



DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) POLICY (EQUAL OPPS PUPILS)

Date of issue: October 2022	Version no: 1
Approved by: SLT	Review date: August 2024

PURPOSE

This policy applies to all staff, Council members, pupils, parents, visitors and volunteers.

Through the operation of this policy, and other school policies, we want to make our school community one where every individual feels valued and included. This policy sets out the means by which we commit to:

- Actively communicate the school's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities and inclusion.
- Foster self-esteem and respect for each person as an individual and create a positive and inclusive atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to respect and celebrate diversity and difference, challenge and prevent discrimination and encourage positive relations between people so that everyone can feel valued within the school;
- Prepare pupils to be good citizens, living and working in a diverse society and to take up the responsibility of participation, and to treat all others as we would wish to be treated. The PSHE and Enrichment programmes, and the existence of democratic institutions within school such as the School Council, will play key roles in achieving this objective;
- Prevent and tackle the use of discriminatory or derogatory language and challenge extremist ideas as part of the school's duty to protect individuals from being radicalised or drawn into terrorism;
- Take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled individuals at a disadvantage (see the school's Disability Policy) and positively promote inclusion.
- Ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any person on any of the grounds listed above; and
- Ensure that genuine equality of opportunity is inherent in the education the school offers and that structural factors or unconscious biases that might place barriers in the way of taking up those opportunities are pro-actively thought about and combatted

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Whole school

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Person responsible:	Head
Council member or Committee:	N/A
Reviewed by and frequency:	SLT – Biannually
Date of last review:	October 2022
Policy approved by SLT on:	1 November 2022
Date of next review:	August 2024

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- St. George's Edinburgh Accessibility Strategy
- St. George's Edinburgh Admissions Policies
- St. George's Edinburgh Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Policy (Equal Opps staff)

LEGAL REFERENCES:

This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and 'Technical Guidance for Schools in Scotland for the Equality Act (2010) regarding discrimination,' published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2014; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Respect for All, The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People; Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools August 2021.

OBJECTIVES:

The Chaucerian motto 'Trouthe, Honour, Freedom and Courtesy' informs St George's School's values and ethos:

Trouthe – truth and integrity are fundamental to the school's ethos, each girl being true to herself and others.

Honour – each member of the community is respectful towards one another and behaves with honour within and beyond school.

Freedom – freedom for girls to be themselves, and the flexibility of a curriculum which allows each individual to aim high.

Courtesy – natural courtesy to one another, demonstrating tolerance and willingness to reach out to others.

St George's School prides itself on maintaining these values and ethos, with a commitment to ensuring that pupils and staff work in a community that respects and values difference and diversity. Discrimination, bullying and harassment are not tolerated and when required are addressed under the appropriate policy.

We recognise the following principles, which stem from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- All young people have the right to an education and to participate in the broader life of their school
- All young people should be protected from discrimination, harm and abuse
- All young people should be involved in all decisions affecting them, understand any action which is taken and why; and be at the centre of any decision making
- All young people have the right to an identity and for this to be respected
- All young people have the right to privacy.

The school is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of age, gender, individual race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability or additional support need.

Celebrating individuality and inclusion is at the heart of a St. George's education. Every member of the community has a role to play, and our inclusive culture is the result of all of our behaviours, personal commitment, collaboration and courage in sharing perspectives and listening to those of others. This policy sets out some of the structures and minimum standards that support this approach but alone, cannot convey the myriad of ways in which this inclusive culture is created.

POLICY:

1. Ethos

St George's was founded on the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity. This spirit is palpable and is evident in numerous ways. Examples of this in action at St. George's Edinburgh are:

- Actively celebrating the diversity in the school and local community and encouraging pupils to feel proud of their culture and identity and able to participate fully in school life through awareness weeks; celebrations of festivals; awareness of the diversity calendar in our planning.
- Using opportunities such as school assemblies, charitable and outreach activities and PSHE to enhance an understanding of our multicultural and pluralistic society, challenge conscious and unconscious prejudice and question stereotyping
- Providing assemblies which bring together the whole community to reflect on moral, spiritual and ethical issues, and promote a reality which transcends the purely material. This is generally achieved within a broadly Christian framework and also celebrates a range of festivals and dates important to the whole school community

- Considering the importance of positive and visible role models for all pupils, with consideration to protected characteristics, in the design of displays, external speaker programmes, staff recruitment, student leadership roles and trips programmes.
- Ensuring all groups in the school are listened to, through our exemplary commitment to pupil voice and other communication channels such as: school councils; pupil voice groups; the Big Four and pupil surveys
- Encouraging engagement with community and national groups representing a broad spectrum of society, and in particular role models who are non-traditional for their sex, ethnicity or disability
- Ensure all policies, procedures and school plans take equal opportunities and diversity, inclusion and equity into account
- Specifically, pro-actively ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made to reflect the requirements of different religious faiths about acceptable variations to school uniform, catering arrangements and authorised absence for religious festivals falling during term time. These include reasonable arrangements to allow for specific acts of religious observance in school.

