



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DISABILITY POLICY

(Senior and Junior Schools)

Reviewed September 2021

Introduction

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of QEH ("the School"). The School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, staff and members of the school community regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity ('protected characteristics').

This policy is consistent with and should be read in conjunction with the School's Admissions Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and the School Rules.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics;
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the School community;
- Comply with the School's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010.

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

Promotion of equal opportunities is at the heart of the ethos of QEH. We seek to promote and celebrate the individuality of everyone regardless of race, gender, disability, religion or belief (Including lack of religion or belief), sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity and, in the case of adult members of the school community, marital or civil partnership status and age.

QEH aims to offer the highest quality of teaching, learning and support to all our pupils in pursuit of academic excellence and strong personal development.

As an academically selective school we believe that our pupils' educational experience can only be enriched if they are exposed to as wide a range of experiences as possible as they grow up.

This:

- Strengthens and enhances our sense of community;
- Prepares our pupils for life in a diverse adult world; and

- Creates an environment in which individuals can feel assured of being valued and accepted just as they are, so that they can flourish and fulfil their full potential.

We therefore welcome applications from as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible, including from those with special needs and disabilities. The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions Policy.

With the aim of welcoming children from as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible, we offer generous bursaries to help those from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to join the Senior School. Bursaries are not available for entry to the Junior School. For further details please refer to our policy on Assistance with Fees.

Members of staff are directed to the relevant section of the staff handbook in respect of the operation of the Equal Opportunities and Disability Policy in relation to staff.

Reasonable Adjustments

The School 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 School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School.

The School has an Accessibility Plan, which is available on request from the Bursar. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled. This Plan is monitored on an annual basis by the Governing Body.

Applications for a place at the school for a child with a disability will be considered on the basis of whether the school can make reasonable adjustments to cater for the child's disability including any special educational needs. The school will not offer a place (or may recommend that a pupil does not sit the entrance examination), if after considering all reasonable adjustments, the school believes that it cannot provide adequately for the pupil's needs or the pupil does not have the ability to benefit adequately from the provision offered.

In the case of an existing pupil where the school becomes aware of a disability or special educational need, the school will make all reasonable adjustments to cater for the pupil's needs. If, after considering all reasonable adjustments, in the opinion of the Head the school cannot continue to provide adequately for the pupil's physical or educational needs, the parents will be asked to withdraw the pupil without financial penalty.

There are separate policies on *Special Educational Needs* for the Junior and Senior Schools which detail the provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs.

Monitoring and Implementation

The Governors are responsible for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. This responsibility is delegated on a day-to-day basis to the Head who in turn delegates aspects of the policy to other defined members of staff as indicated. The implementation and effectiveness of this policy are monitored annually by Governors and the SMT.

In the Senior School the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Head of Learning Enhancement (HLE) meet regularly to monitor the performance of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and English as an Additional Language (EAL), and report annually to the Head. In the Junior School such monitoring is carried out by the Head of Junior School and the senior staff. The HLE will coordinate the provision for and dissemination of information about pupils with disabilities or special educational needs. The HLE will draw up an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for pupils with disabilities or a high level of special educational needs, liaising with other staff and detailing any specific adjustments made to the curriculum or facilities.

The academic performance of pupils from different backgrounds is monitored by the Deputy Head (Academic) in the Senior School, and by the Head of Junior School and senior staff in the Junior School. If there is any indication of poor attainment or effort from any group, appropriate remedial action is taken.

In the Senior School the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) monitor the teaching of PSHE under the direction of the Head of PSHE and the Head of Enrichment to ensure that issues of discrimination are being appropriately explored within the curriculum. In the Junior School, the Head of Junior School ensures that an appropriate PSHE curriculum is in place and taught effectively. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) monitors the effectiveness of pastoral provision for all pupils and especially those with disabilities or special educational needs.

All members of staff, including the chaplain and medical staff, are active in the implementation of this policy.

We will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying or any other similar behaviour and our anti-bullying policies are clear on this. The principles of Equal Opportunities are promoted through assemblies, PSHE and in all lessons and activities.

The Governing Body, through the senior management 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 objective is not merely to protect against instances of discrimination or prejudice, whether direct or indirect (such as unconscious bias), but also to help pupils to understand related issues and why such behaviour is unacceptable. We also want pupils to appreciate the value of diversity and we seek to promote positive role modelling. Teaching materials therefore aim to introduce pupils to different cultures and to explore a wide variety of viewpoints where this is appropriate.

Crucially the School recognises that the successful implementation of an equal opportunities and disability policy requires the wholehearted support of parents and carers, and their full acceptance of the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

English as an Additional Language

In order to thrive both academically and socially in the school all pupils must be fluent English speakers, and have a good level of written English which we test in the admissions process. EAL can be arranged and is offered for overseas pupils at parents' expense.

Requests for variation in school uniform

Although QEH has Christian roots, it welcomes applications from those of all faiths and none, and does not select on the basis of any religious or other belief.

Parents should be aware that all pupils at the school are required to wear a uniform up to Year 12, and a strict dress code applies to Years 12 and 13. However, where parents wish to seek variations from the uniform policy to allow their children properly to exercise their beliefs, they should apply to the Head for consent. This will normally be granted provided that this does not run counter to either the school's ethos or its policy on health and safety

Provision for pupils with dietary or cultural needs.

All reasonable adjustments will be made to cater for pupils with specific dietary needs which must be negotiated in advance of a pupil starting in the school or, in the case of an existing pupil, with sufficient notice. Requests for cultural adjustments must be made in writing to the Head.

Complaints

We hope that parents and pupils will not have any complaints over the school's equal opportunities policy or its implementation. Any such matters will however be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy, as appropriate.

In the first instance any such complaint, in relation to the Senior School, should be addressed to:

- The Head – in respect of Admissions issues;
- The Deputy Head (Academic) – in respect of Curriculum issues;
- The Deputy Head (Pastoral) – in respect of Pastoral Care issues

In relation to the Junior School complaints should in the first instance be addressed to the Head of Junior School, who will inform the Head of the Senior School

Any complaint or incident relating to Equal Opportunities or Disability will be recorded by the Head and will be included in the annual review.