



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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Next review:	August 2024
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Approved by:	Governing Body

This Policy has been drawn up with reference to the Equality Act 2010, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Slindon College. We are committed to applying equal treatment for all pupils, staff and other members of our community, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or protected characteristics. It is the College's policy to ensure that all pupils and staff enjoy the opportunities available to them without discrimination. For pupils, this will mean they can be safe in the knowledge that they are all equally valued and supported to progress to their full potential. For staff, this will likely mean they feel respected for the work they undertake and have available to them equal opportunities to excel in the important roles they undertake at the College. We expect all members of the College community to comply with this policy and we expect parents/carers to support the aims of this policy.

The college aims to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics - age, disability, gender reassignment, dietary requirements, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity;
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the College community;
- Comply with the College's equality duties contained in the Equality Act updated 2010.

### **Admission**

The College operates under the exception for single-sex establishments as agreed in Equality Act 2010, part 1 (862). It treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the College's Admissions Policy. We accept applications from prospective pupils irrespective of their disability, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief), gender reassignment, sexual orientation or special educational needs (SEN).

Parents must inform the College 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 College. The College will not offer a place to a pupil if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the College cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

Bursaries are means-tested awards offered to those who meet the College's admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the College due to financial hardship. Details of our provision for bursaries can be obtained from the bursar's office.

## **Education**

The College affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The College will not discriminate against a pupil or staff on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Slindon College will aim to:

- Treat all members of the College community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination;
- Endeavour to meet the needs of our pupils and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics;
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support with regards to their specific needs;
- Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds;
- Challenge and act on inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and language by pupils, staff or any member of the College community;
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of enrichment activities;
- Work with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination;
- Endeavour to seek and provide teaching resources that reflect our ethos and avoid stereotypes.
- Seek to use the diversity of its pupils, their parents and the communities from which they come, as important resources.
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices;
- Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:
  - Promote tolerance of, and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
  - Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

We recognise that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate, harass or victimise someone because they have or are perceived to have a “protected characteristic” or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. This means treating someone less favourably than someone else because of a protected characteristic. Harassment and bullying in all its forms is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Behaviour Management and Anti-bullying policies.

### English as an Additional Language

- The College encourages pupils and staff to take pride in their first language.
- We provide support for pupils whose first language is not English.
- Dialects are an important part of cultural and racial heritage and therefore are never ridiculed or seen as inferior.
- Negative and abusive language is not tolerated.
- Language used at the college does not reinforce prejudicial stereotypes.

### Boarding provision

- The school ensures that boarders are not discriminated against, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 or of their cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic or sporting ability.
- The care of boarders is sensitive to individual needs.

### Religious belief

Although the College's religious ethos is broadly based on Christian values and tradition, the College 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 College community.

Religious education promotes an understanding of and respect for world faiths. There is sensitivity to religions and cultural customs in all areas of College life, including diet and uniform.

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 variation in the College uniform

All pupils are required to wear a uniform until Year 11, and a smart dress code operates for Years 12 and 13. The Headteacher will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment, SEN and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the College's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the College's obligations under the Equality Act updated 2010.

### Reasonable adjustments for pupils and staff with a disability

The College has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils.

Where the College is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents/carers and if necessary, local authorities, regarding what reasonable adjustments, if any, the College is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. The College will carefully

consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability, the resources available to the College and the College buildings protected listing.

The College has an Access Plan in place which can be found on the College website and a hard copy is available upon request. This sets out our plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils and staff can participate in the College's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the College for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils and staff are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the College; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Slindon College is an equal opportunities employer and as such all prospective and present employees are given the same opportunities in terms of employment conditions, career prospects and pay. It is however recognised that within the school setting there are certain jobs where the gender of the applicant would be an appropriate consideration, e.g. supervision of changing rooms etc.

### **Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination.**

If you have any questions about the content or application of this Policy, you should contact the Headteacher or another member of the SLT. If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter first through the Headteacher or another member of the SLT; or if necessary, through the School's Formal Grievance Procedure. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this Policy will be treated in confidence and investigated accordingly.

### **Breach of this policy**

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the College's Behaviour Policy. Any breach of this policy by staff will be against the College's staff code of conduct.