



Equal Opportunities Policy

Edgbaston High School aims to create the conditions whereby pupils and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits and potential regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age or marriage or civil partnership.

The Equal Opportunities Policy seeks to eradicate any unfair and discriminatory practices in the school and to encourage a diverse community to which all individuals may contribute as fully as possible.

The Policy applies to all connected with the school - pupils, staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents in school, governors and visitors to the school - and is subject to regular review and evaluation.

1. Aims and Objectives

1. To ensure that no-one is discriminated against, be they staff or pupil, on the grounds of race, age, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity or paternity, marriage or civil partnership.
2. To promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
3. To ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
4. To strive constantly to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.
5. To ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
6. To challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
7. To celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups.

2. Code of Conduct

The Headmistress, the Senior Management Team, Pastoral staff and the Medical staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the school's policy on equal opportunities. Use is made of assemblies, PSHEE, RS, Drama and English and other lessons to:

- 2.1 Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the school community.
- 2.2 Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

- 2.3 Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures.
- 2.4 Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour.
- 2.5 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 contains clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and guardians, and full acceptance of the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

3. Protected Characteristics

There are seven protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 which apply to the provision of education in school.

- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (single sex schools are allowed to apply an admission procedure to admit pupils of one sex)
- Sexual orientation.

And two which apply in addition to staff employed

- Age
- Marriage and civil partnership

4. Discrimination

Types: Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. It also covers harassment and victimisation. These terms are defined in the Equality Act 2010, and below is a summary of the defined terms.

Direct discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as above. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in" on the grounds of their race would be direct discrimination.

Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a pupil is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that pupil.

Indirect discrimination: Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with gender, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of gender.

Harassment discrimination: Harassment occurs where an individual is subject to unwanted conduct concerning a protected characteristic (as above) and which is intimidating, hostile,

degrading, humiliating or offensive for the individual. For example, racial comments directed towards one of the pupils or a staff member would be considered harassment.

Victimisation discrimination: Victimisation occurs where an individual is subject to a detriment because he or she has done a 'protected act' – which includes bringing legal proceedings or giving evidence in support of legal proceedings, under the Equality Act. For example, disciplining a pupil or staff member because they had brought proceedings under the Equality Act would amount to victimisation.

5. Monitoring

Edgbaston High School for Girls monitors its equal opportunities policy regularly and the policy is monitored by the Compliance Committee. As part of that process, all parents who accept places at the school for their child to complete an anonymous 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 any other material that might identify the individual child. The data is logged onto a computer spreadsheet by year of both entrance examination and entry.

Under no circumstances would we link our ethnic monitoring data with our pupil administration records.

All staff appointments are monitored in the same way.

6. Admissions

The school welcomes applications for admission from any girl regardless of background. There is a separate admissions policy.

7. Transgender

We are a girls' school. As such we will consider at the admission stage only those prospective pupils who are legally defined as female, in adherence to our articles of association and our Charitable objects. This includes any individual who has transitioned to female, and any individual who is recognised as female under the Gender Recognition Act (2004).

The school recognises the need to create an environment that is accessible to all and as such will provide gender neutral rest rooms and work with trans students to ensure that their needs are met in a predominantly female environment. Staff will receive regular training and guidance on LGBTQ+ issues to ensure our school ethos is being upheld.

8. Requests for Variation of the School Uniform

Cases when the cultural traditions of a girl's religion are in conflict with the school's uniform rules, it will be dealt with sensitively and respectfully and within the school's uniform code. This is also the case with trans children.

9. Disability

The school has a Disability Policy and Access Plan which is updated biannually, all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate disabled pupils and staff.

10. Special Needs

The school has a Special Educational Needs Policy which is updated biannually and is available on our website.

11. English as an Additional Language

The school has an EAL Policy which is updated biannually and is available on our website.

12. The Role of Governors

12.1 The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

12.2 The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.

12.3 The Governing Body welcomes all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

12.4 The Governing Body ensures children have access to the full range of the curriculum and that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school.

13. The Role of the Head Teacher

13.1 It is the Head Teacher's role to implement the school's equal opportunities policy and she is supported by the Governing Body in so doing.

13.2 It is the Head Teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

13.3 The Head Teacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

13.4 The Head Teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people as a regular theme, for example in assemblies and in displays shown around the school.

13.5 The Head Teacher responds to all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

14. The Role of the Class Teacher

14.1 The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. No child is ever discriminated against.

14.2 When selecting classroom material, teachers pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not promote material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

- 14.3 When designing schemes of work, this policy is used for guidance, both in the choice of topics to study and in how to approach sensitive issues. For example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history; in geography topics, the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.
- 14.4 All our teachers challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. Serious incidents are passed on to the Pastoral Deputy in Senior School or to the Pastoral Deputy in School. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

15. **Monitoring and Review**

- 15.1 It is the responsibility of the school's Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities Policy. The Governing Body does this by:
- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
 - taking into consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils;
 - monitoring the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

16. **Complaints**

We hope that you do not have any complaints about the operation of our equal opportunities policy; but copies of the school's complaints policy can be sent to you on request and is available on our website.

Other linked policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Pupil Sanctions Record
- Complaints Procedure
- Disability Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- EAL Policy