

Statement of Equal Opportunities at Aldenham School

Introduction

Aldenham School is mindful of its own stated aims and objectives and of its legal obligations under current equal opportunities legislation. The School regards fulfilment of these obligations with enthusiasm and dedication. Additionally, ensuring equal opportunities for all students is an important aspect of its mission as a Church of England Foundation.

Equal Opportunities

Admissions procedures at Aldenham School are applied to pupils irrespective of racial, religious or national background and are designed to fairly determine that a pupil is likely to benefit from the type of education offered at the School. Where there is competition for places, admission is determined by merit.

In strategic planning, in the admission of pupils, in the provision of curriculum and extra curriculum entitlement and in its day-to-day workings, the School seeks to ensure equality of opportunity and equality of treatment for all pupils in the ways and in the areas listed below.

- a) **Gender** – Aldenham School admits boys and girls from ages 11-18 (National Curriculum Years 7-13.). A pupil's entitlement to what is offered in the School will be irrespective of his or her gender. The only exceptions to this will be where provision of equipment, staffing, facilities or the economic viability of the numbers of pupils involved make provision of an activity for pupils unsuitable.
- b) **Religion** – the School will ensure equality of opportunity and provision for all pupils irrespective of their religious background and regardless of whether their family practises a faith or not. All pupils are required to attend School religious services and religious studies lessons as determined by the Governors and Headmaster. It is always accepted that pupils attending these parts of School life in this way have full respect paid to the beliefs and practices of the pupils themselves and their families.
- c) **Race or national background** – equality of opportunity and provision will be assured for all pupils regardless of their racial or cultural or national background. Racist abuse of pupils or discrimination against pupils on this basis is a serious School offence which will attract due investigation and, if appropriate, disciplinary sanctions. The School seeks to be understanding of the requirements of pupils from different racial, religious and cultural backgrounds and positively encourages pupils to share these with the rest of the School and to be proud of them. In its teaching in general and in its Special Needs provision, the School will be mindful of linguistic and cultural difficulties which pupils may encounter in the school environment.
- d) **Financial circumstances** – Aldenham School is an independent fee paying school and as such parents, guardians or other persons responsible for the payment of fees for a pupil are responsible for ensuring the payment of all fees and extras punctually as the Headmaster, Bursar and Governors may determine. Subject to this condition, the School shall ensure for all pupils attending the School equality of opportunity and provision regardless of the social or financial circumstances of their families. Bursaries, scholarships or other financial awards are made entirely on merit.
- e) **Disability** – The School seeks to ensure equality of opportunity and provision for all pupils regardless of any physical, medical or mental disability so long as the School is

sure when a pupil is considered for admission that he or she is able to benefit fully from the School's facilities and the type of education which is offered at Aldenham.

Conclusion

Aldenham School will seek to ensure equality of opportunity for all its pupils in the areas outlined above at every possible stage. The School recognises the right of pupils or their families to express concern where they feel that this may not be the case. Use of the School Complaints Procedure or of the normal mechanisms of raising concern by way of teaching staff, Housemasters and other members of staff is as applicable to concerns covered by this document as to other questions of welfare or academic progress. The School seeks to ensure provision of equality of opportunity consistent with the safety of pupils and as appropriate to their age. The School always will explain fully to pupils or their families any occasions where apparent differences in the way pupils have been treated may be appropriate because of such issues as age or medical grounds. The School Rules and Procedures are applied to all pupils as is its policy on Sanctions and Rewards. The School regards it as a positive advantage that the mixture of religions, traditions, cultural and national backgrounds represented in its community is a rich mixture to be enjoyed and appreciated by all members of the School. The positive and active assurance of equality of opportunity is an essential part of this mission.

School policy for race equality and cultural diversity

1. Legal duties

This school welcomes its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. We are committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity;
- promoting good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities;
- eliminating unlawful discrimination.

2. Guiding principles

In fulfilling our legal duties listed above, we are guided by three essential principles:

- Every pupil should have opportunities to achieve the highest possible standards, and the best possible qualifications for the next stages of their life and education.
- Every pupil should be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities.
- Every pupil should develop the knowledge, understandings and skills that they need in order to participate in Britain's multi-ethnic society, and in the wider context of an interdependent world.

3. The full range of school policies and practice

We ensure that the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and assessment
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- teaching and learning
- admissions and attendance
- the content of the curriculum
- staff recruitment and professional development
- partnerships with parents and communities

4. Addressing racism and xenophobia

The school is opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities.

5. Responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to deal with racist incidents that may occur; to know how to identify and challenge racial and cultural bias and stereotyping; to support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language; and to incorporate principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work.

6. Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors, and also, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of race equality and cultural diversity in appropriate detail.

7. Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

8. Action plan

We draw up an annual action plan for the implementation of this policy, and for monitoring its impact.

- Deputy Head

9. Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headmaster and governing body.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

Date approved by the Governing Body:

Reviewed Nov 07