



# **Aldenham School**

## **Equal Opportunities for Pupils Policy**

**Revised August 2021  
by AMW**

## **Scope**

Aldenham Senior School is mindful of its own stated aims and objectives and of its legal obligations under current equal opportunities legislation. A strong commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils is an important aspect of the School's mission and is embedded in its working practice.

Aldenham School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of age, race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity ('protected characteristics').

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy and the School's ethos as a whole is to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics;
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the School community; and,
- 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.

## **Admission**

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions Policy. Where there is competition for places, each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the School's selection criteria based on an applicant's ability and aptitude. The School accepts applications from, and admits, all prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief) or special educational needs ('SEN').

Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. The School will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

## **Financial Circumstances**

Aldenham School is a 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 punctual payment of all fees and extras 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 are means tested awards offered to those who meet the School's admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the School due to financial hardship. Bursaries are only available for Aldenham Senior School pupils. Details of our provision for bursaries, can be found on our website or obtained from the Bursary office.

## **Educational Services**

The School affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The School will:

- Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination;
- Endeavour to meet the needs of all children and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics;
- Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support;
- Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds;
- Challenge inappropriate discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff;
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities;
- Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School;
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices; and,
- Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:
  - Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
  - Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

## **Religious Belief**

Although the School's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, the School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the School community.

All pupils are required to attend School religious services and Philosophy, Religion and Ethics lessons as determined by the Governors and Headmaster. It is fully understood and accepted that pupils may be required to be absent on occasion during the course of the school year in order to observe religious holidays.

The governing body, through the senior leadership 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.

### **Dietary Requirements**

The School employs an outside catering company (Holroyd Howe) who provide a nutritious and balanced diet with plenty of choice at meal times. Provision is made at all meals for pupils who have special dietary requirements based on preference, religion or medical advice. Pupils are encouraged to attend food committee meetings / food feedback cards to discuss the school's food provision and influence future menu choice.

### **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

The School will ensure equality of opportunity regardless of a student's sexual orientation. The School seeks to be understanding of students irrespective of their sexual orientation and promotes social awareness via the Life Matters / PSHCE programme.

Pupils who are exploring their gender identity (for example those who identify as non-binary) may request to change their pronoun in school and may request a preferred name as part of their identity. Official changes on formal/legal documentation requires parental consent if the pupil is under 18 and must be accompanied by deed poll confirmation.

### **Gender Reassignment**

Pupils who are exploring gender reassignment options may request to change House to that of a different sex. Measures will be put in place to accommodate these request in practical terms as far as reasonably possible in accordance with the school's Trans Policy.

### **Requests for Variation in the School Uniform**

All pupils are required to wear a uniform. Pupils may choose to wear the male or female style uniform. The Head of Senior School will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils with Disability**

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. Further information on the School's reasonable adjustments duty can be found in the School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.

The School has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the School website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. 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, subject to reasonable adjustment.

### **Special Educational Need**

The School will strive to make appropriate provision for students with SEN requirements and individual support lessons are available. In addition, SEN assessment is available at the School and access arrangements can be made for pupils with special requirements for examinations, e.g., ICT facilities, amanuensis, isolation, etc.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Head of the Senior School regularly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy and it is subject to regular review by the Governors.

### **Breach of this Policy**

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

The School is opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities. In reported cases of racist behaviour, the School adheres to the guidance contained in the Dealing with Racist Incidents Policy.

Aldenham School will seek to ensure equality of opportunity for all 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's 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 and academic progress.

The School seeks to ensure provision of equality of opportunity is consistent with the safety of pupils and as appropriate to their age. The School 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 one, 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 the School's mission.