



St Mary's School  
CAMBRIDGE

# Equality Policy

*This policy is the responsibility of the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding).*

*Review: The Governance Committee of the Governing Body has overall responsibility for effective operation of this Equality Policy and compliance with the relevant statutory framework for prohibiting unlawful discrimination.*

*Date of review: March 2021*

*Date of next review: March 2022*

---

## Ethos

The values of Mary Ward encourage and celebrate diversity and therefore St Mary's School, Cambridge (the School) welcomes its legal obligations with respect to equal treatment of all pupils. The principles of equal treatment guide the School's expectations of pupils during their time at school. The School adopts equal treatment principles in its provision of access to facilities, services, opportunities, and its responsibilities as an education provider and as an employer.

This Policy is in accordance with and should be read in conjunction with:

*Accessibility Plan – Junior School*

*Accessibility Plan – Senior School and Boarding*

*Admissions Policy*

*Behaviour Management Policy*

*Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy*

*SEND Policy*

*EAL Policy*

*Anti-bullying Policy*

The School endeavours to ensure that all policies and practices conform to the principles of, and legislation associated with equal opportunities.

## What equal treatment means at St Mary's School, Cambridge

Our School celebrates its diverse community, welcomes the contributions of all members of our School community and is committed to being an equal opportunities provider of education and a promoter of equal treatment for all members of our School community which is made up of children, parents, legal guardians, teachers and other types of staff/employees, volunteers and governors from different races, nationalities, and backgrounds.

All members of the School community are expected to comply with this Policy. All parents/guardians are expected to support the aims of this Policy and the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

In the provision of equal opportunities for pupils, the School opposes any discrimination (Appendix 1), harassment (Appendix 2) or victimisation (Appendix 3) of any pupil based on any of the Protected Characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) as set out below:

- gender (in the context that we are a single sex school)
- pregnancy and maternity
- gender reassignment
- race
- disability
- religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- sexual orientation
- marital or civil partnership status (adult members of the community)
- age

The School opposes any discrimination or bullying based on special educational need or disability (SEND) or learning difficulty or because English is an additional language.

The School also opposes sexual harassment (Appendix 4) of pupils by staff or other pupils.

The School will challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices whenever they may arise through the PSHEE programme, and assemblies and pupils will be encouraged to value and respect all those they encounter at or through School. The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in any form is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

## Reasonable adjustments to ensure equal treatment (including access)

The School strives to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities and those with special needs in respect of education and associated services so that they can be involved in all aspects of school life and will give due regard to requests for reasonable adjustments made either by pupils and/or their parent/guardian.

At present the School's facilities physical and otherwise, for those with disabilities and those with special educational needs are limited but all that is reasonable will be done to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures, and premises are made accessible for everyone.

The School keeps its premises under review to consider whether pupils with disabilities and other users are placed at a substantial disadvantage. The School has an Accessibility Plan which is reviewed and revised, as

necessary. This 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 pupils with disabilities can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to pupils with disabilities of information which is readily accessible to pupils without disabilities.

## Equal treatment in respect of admissions to the School

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this Policy and School's *Admissions Policy*. Although 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 welcomes applications from all backgrounds and from those who have a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. All candidates will be treated equally, and every application will be processed and considered fairly, and the School will not discriminate on those grounds on the terms on which a place is offered. Candidates are required to satisfy the requirements for entry current at the time of their admission irrespective of gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational needs, or native language.

The School will make reasonable adjustments to its procedures to accommodate disabilities of which it has been made aware. 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 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.

Further details of the School's admission arrangements can be found in the *Admissions Policy*.

## Equal treatment in respect of education and benefits, services, and facilities

The School will provide all pupils with equal access to the wider curriculum, including sports, extra-curricular activities, homework clubs, trips/visits, and work experience placements, as well as facilities, including the Learning Resource Centre, irrespective of gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational needs, or native language subject to considerations of reasonable adjustments and of safety and welfare.

Equal treatment might include positive action; that is provision of additional education, training, or resources to a particular group to meet the special needs of those pupils, for example EAL pupils.

