Queen's College, London
Queen's College Preparatory School
(including Early Years Foundation Stage)

Equal Opportunities policy

Reviewed August 2019

Introduction

Queen's College, London and Queen's College Preparatory School (hereafter referred to as 'the School') acknowledge their legal duty to be non-discriminatory towards their pupils and to provide equal access to the curriculum, pastoral care and extracurricular opportunities. The School also has an extended duty to all employees or visitors to the site whether parents, carers, visitors or alumnae.

Promoting equal opportunity is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Queen's College, London and Queen's College Preparatory School, and the School welcomes the duty to eliminate discrimination against anyone with 'protected characteristics' and foster good relations, irrespective of age, sex, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins), disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or identity, marital or civil partnership status, and pregnancy or state of maternity, whether actual, perceptual or by association. All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents or staff with protected characteristics.

The School believes that inclusivity should permeate all aspects of school life and counters and challenges all types of discriminatory behaviour (including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation), as well as expecting tolerance and respect from all members of staff, pupils, parents and Council members.

The School's aims in this regard are to:

- Respect the rights of members of staff, pupils and potential pupils and to provide equal access to the curriculum, pastoral care and co-curricular opportunities

- Value and encourage all members of the school community

- Promote tolerance and respect within the school community through the encouragement of positive attitudes towards all

Responsibility

The Council and Senior Leadership Team have responsibility for ensuring that the School operates within the legal framework for equality and for implementing the policy throughout the School. However, each member of the School community is

responsible for preventing discrimination, embracing diversity and upholding equality of opportunity.

Legal Framework

Discrimination can take the following forms:

- Direct Discrimination - This occurs where a person is treated less favourably than others because of their (or a family members) actual or perceived protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination - This occurs by applying a provision, criterion or practice, which disadvantages people on the grounds of a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified as a proportionate or unpreventable way of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Victimisation - This occurs where an individual has exercised their rights under equality legislation (or has indicated that they intend to do so) and is treated less favourably as a direct result. It applies equally to a person who is supporting (or indicates that they intend to support) another person who is exercising their rights under the legislation.
- Harassment – This is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose OR effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating a hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

The legal and local framework for this policy is:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE Guidance on Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 2004
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Duty to Promote Community Cohesion, Education and Inspections Act 2006

Admissions

Queen's College, London and Queen's College Preparatory School aim to encourage applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where every individual feels valued and can flourish.

The inability to pay tuition fees should not be a deterrent to those who share our ethos from applying to join Queen's College, London or Queen's College Preparatory School. Our bursary programme is designed to make it possible for as many as possible of those who meet the School's entry criteria to take up a place here (see separate Bursaries Policy).

Special Education Needs and Disability

Queen's College, London and Queen's College Preparatory School welcome pupils with Special Educational Needs, providing that our Learning Support Departments can offer them the support that they require. The School welcomes pupils with disabilities provided that our sites can accommodate them. The School will at all times work closely with parents to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met as far as possible. The School will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if she becomes a pupil at the school.

Physical Access

Queen's College, London and Queen's College Preparatory School recognise their duty to consider alterations to the physical features of the Schools where that is reasonable in order to avoid disadvantage caused by any impairment.

The Schools are housed in listed buildings over five floors and more. As is common in similar schools, the School premises are organised into department and subject areas with designated classrooms and thus require pupils to move around the School, necessitating the use of steps or stairs in buildings.

The School's Accessibility Plan seeks to improve physical access within the constraints of local planning permission and budget, recognising that some possible improvements are unlikely to be considered as reasonable adjustments if their costs to the School are prohibitive.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are collated for individual pupils or members of staff who may need additional support in evacuating the premises during an emergency.

Educational Provision

Form Tutors, Specialist Teachers and Teaching Assistants are made aware of pupils with a disability or Special Educational Needs:

In Queen's College Prep School: by the Head of Learning Support, the Assistant Head (Pastoral) or the Deputy Head (Academic).

In Queen's College, London: by the Learning Support Coordinator, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Senior Tutor.

Strategies are put in place in the classroom to ensure that pupils with a disability or Special Educational Needs are not at a significant disadvantage in accessing the curriculum. Such strategies are recorded in Individual Education Plans which are stored with pupil records and in SchoolBase and circulated to all relevant members of staff. Schemes of Work will also reflect the different educational needs of such pupils.

Teaching is adapted and differentiated where possible to meet the individual abilities and needs of pupils. The implementation of reasonable adjustments to classroom management, teaching and expectations should not, however, prejudice the progress of other pupils, nor their health and safety.

Appropriate training for relevant staff will be provided where necessary to enhance an understanding of those with protected characteristics, to highlight the need for making reasonable adjustments and to improve the School's educational provision.

Sporting and Co-Curricular Activities

The School will endeavour to provide equal access to all School activities for disabled pupils, within the constraints of the physical nature of the site, budget, Health and Safety implications and practicalities of supervision.

Individual risk assessment and management strategies will be provided for disabled pupils engaged in Educational Visits.

Religious Observance

The religious beliefs of pupils, staff, parents and carers will be respected. The School welcomes pupils of all faiths and none.

Parents should be aware that all pupils at Queen's College Preparatory School and younger pupils at Queen's College, London are required to wear a uniform: the Principal / 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 Principal / Headmistress may take expert advice and may arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

Employment

Queen's College, London is an equal opportunities employer.

In order to promote an environment within which the School can call upon the widest possible range of knowledge, skill and experience, as well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we aim to achieve and maintain a workforce which represents the population within our recruitment area in terms of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation/identity, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment/identity, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

To this end, we shall regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion, training and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular, but not only, in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, transfer and training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- Conduct at work
- Procedures are in place to ensure fair and equitable treatment in relation to the admission and assessment of pupils.

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat visitors, pupils, parents, suppliers and former members of staff.

Implementation

The School, with the assistance of the staff, will:

- Break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit
- Advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job
- Promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary
- Ensure that all members of staff are fully informed of this Policy
- Monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices
- Examine and review existing procedures to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation
- Ensure that the language used in official communication reflects the letter and spirit of the policy

Recruitment and Selection

The staffing process is governed by the School's principles of non-discrimination and is designed to achieve the best match between, on the one hand, the individual's knowledge and skills, experience and character and, on the other hand, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions. Full details are given in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

Disability

If staff are disabled or become disabled, they are encouraged to tell the school about their condition so that they can be supported as appropriate.

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

If a member of staff experiences difficulties at work because of their disability, they may contact the Assistant Head in the Preparatory School, or the Senior Tutor at Queen's College, London to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Assistant Head / Senior Tutor may wish to consult with the staff member and their medical adviser about possible adjustments and the staff member may be required to give their consent to a report being produced about their state of health and ability to perform their duties. The School will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate staff needs within reason. If the School considers a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the reasons will be explained and an alternative solution sought. Once an adjustment has been made, its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or School premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out his or her duties. This may include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, relocation of teaching, job redesign, or flexible hours.

Where, during the course of their employment, a disabled member of staff recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work arrangements or School premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Bursar.