



Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy (Pupils)

Scope:	Whole School
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Author:	Senior Deputy Head (Senior School)
Reviewer:	Senior Deputy Head (Prep School)
Approval body:	Board of Directors (released pending ratification at EdComm Board Meeting)
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Linked documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- A1 Admissions Policy;
- A2 SEND Policy;
- A6 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (particularly the Prevent section);
- A8 Online Safety Policy;
- A15 SEND 3-Year-Accessibility Policy
- A4 Child-on-Child Abuse Policy;
- A4 Anti-bullying Policy (Prep School)
- A4 Behaviour Policy (Senior School and Prep School separate documents);
- A5 PSHCE Policy (Senior School and Prep School separate documents);
- Safer Recruitment Policy

Availability

This Policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the School website, and a printed copy may be requested from the Admissions Team.

Introduction

This policy is for the whole Wisbech Grammar School pupil body (Senior School, Prep School, EYFS and Boarding). A separate policy is in place for staff.

Wisbech Grammar School is a community in which an individual's needs should be recognised and each of its members' talents and aptitudes should be fostered and nurtured. The School is committed to a policy of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all pupils, parents and staff, regardless of an individual's age, body image, disability, gender reassignment and gender identity, learning difficulty, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (actual and perceived) or social background.

This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010 and acknowledges its duty to advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people of all groups. Wisbech Grammar School actively seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination, victimisation and harassment towards pupils (prospective, current or former). For example, when visiting speakers address pupils, we will ensure a balanced view is presented.

Wisbech Grammar School recognises that diversity exists in our community and that it brings significant educational benefits to all pupils. Diversity is an enabling force in the creation of learning experiences which are enriched by the contribution of different life experiences, varied perspectives, flexibility and creativity. It is the School's policy to accept and celebrate diversity; any form of intolerance is unacceptable. The School is therefore committed to building an environment in which:

Equality of opportunity at Wisbech Grammar School is based on the following core values:

- The ethos of the School supports the development of self-respect and self-esteem in all pupils and staff.
- We place a high value on diversity and treat every member of the School as an individual. In this respect, we aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of differences of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. This means that
 - diversity is valued;
 - stereotypes are questioned;
 - bias, bigotry and prejudice (behaviour which leads, for example, to racism and homophobia) are rejected.
- Staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and of the need to prepare pupils for life in a pluralist society. The School is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- We aim to provide a welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

Policy Principles

Admission of Pupils

Wisbech Grammar School is fully co-educational (and has been since 1970) and believes that the educational experience is enriched by exposure to a wide range of cultural backgrounds.

The School, as a Grammar School foundation, is academically selective. Applications from pupils, including those with special needs and disabilities, are welcomed. The School would not accept a pupil for whom the environment or courses available would be inappropriate and therefore likely to cause distress in the pupil. The Headmaster of Wisbech Grammar School would give advice to parents of a disabled child concerning the problems of access which could arise as a result of the School's utilisation of historic buildings. We refer parents to the Admissions Policy, the SEN Policy, as well as the Disability Policy - Accessibility Plan.

Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the School's admission criteria to attend the School.

Attainment and progress

With regard to attainment and progress, we are mindful that 'the aptitudes and needs of all pupils within the school are catered for' and Wisbech Grammar School aims to 'enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability'.

- Pupil achievement is monitored by formal and informal procedures. Any pattern of underachievement of a particular group is addressed through targeted curriculum planning, teaching and support.
- The School will ensure, where possible, that any assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias.
- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.
- All forms of achievement are recognised and valued.

Attitudes, behaviour, personal development and attendance

- The School promotes positive approaches to difference, fostering respect for people and property. Language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, will not be tolerated:
- There is high expectation of all pupils with regard to behaviour and attendance. Use is made of assemblies, Form time, Drama, English, PSHCE and other lessons to promote tolerance of each other and to foster an open-minded approach to recognising the contributions made by different cultures.
- All forms of harassment, including racism, sexism and homophobia, are dealt with in line with the Schools' disciplinary procedures. Pupils, staff and parents are made aware of procedures should incidents of harassment arise the School works in partnership

with parents to tackle specific incidents of harassment and to develop positive attitudes to difference.

