



OUR LADY'S

Our Lady's Preparatory School and Day Nursery

Equal Opportunities Policy 2.2

Background to the Policy

At Our Lady's School and Nursery, we aim to ensure that every pupil and member of staff is given an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential, and to take full advantage of the School's facilities and activities. We also believe that each individual is entitled to learn, teach or work in a supportive environment, free from prejudice or discrimination of any form.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's policies on Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) and its Accessibility Plan, Anti-bullying and Admissions.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates and replaces the previous discrimination legislation for England, Scotland and Wales.

Before the Act came into force, there were several pieces of legislation to cover discrimination, including:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Equality Act 2010 covers discrimination because of gender, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, linguistic or cultural background, gender reassignment, SEN, disability and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as 'protected characteristics'. Our Lady's Preparatory School's Policy on Equal Opportunities is aligned with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 applies for anyone wishing to make a complaint in respect of alleged unlawful treatment that occurred after 1 October 2010. In the event that such alleged unlawful treatment occurred prior to 1 October 2010, then such a complaint would need to be made under the preceding legislation.

From September 2012, it is a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services “where a disabled person would, but for the provision of the auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled”.

Our Lady’s will take all reasonable steps and make reasonable adjustments, bearing in mind the constraints of the building, in order to provide such aids.

<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Aims and Objectives

The aims & objectives of this policy are for Our Lady’s Preparatory School and Nursery:

- To be free from discrimination and stereotyping
- To promote the self-esteem, and to develop the social and emotional growth, of each child throughout the School and Nursery and, in particular, through the School's pastoral system and the Personal, Social Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum.
- To provide both boys and girls with full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, together with extra-curricular opportunities, according to their individual needs and requirements
- To recognise and celebrate the cultural and ethnic diversity of children, parents, staff and visitors, welcoming the enrichment of the environment which this brings, and to foster positive attitudes towards our multi-cultural society.
- To promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues, e.g. through the provision of resources, such as posters, books, materials and equipment, that are multicultural and non-sexist
- To provide opportunities within the life of the Nursery / School and to increase religious awareness and understanding, and to forge links with the wider community
- To create, through example and education, an environment of mutual respect and tolerance, and help children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful, unacceptable and that the school has a zero tolerance with regard to such behaviour.
- To ensure that no pupil or pupils are ever discriminated against by teaching in the school (including disabled pupils, please refer to the SEND Policy).

Responsibilities

The Headmaster and Senior Management Team are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the School, Nursery and in the Curriculum.

All staff members are responsible for following this Policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment or discrimination to an appropriate member of the Senior Management Team. Staff members are also encouraged to challenge any cultural bias or stereotyping that may arise during the course of their work.

Policy Details

Admissions:

Both School and Nursery welcome applications from potential pupils with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. Please see the Admissions Policy for further details.

Access to Educational Opportunities:

All staff understand the importance of providing a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development, and undertake to make reasonable adjustments to enable all to participate in this programme, including children with special educational needs or learning difficulties or disabilities. Please see the SEND Policy for further information regarding the support that can be provided. The named SENCO for the School is Melanie Boyer, the Nursery is Natalie John - both report to the Headmaster.

Physical Environment:

The School and Nursery will make every effort to ensure that no child, parent or staff member is disadvantaged by the School environment due to a disability, although it needs to be recognised that the physical layout of some of the building may restrict the movement of individuals with particular mobility difficulties. (See Special Needs Policy & Accessibility Plan).

Pupil displays around the School will reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity. Promoting and valuing diversity and differences: We endeavour to make Our Lady's Preparatory School and Nursery a welcoming place for all, and appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources are chosen to give the children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the diversity of our multi-racial society. As far as possible, resources will show a variety of role models, e.g. disabled people carrying out similar jobs to able bodied people, mothers and fathers carrying out parenting roles, old and young helping out in the community, etc. We celebrate a range of festivals and positively reflect on a range of communities through our choice of activities. We also invite volunteers, local speakers or personalities, who reflect the diversity of the local community, to visit the School.

We recognise the different learning styles of children, particularly between girls and boys, and make appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the best opportunity to develop their skills and abilities.

Discriminatory Behaviour: Discriminatory remarks made by children, parents or staff members are unacceptable and action will always be taken. It is, however, recognised that in our youngest children, the comments can be harmless and due to a lack of understanding. We help children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable through PSHE, R.E., assemblies, pastoral work and generally in all aspects of school life and in the curriculum.

Equal Opportunity Principles for Current or Prospective Employees: Our Lady's Preparatory School is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who provide services for us will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against for having any 'protected characteristic' (under the Equality Act 2010).

Decisions about recruitment and selection, promotion, training or any other benefit will be made objectively and without unlawful discrimination. Please refer to the Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy, the Accessibility Plan and the Mentor Handbook stored in the School office.

The School recognises that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice but that it also represents sound business sense. Our equal opportunities policy will help all those who work for us to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the School's employees will be utilised fully to maximise the educational opportunities offered to the children.

All staff are aware that Corporal Punishment is not allowed at Our Lady's ***under any circumstances***, with this ban applying to all members of staff without exception. Teachers/Staff are permitted to use 'physical intervention' to avert an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger to the property of, a person (including the child). This is addressed in detail in the Behaviour Policy.

Our Lady's Preparatory School and Nursery, as an employer, is committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all its members of staff.
- Promoting a good and harmonious working environment in which everyone is treated with respect.
- Preventing occurrences of unlawful direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Fulfilling all its legal obligations under the equality legislation and associated codes of practice.
- Taking lawful affirmative or positive action, where appropriate and necessary.
- Regarding all breaches of equal opportunities policy by employees as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Policy Implementation

The School will ensure the implementation of this policy through:

- Monitoring and Self Evaluation: Monitoring the effectiveness and impact of the Equal Opportunities Policy is ultimately the responsibility of the Headmaster and Senior Management, but every member of staff is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the policy in terms of promoting good practice.
- Training: Our Lady's employees will receive guidance on the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and disabilities, where appropriate. Equality training and guidance may also be provided for staff as appropriate, including training and awareness of this Policy within the School's induction programme.
- Communication: This Policy will be communicated to all staff members, and made available for current and prospective parents via the School website, with a hard copy available for viewing on request.

Monitoring & review

The School will review this Policy every two years and any guidance or advice published by the DfE, ISI and/or other relevant bodies will be monitored on an ongoing basis, in the event that ad-hoc amendments or revisions are appropriate outside of this timeframe.

Reviewed: 23 August 2022

Signed:

Michael Stone

M A Stone, Headmaster

To be reviewed: 24 months from "Reviewed" date