A Senior, Lower and Junior Leadership Team culture of open-mindedness that welcomes debate and discussion of new approaches from all members of the community, as opposed to closed-mindedness and a focus on how 'things have always been done'.

2. Admissions

- The school welcomes applications from girls with a diverse range of backgrounds, enriching the school environment and preparing each individual for today's world. Through provision of a safe and caring environment we want each girl to feel valued, happy and enthusiastic about school, while equipping her with a range of academic and life skills that are needed to become 'women of independent mind.'
- Applications are welcomed from girls with additional support needs where provision and reasonable adjustments can be adequately made, with reference to the school's admission criteria, the Support for Learning Policy and, when relevant, provision of English as a second language.
- We will ask for diversity data on receiving applications, and regularly review this within the Admissions team, in order to see if there are any significant patterns relating to particular groups which indicate trends of advantage or disadvantage at any stage throughout the admissions process.
- We will regularly review our entrance assessments to minimise disadvantage through assumption of specific cultural capital or knowledge.
- We will survey families who have not accepted places at the school in order to understand their reasons for not doing so and accept any feedback with an open mind.
- Bursary provision is offered with the purpose of making it practicable for as many girls as possible who meet the admission criteria to attend the school. Details of bursary provision are outlined on the school's website or can be obtained from Admissions, and we commit to making our guidance as jargon-free and accessible as possible.

3. Learning and Teaching

The education we provide in our classrooms (above P3) is specifically tailored to the way girls learn, and we are committed to ensuring that our pupils are not held back academically, socially or professionally by a limitation of their horizons or sexual stereotypes. The school has a history of challenging gendered norms: for example, currently the number of our pupils' taking degrees in STEM subjects well above the national average, and over 50% of our pupils take at least one science at Higher or Advanced Higher.

More generally we have high expectations of all our pupils, offering them a broad and balanced curriculum and supporting them by taking into account their varied individual experiences and needs.

- We use contextual data to improve the way in which support is provided to individuals and groups of pupils
- We are beginning to collect and monitor achievement and participation data by ethnicity and disability and this information is used to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching

- We make no assumptions about attainment levels for our pupils and promote a growth mindset approach for all. For this reason, target grades projected by MidYIS, YELLIS or ALIS are not shared with parents and pupils, in case they limit ambition.
- Gender or other stereotypes play no part in subject or career choice, and pupils are encouraged to challenge restrictive norms; we celebrate the diversity of the post-school career choices of our alumnae regularly on the website, at events and through options guidance and the extensive careers programme.
- All forms of individual and subject support, guidance, amenities and facilities, including co-curricular activities, will be equally available to all pupils, with particular attention given to equality of opportunity across the protected characteristics
- The taught curriculum will be reviewed regularly for opportunities to celebrate different cultures and cover equal opportunities issues in a meaningful, non-tokenistic way
- Resources used reflect the diversity of the school and local community, challenge stereotyping and give pupils access to a wide range of thought and ideas
- We put a premium on independence and critical thinking. Our pupils are taught to question received ideas, recognise bias and understand the ways in which language can be used to stereotype and undermine confidence
- PSHE programmes cover many areas relevant to equal opportunities, including notions of identity and self-esteem, and fundamental British values such as individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils are also taught how to recognise discrimination and how to respond
- Sex and relationships education is inclusive of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, and pupils' questions are answered as they arise, honestly, factually and with an understanding of different types of family model, relationships and sexual orientations. There is no presumption in any part of the curriculum, that there is a 'typical' family or relationship model.
- Religious Studies is accessible to all pupils and will cover different faiths and beliefs without prioritising one over another. However, pupils may be excused from all or part of the programme at the written request of parents. In such circumstances the school will provide a meaningful alternative.
- Teaching approaches are inclusive and reflective of our pupils
- We seek to involve all families in supporting their child's education

4. Promoting understanding of inclusion

In assemblies, PSE lessons, academic lessons, co-curricular activities, and staff professional development, the school aims to promote inclusion, positive diverse images and role models; foster open-mindedness and recognise contributions from different cultures; aid understanding about why and how offensive language and behaviour are dealt with, and how response to incidents is prompt and dealt with in a sensitive manner.

