



FOREST SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy

Whole School including EYFS

v1.2

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1 Aims

Forest School prides itself on being an inclusive institution and embraces equal opportunities for all. The aims of this policy are to:

- 1.1 promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the school, both for staff and pupils;
- 1.2 develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities;
- 1.3 promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities;
- 1.4 enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationship with others;
- 1.5 outline arrangements for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices;
- 1.6 not discriminate against the Protected Characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. The Protected Characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race (colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, and sex or sexual orientation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with;

Access Arrangements Policy

Admissions Policy

Behaviour Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Anti-Bullying Policy

School Rules

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Recruitment Policy and Procedure

SENDA Accessibility Plan

Learning Support Policy

Exams Disability Policy

Complaints Procedure

[DfE Equality Act – Advice for Schools](#)

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Warden has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the Equal Opportunities Policy, for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- 2.2 The Warden has responsibility for ensuring equal opportunities in the appointment of teaching staff to the school. The Bursar has responsibility for ensuring equal opportunities in the appointment of support staff to the School. The Warden and Head of the Preparatory School are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the awarding of places and awards

following entrance assessments and in the daily lives of the pupils. The Deputy Head Co-Curricular is responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the co-curricular lives of the pupils. The Deputy Head Academic is responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum. All staff with these responsibilities must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the Policy and promote the School's aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities.

- 2.3 All staff are responsible for following the policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the Warden or other senior member of staff.
- 2.4 The School takes seriously its legal responsibility to make reasonable adjustment to accommodate known difficulties or disabilities in staff appointed to the School or pupils awarded a place.

3 Appointment of Staff

- 3.1 Advertisements and job specifications make it clear that the School welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- 3.2 Applicants fill in a confidential equal opportunities form for the School to monitor the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy with regard to appointments.
- 3.3 Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities, experience as specified in the job description) in selection for recruitment, to ensure the elimination and prevention of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment.
- 3.4 People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interview to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment.
- 3.5 Unless the job is covered by a statutory exemption we will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, maternity or pregnancy, marital status, race, SEN and disability, religion and belief or age.
- 3.6 We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Accordingly, all prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation.

4 Staff Development

- 4.1 All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.
- 4.2 Employees becoming disabled while in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs or to be considered for redeployment if that is necessary.

5 Pupils

- 5.1 Forest School is an academically selective school and pupils are admitted in accordance with the School's Admissions Policy.

- 5.2 The school is committed to full educational inclusion.
- 5.3 Pupils have equal access to the programmes of study throughout the school, according to aptitude and ability.
- 5.4 All subjects will have equality of opportunity at their core.
- 5.5 School rules clearly and explicitly forbid the verbalisation or vocalisation of discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religious, gender, sexuality and ability or disability.
- 5.6 Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity is specifically taught through the PSHEE and tutor programme, assemblies, House meetings and Chapel services.
- 5.7 The School's SMSC audit confirms the wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, culturally and socially.
- 5.8 The School's Behaviour Policy includes a Code of Conduct (The Forest Classroom), agreed to by pupils, which emphasises responsibility for self and for others.
- 5.9 Pupils becoming disabled in the course of their time at the School will wherever possible be accommodated to enable them to continue with their studies.

6 Racist or homophobic bullying and sexual harassment

- 6.1 All staff have a legal duty not to bully or otherwise harass other staff.
- 6.2 Where staff come across incidents involving racist, homophobic bullying or sexual harassment they must report these to the Warden or another senior member of staff.
- 6.3 Any incidents of racist, homophobic bullying or sexual harassment amongst pupils will be taken seriously, must be dealt with appropriately and reported to a senior member of staff.
- 6.4 The School Rules and the School's Anti-Bullying Policy refer specifically to racist and homophobic bullying.
- 6.5 The School is aware that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities may be particularly vulnerable to bullying. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy provides further details.

7 Religion

- 7.1 Forest School has an Anglican foundation and the Chapel is at the heart of the School's buildings and routines. All pupils and teaching staff are expected to attend Chapel as an expression of community but are not required to participate in liturgy. We respect all faiths and regularly welcome to the School visiting assistant Chaplains from the Hindu, Muslim and Jewish community. Permission to observe particular religious practices is at the discretion of the School, but where such practice is a compulsory element of a pupil or staff member's faith, the School will do what it can to meet the request within the constraints of what is practical and safe.

8 Access

- 8.1 We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils and applicants who are disabled under the [Equality Act 2010](#). When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the school will consider the following factors:
 - 8.1.1 The effect of the disability on the child, in particular as it relates to participating in the full life of the school, including academic performance, as evidenced by medical and other submissions. Please refer to the Learning Support Policy for further information.
 - 8.1.2 Whether any adjustment would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering
 - 8.1.3 The practicability of the adjustment, including consideration of school finances, staffing, resources and health and safety requirements, the cost of the adjustment and whether it will be provided under an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) from the Local Authority
 - 8.1.4 The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards
 - 8.1.5 The interests of other pupils and potential pupils
 - 8.1.6 After a full consideration of the above points, the school reserves the right to decide that Forest School is not the appropriate educational environment for an individual and that the adjustments required are not reasonable.
- 8.2 We are not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Similarly, we do not need to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the School.
- 8.3 Where additional specialist medical advice is required by the School before it can make a decision with regard to reasonable adjustment, it will direct parents to the services of a suitable practitioner.
- 8.4 Owing to the nature of the school buildings, not all rooms are fully accessible. Where necessary, the rooming timetable will be adjusted (whether temporarily or permanently) in order to allow all pupils and staff full equality of opportunity. Arrangements are made for disabled parents at parents' evenings.

9 Changes during the pupil's school career

- 9.1 Once admitted, a pupil's needs will be reviewed annually and adjustment made to existing provision where necessary. The considerations in the list above still apply, but all reasonable steps will be taken to enable the pupil to remain in School.
- 9.2 The same applies to any pupil who develops a particular need or disability where none existed before.

10 Entry tests for pupils

- 10.1 If necessary, we will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants sitting the entry test, such as, for example, allowing it to be completed on computer rather than by hand. However, the pass mark for the test is not altered as this would not be a reasonable adjustment.

11 Review, monitoring and evaluation

- 11.1 The effectiveness of all aspects of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be reviewed at Leadership Team level in the course of each academic year, following monitoring and evaluation as appropriate by those responsible for different areas of its remit.

12 Breaches of this Policy.

- 12.1 The School takes a strict approach to breaches of this Policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.
- 12.1 An employee believing that s/he has suffered discrimination should raise the matter through the School's Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
- 12.2 An employee must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.