



WALTHAMSTOW HALL
SEVENOAKS

EQUALITY POLICY **Including Early Years Foundation Stage**

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the Equality Act 2010.

The Act covers all aspects of School life to do with how the School treats pupils and prospective pupils, parents and carers, employees, and members of the community. Everything we do must be fair, non-discriminatory and not put individuals or groups of people at a disadvantage. In particular, we will not discriminate, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to:

- Admissions.
- The way it provides education for pupils.
- How it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service.
- Excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

WHAT ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOURS ARE UNLAWFUL?

The Act defines a number of types of unlawful behaviour, including:

- Direct discrimination.
- Indirect discrimination.
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or staff.
- Discrimination arising from disability.
- Harassment related to a protected characteristic.
- Victimisation of someone because they have made, or helped with, a complaint about discrimination.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Act uses the term “protected characteristics” to refer to aspects of a person’s identity. Treating a person less favourably because they have one or more of these characteristics would be unlawful. The protected characteristics are:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Gender reassignment.
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.

- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.

The protected characteristics of age and marriage and civil partnership apply to schools as employers, but not in relation to their provision for pupils.

RATIONALE

- Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Walthamstow Hall. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.
- We are fully committed to equality and to enabling all staff and pupils, including prospective pupils, to develop their potential to the full, regardless of an individual's race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.
- We also welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities, and refer parents to our Disability Policy.
- Generous bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School. Details of our provision for bursaries can be found in the Bursary and Awards (Scholarships and Exhibitions) Policy on our website.
- The School recognises that direct or indirect discrimination might take place and therefore sees the need for a positive and effective Equality Policy.

AIMS

- To develop an understanding of, and the promotion of human equality and equal opportunities.
- To promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities.
- To provide equal access to the curriculum.
- To ensure that each student makes progress commensurate with their developing abilities.
- To promote an environment that challenges gender and social stereotypes and encourages every pupil to make full use of their talents and abilities.
- To acknowledge and welcome the multi-racial character of society and the nature of cultural diversity.
- To combat racism and other forms of discrimination at every level of the School community relating to both students and staff.
- To ensure that pupils are resilient to terrorist and extremist influence.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Headmistress, Senior Management and all staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the School's policy on Equality. For example, use is made of assemblies, PSHEE, RSE, RE, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of others and respect for others within the community.
- Promote positive role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
- Foster an open-minded approach by, for example, encouraging pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures and traditions.

- Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour.
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies contain clear procedures for dealing with discrimination and unacceptable behaviour. All our staff receive relevant training to support our policies. Teaching and medical staff attend regular INSET sessions.

The Governing Body will monitor and review the working of the policy and procedures regularly.

The Headmistress takes responsibility for the Equality Policy and for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the Policy is known and understood by staff, students and parents.

Any incidents will be reported to the Governing Body.

The Director of Studies is responsible for monitoring equal opportunities in the curriculum.

All staff are responsible for following the Equality Policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the appropriate member of staff.

STAFF

Appointments

- The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010 and welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership or age.
- People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment.
- Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only, i.e. skills, qualifications and experience in selection for recruitment.

Staff Development

- All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.
- All recruits to the School will be provided with induction training which will include a reference to the School's Equality Policy.
- Staff development opportunities will be monitored and the Governors will be informed regularly. All staff, and in particular those concerned with selection and promotion, are given INSET on equality awareness.
- People becoming disabled while in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs in so far as it is reasonable to do so.

PUPILS

- Pupils have equal access to the curriculum programmes of study throughout the Early Years Foundations Stage, each Key Stage, and non-compulsory courses, according to aptitude and ability.
- The School is committed to full educational inclusion (see Special Educational Needs policy).
- All subjects have equality of opportunity at their core.
- School Rules and the School Code clearly and explicitly forbid the verbalisation or vocalisation of discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religion, gender, sexuality and ability/disability.
- Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity is specifically taught through the PSHEE programme.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

- In order to cope with the high academic and social demands of Walthamstow Hall, pupils need to be fluent English speakers. Normally pupils should have been educated in the English medium for at least 3 years before coming to the School. If your daughter has English as an additional language, we will assess their need for support and liaise with you to provide the appropriate level of support. Tuition for English as an Additional language (EAL) can be arranged at the parent's expense.

REQUESTS FOR VARIATION IN THE SCHOOL UNIFORM

- Walthamstow Hall has Christian roots; we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief and we welcome pupils of all faiths and none. However, parents should be aware that all pupils at Walthamstow Hall are required to wear a uniform until they enter Year 12, and that a strict 'business dress' code operates for Years 12 and 13. The Headmistress will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on health and safety. The Headmistress may take expert advice, and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

RACIST OR HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING

- All staff have a legal duty not to bully or otherwise harass other staff and will not promote any extreme views either verbally or through printed or electronic means.
- Where staff come across incidents involving racist or homophobic bullying of staff or pupils, they must report these to the appropriate senior member of staff. All such incidents will be taken seriously, and appropriate bodies informed if deemed necessary.
- The Governing Body (or an appropriate committee) will be made aware of any incidents of racist, extremist or homophobic bullying through the complaints/grievance procedure.

ADMINISTRATION

- Venues for meetings will take account of the needs of all participants.

LANGUAGE

- Language used in documents will reflect and promote equal opportunities and inclusive language will be used wherever appropriate.

REPORTS TO THE POLICE

- Incidents that involve racist elements which need to be reported to the police will be done via the School's Police Liaison Officer.
- Incidents promoting terrorism or extremist views will be referred to the Channel Programme.
- If an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a pupil under the age of 18 a report will be made to the police.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about our operation of our Equality policy; but copies of the School's Complaints and Concerns Procedure can be sent to you on request and is available on the School's website.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Walthamstow Hall monitors its Equality Policy regularly and reports to the Governing Body annually (During the Governing Body Meeting in November) in order to ensure its effectiveness. As part of the process, we invite all parents of candidates for our entrance exams, together with all parents who accept places at the School for their child to complete an ethnic monitoring form. The form uses the same ethnic categories as the Government uses in the national census. When the completed forms arrive at the School, they are separated from other material that might identify the individual child. The data is logged onto a computer. The individual forms are then shredded.

Our ethnic monitoring data is not available or accessible as part of our pupil records. We hope that all parents will feel able to participate in the ethnic monitoring scheme.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Reviewed May 2021
Next review date Sept 2021

Signed: Date:

Mrs J Adams
Chairman of the Governing Body