Efforts are made to promote equality across all lessons and equality, tolerance, and respect for each other is addressed specifically in PSHEE lessons. Materials used in teaching and learning are also selected carefully to promote equality where possible and checked for stereotype and/or bias (including unconscious bias) and staff are encouraged to avoid teaching methods which may inadvertently disadvantage a particular group. The School promotes positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

Pupils are encouraged to celebrate diversity and have respect for others irrespective of gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational

needs, or native language in conjunction with Mary Ward values. Pupils are encouraged to play and to work outside their friendship groups and are encouraged to challenge stereotypes of any kind, including those based on Protected Characteristics.

The School ensures equal access to public examinations to all pupils irrespective of gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/ maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational needs, or native language which means that positive action may be used to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are not indirectly discriminated against. This also applies to assessment outside of public examinations to avoid indirect discrimination in respect of particular groups.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. The School does not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying of any kind relating to gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational need, native language, physical appearance or health issue, or home related circumstance, including young caring. Please see the School's *Anti-bullying Policy* for further information.

## Equal treatment regarding school uniform and dress code

The *Uniform Policy* applies equally to all pupils irrespective of gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational needs, or native language. However, the School will consider requests from parents and pupils to alter school uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and /or religious/cultural grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on Health and Safety, and it is reasonable in all circumstances including considering the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

## Equal treatment regarding behaviour management and exclusion

The School does not treat pupils with a Protected Characteristic or special educational need less favourably in respect of management of behaviour and accepts that positive action or reasonable adjustment may be necessary to include pupils with specific learning difficulties where challenging behaviour may result as a direct consequence of that difficulty.

The School does not exclude pupils based on gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, religion/beliefs, special educational needs, or native language.

## Equal provision for students with religious, dietary, language or cultural needs

The School is a Christian school in the Catholic tradition with a Mary Ward ethos but 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.

The School seeks to provide for all reasonable dietary requirements whether for allergy, intolerance, mental health, religious or cultural reasons.

The School endeavours to use language clearly and succinctly and to make reasonable adjustments to ensure access to materials for pupils and parents/guardians who have English as an additional language.

## Breach of this Policy

Pupils who are in breach of this Policy may be sanctioned in accordance with *the Behaviour Management Policy* and/or *Discipline, Exclusions and Required Removal Policy*.

All complaints are taken seriously. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of staff who is found to have acted in contravention of this Policy.

---

# Appendix

## 1. Discrimination

### 1.1 Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when a pupil is treated less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.

Direct discrimination also occurs when a pupil is treated less favourably because of their association (other than maternity or pregnancy) with another person who has a protected characteristic. Association might be a friend, parent, sibling, child, or carer.

Direct discrimination also occurs if discrimination takes place because a person perceives someone else (even mistakenly) to have a Protected Characteristic.

It is discrimination to treat a pupil of any age less favourably because she is or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby or child (even if that child is more than 26 weeks old).

### 1.2 Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs where a person is subject to a general provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a Protected Characteristic. Disadvantage means that a reasonable person would conclude that disadvantage had occurred.

### 1.3 Discrimination arising from disability.

Discrimination from disability occurs when a person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability. Discrimination arising from disability is different to direct discrimination which occurs when a person is differently treated because of a Protected Characteristic. For discrimination arising from disability the question is a wider one of whether the disabled person has been treated unfavourably because of something connected to or arising because of their disability.

## 2. Harassment

Harassment occurs when unwanted (meaning unwanted or uninvited) behaviour relevant to a Protected Characteristic has the purpose or effect of violating a pupil's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the pupil.

## 3. Victimisation

Victimisation is treating someone badly because they have done, or someone believes they are planning to do a 'protected act'. A protected act is making a claim or complaint of unlawful discrimination or helping someone else to do so by giving evidence or information.

## 4. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment occurs when a person engages in unwanted behaviour which is of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a pupil's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the pupil. It is also unlawful to treat a pupil less favourably because they either submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to their sex as a protected characteristic.