governing body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Governors have delegated to the Head day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

11.3 Management: Those working at senior management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the School with regard to equal opportunities.

12.0 Monitoring and review

12.1 **Monitoring:** To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admission and selection, and to identify those sections of the local community which may be under-represented in the School, the School monitors applicants' gender, race, disability and religion or belief as part of the Admissions procedure.

12.2 **Review:** The Head is responsible for the on-going monitoring and reviewing whether the aims of this Policy are carried out throughout all areas of the School and taking appropriate action where necessary. This policy is reviewed annually by the Head. Recommendations for any amendments should be made to the Head.

13.0 Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination

13.1 **Questions about this policy:** If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Head.

13.2 **Complaints:** Boys who feel they are being discriminated against should talk to a member of staff who will consider their concern or complaint. Alternatively, if parents feel that this policy has been breached or they have any concerns they should raise their concern or complaint through the School's formal Complaints Procedure. A copy of the Complaints Policy is available on the School website. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

13.3 **Enforcement:** We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

13.4 **Record:** All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Head.

14.0 Publication

14.1 This policy will be available on request from School.