

Equal Opportunities



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Equal Opportunities

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Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Statement

At St Olave's Prep School, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where every child feels valued, supported and able to thrive. We believe that every child has the right to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect and to have equal access to the opportunities, experiences and support necessary to flourish both academically and personally.

Promoting equality of opportunity is fundamental to our ethos, our Christian values and our commitment to safeguarding and wellbeing. We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe, accepted and a genuine sense of belonging within their school community. Our aim is not simply to prevent discrimination but actively to foster understanding, celebrate diversity and ensure that every child is able to participate fully in school life.

The School is committed to equal treatment for all members of the school community regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or any other characteristic protected by law.

As a school committed to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), this policy reflects the rights of all children to be protected from discrimination, to have their views heard and to receive an education that develops their talents and abilities to the fullest extent possible.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Restorative Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- PSHE and RSE Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

I. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Prevent Duty Guidance

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- Human Rights Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the School seeks to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Although not all protected characteristics apply directly to children, the School recognises its wider responsibilities towards staff, parents and visitors.

2. Principles and Aims

At St Olave's Prep School, we believe that inclusion and challenge go hand in hand. Every child should feel valued and supported while also being encouraged to think deeply, develop resilience and achieve their full potential.

We are committed to:

- treating all members of the school community with dignity and respect
- ensuring that no child is disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic
- promoting understanding, empathy and respect for difference
- creating an environment in which children feel safe to be themselves
- removing barriers to participation wherever reasonably possible
- maintaining high expectations for every child
- promoting positive relationships and a sense of belonging
- preparing children to live successfully in modern Britain

Equality is embedded within all aspects of school life and informs our curriculum, pastoral care, safeguarding procedures, behaviour expectations and decision-making.

3. Equality, Inclusion and Safeguarding

The School recognises that equality and safeguarding are closely linked.

Children who experience discrimination, prejudice, exclusion or bullying may be at increased risk of emotional harm, social isolation and reduced wellbeing. Staff understand that discriminatory incidents must always be taken seriously and may, in some circumstances, constitute a safeguarding concern.

All staff are expected to:

- model respectful and inclusive behaviour
- challenge discriminatory language and behaviour immediately
- maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
- recognise that prejudice-based incidents may be linked to wider safeguarding concerns
- report concerns in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Incidents involving racism, sexism, sexual harassment, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, disability discrimination, religious prejudice or any other form of discriminatory behaviour will be recorded appropriately, monitored for patterns and addressed promptly.

Where concerns indicate a potential safeguarding risk, they will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

4. Promoting Equality Through the Curriculum

The curriculum plays a central role in promoting equality, inclusion and mutual respect.

Through planned learning opportunities, assemblies, collective worship, educational visits, wider enrichment activities and everyday classroom practice, children are encouraged to:

- understand and respect differences between people
- challenge stereotypes and prejudice
- appreciate diversity within Britain and the wider world
- develop empathy and compassion
- engage respectfully with different viewpoints
- recognise and uphold the rights of others

The School seeks to provide children with both mirrors and windows through the curriculum: opportunities to see themselves reflected in their learning and opportunities to learn about the experiences and perspectives of others.

Curriculum resources are reviewed regularly to ensure they are inclusive, representative and appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children.

5. Behaviour, Relationships and Inclusion

This policy operates alongside the School's Restorative Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

The School is committed to maintaining a culture of kindness, respect and belonging. Discriminatory language, prejudice, harassment and bullying are unacceptable and will be addressed promptly.

Responses to incidents will:

- prioritise the safety and wellbeing of those affected
- support children to understand the impact of their actions
- encourage reflection, responsibility and repair where appropriate
- apply clear and proportionate consequences when necessary
- seek to educate as well as sanction

The School's approach is restorative, recognising that children learn best when supported to understand mistakes, repair relationships and make positive choices in the future.

6. Admissions, Access and Participation

The School welcomes applications from children of all backgrounds and seeks to ensure that admissions arrangements are fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.

Admissions decisions are made in accordance with the Admissions Policy and relevant legislation. No child will be treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

The School aims to ensure that all children are able to participate fully in school life and will consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

7. Special Educational Needs, Disability and Accessibility

The School is committed to supporting children with SEND and disabilities and to removing barriers that may prevent participation.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- adaptations to teaching approaches
- environmental adjustments
- specialist resources or equipment
- additional adult support
- modifications to school procedures where appropriate

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The School recognises that every child is unique and that support should be tailored to individual needs wherever possible.

Further details can be found within the SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan.

8. Religious Belief and Inclusion

St Olave's Prep School is rooted in Christian values while fully respecting the beliefs, traditions and backgrounds of all members of the school community.

Children are encouraged to learn about and appreciate different faiths, cultures and worldviews. Respectful curiosity and open discussion are actively promoted.

No child will be disadvantaged because of their religion or belief and all members of the school community are expected to demonstrate mutual respect and tolerance.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees

Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the School complies with its legal obligations relating to equality and non-discrimination and for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

Headteacher and Senior Leaders

The Headteacher and senior leaders will:

- promote an inclusive culture
- ensure policy implementation
- monitor equality-related incidents and trends
- ensure appropriate training is provided
- review procedures and practice regularly

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will oversee the safeguarding aspects of discriminatory incidents, ensure appropriate recording and support effective information sharing where required.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- modelling inclusive behaviour
- challenging discrimination and prejudice
- promoting equality through teaching and relationships
- reporting concerns promptly

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- supporting children to develop understanding and respect

Children

Children are expected to:

- treat others with kindness and respect
- value differences
- challenge unkind behaviour appropriately
- report concerns to a trusted adult

Parents

Parents are encouraged to support the School's values and work in partnership with staff to promote inclusion, respect and positive relationships.

10. Monitoring and Review

The School will regularly monitor:

- discriminatory incidents
- bullying incidents
- safeguarding concerns linked to prejudice
- participation and outcomes for different groups of children
- accessibility and inclusion arrangements

Information gathered through monitoring will inform future planning, staff training and policy review.

Trustees will receive appropriate information to enable them to fulfil their oversight responsibilities.

11. Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this policy by pupils will be managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and, where appropriate, safeguarding procedures.

Breaches by staff may be addressed through supervision, capability procedures, disciplinary procedures or safeguarding processes depending upon the nature and seriousness of the concern.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school practice.

Summary

At St Olave's Prep School, equality is not a standalone initiative. It is fundamental to safeguarding, wellbeing, teaching and learning, behaviour, relationships and the wider life of the School.

We are committed to ensuring that every child feels safe, respected, included and empowered to achieve their full potential within a community that values kindness, dignity, belonging and opportunity for all.