The implementation of a successful DEI Policy needs support from parents and guardians, who accept the school's values and ethos. The Senior Leadership of the school therefore commits itself to regularly inform and have dialogue with families over the school's approach to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion at St. George's both individually and more generally through information events, Head's letters and the transparency of school policies and procedures.

The implementation of a successful DEI Policy is also dependent upon providing support, training and a safe environment in which all staff can ask questions without fear of judgement, as many issues that arise can be emotive and people can be fearful of 'getting things wrong'. The Senior Leadership of the school therefore commits itself to provide this support and foster an open-minded and supportive environment, seeking to role-model the behaviours and attitudes that this policy articulates.

5. Dealing with discrimination, harassment and bullying

Everyone in the school deserves to feel valued and included and the school is committed to equality of opportunity for all. This policy is primarily concerned with equal opportunities for pupils and prospective pupils. There is a separate Equal Opportunities Policy for Staff in the school's Staff Handbook.

The school opposes discrimination against pupils or potential pupils on the basis of:

- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity

These are known as “protected characteristics”. Other protected characteristics include age and marriage or civil partnership status, but these do not directly apply to pupils. The school also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that an individual:

- has a special educational need or learning difficulty
- is perceived to have a protected characteristic
- or associates with someone who has a protected characteristic

Discrimination, harassment and bullying are unacceptable in all forms by any member of the school community. Discrimination and harassment may occur deliberately or by accident. Direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment are defined as:

- Direct Discrimination – treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic; their association with someone who has a protected characteristic e.g., a parent with a disabled child; or the perception that someone has a protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination – applying a criteria, provision or practice which cannot be objectively justified and places a person or group of people at a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic.
- Harassment – when unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic causes a distressing or humiliating or offensive environment for that person.
- Victimisation – treating a member of the community unfairly who has made or supported a complaint about discrimination.

Pupils: The Anti-Bullying and un-kindness policy, Behaviour Policy and ICT code of conduct outline appropriate conduct for students, and school procedures when a concern is raised.

Trends in behaviour incidents are reviewed on a termly basis at the Council Safeguarding Committee. Here any incidents that are racist or discriminatory in another way, will be highlighted so that trends and appropriate and effectiveness of the school’s response can be discussed and learnt from for future practice.

Behavioural expectations and disciplinary sanctions (including exclusion) will be free of any bias in relation to the protected characteristics.

Where a pupil with a disability is facing a disciplinary sanction, schools will consider whether or not the disability affects their behaviour, and reasonable adjustments will be made to take account of the possible effect of this, alongside the impact of the pupil’s behaviour on the school community.

Pupils will not be excluded on the basis of a protected characteristic or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristics or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Staff: The Staff Code of Conduct, ICT Staff Policy, and compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and employment legislation ensure the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity are applied. Staff must apply these principles in the way they treat colleagues, visitors, students and parents, ensuring respect is demonstrated to all.

6. Roles and Responsibilities:

Staff:

- All staff recognise the possibility of their own prejudices but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child

- All staff ensure that the language they use does not deliberately or inadvertently reinforce stereotypes or prejudice
- All staff are expected to challenge any incidents of bullying, discrimination, victimisation or harassment that they witness. Incidents are recorded on ISAMs and records are reviewed for patterns
- Teachers will plan lessons and schemes of work in accordance with the principles of this policy

Head (supported by SLT):

It is the Head's responsibility to ensure that the policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively at school level and that staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. This will include:

- Ensuring that equal opportunities are considered in planning and decision making relating to school self-evaluation and development planning, curriculum review, policy development etc.
- Overseeing the monitoring of admissions and attainment data, and records of behavioural and bullying issues, and ensuring action is taken to address any patterns of concern
- Using other sources of information (e.g., records of attendance at co-curricular activities, pupil and parent questionnaires, complaints) to assess equality of access to education and other services across the school, taking action if necessary to address inequalities
- Overseeing the monitoring of applications, admissions and attainment data, the award of bursaries and scholarships, and exclusions, in order to identify any possible bias
- Ensuring that any incident of bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination is dealt with in a way that communicates a clear message that prejudice, and intolerance are unacceptable at the school.