- If parents or pupils consider that pupils have been subject to discrimination at School, they should inform the Senior Deputy Head (Senior School). The School will seek to stop any discrimination or harassment. Parents are encouraged to use the School's 'Complaints Policy', available on the School website, if they feel that any concerns about harassment or discrimination are not being addressed properly and in accordance with this policy.
- It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The School takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- Pupils are encouraged to become independent and to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Teaching

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles in order to engage all pupils:

- Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalized; the teacher takes positive steps to include them.
- Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. Pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.
- Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied.
- Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.
- Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas.

All pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs are included, valued and supported and reasonable adjustments, including the provision of additional support and aids, will be made for them. Support is provided for pupils with special educational needs via the Learning Support Department and this support includes a commitment to work with parents and external agencies if required. Where possible pupils will be given support during non-core teaching time, but support during core lessons may also be necessary. Where appropriate, in-class support using Classroom Assistants may occur

Curriculum

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately.

Support for pupils is provided through the Form system, as well as via the Learning Support Department and the International Support Department where appropriate.

- For pupils with English as an additional language;
- For pupils from minority ethnic groups, where necessary;
- For pupils with Special Educational Needs.

All pupils are included, valued and supported and reasonable adjustments, including the provision of additional support and aids, will be made as required. Any support required from the Learning Support Department comes with a commitment to work with parents and external agencies if required. Where possible pupils will be given support during non-core teaching time, but support during core lessons may also be necessary. Where appropriate, in-class support using Classroom Assistants may occur.

The content of the curriculum values cultural diversity:

- The curriculum encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.
- All subjects aim to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.
- Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture, where known.
- Informal events are designed to include the whole School community and at times will target minority or marginalised groups.

Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability.

The School has a responsibility 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 receives requests for reasonable adjustments to be made, 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 can be found in the School's Accessibility Policy.

The School also has an Accessibility Plan in place. 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.

Religion and the Ethos of the School

Wisbech Grammar School follows a Christian tradition and has redeveloped links with the parish church of Ss. Peter and Paul (where it was founded). However, selection for admission is not dependant on religious belief; we welcome pupils of all faiths and none.

The School is pleased to accept pupils with other religious faiths.

Many nationalities are represented amongst the pupil body and our multiculturalism is celebrated and tolerance encouraged through a variety of different events including International Evenings and culturally-themed assemblies, Church services and mealtimes.

The School attends the Church of St Peter and St Paul to celebrate key events across the School calendar. Pupils are expected to attend but there is no compulsion for them to take part in the services if they feel this would be contrary to their own beliefs. As well as having a religious purpose, Church services are also an important occasion for the whole school community to come together.

If parents request that pupils should be allowed to worship at another place such as a mosque, this can be arranged with permission from the Headmaster. For Muslim pupils who wish to pray on Fridays, the Senior Deputy of the Senior School will talk to them about a suitable venue.

Acts of Christian worship may take place in assemblies, hymns may be sung and prayers offered. Religious Studies is a core subject from Reception to Year 9 (Third Form) and other religious faiths will be studied. The ethos of the School has a foundation in Christian attitudes and values.

Requests for variation in school uniform

Although Wisbech Grammar School has Christian roots, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and we welcome pupils of all faiths and offer the opportunity for pupils of other faiths to practice their own faiths.

However, parents should be aware that all pupils at Wisbech Grammar School are required to wear a uniform until the beginning of the Lower Sixth, and that a strict “business dress” code operates for the Sixth Form.

The Headmaster 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 Headmaster may take expert advice, and will discuss with the parents and pupils involved the implications of such a request.

Requests for provision of specific dietary requirements

Where possible, the Catering department will aim to meet the needs of pupils who have specific dietary requirements. All pupils are also welcome to bring packed lunches, especially those with specific dietary requirements or allergies.

We are not a halal school but will provide halal snacks if specifically asked by pupils or parents, and we offer a wide range of choices at mealtimes.

The Executive Chef is happy to consider individual requests from parents regarding dietary issues.

The Executive Chef will take into consideration cultural events and holidays that are of importance to members of the School community and create relevant menus to celebrate them, for example the Chinese New Year and Moon festivals.

An environment that celebrates the cultural heritage of all pupils

The School will allow the growing of beards and wearing of cultural clothing where appropriate and possible as well as supporting our international pupils with celebrations for New Year and Moon Festivals, where possible we make these whole school occasions.

A supportive environment for pupils with EAL

All EAL pupils receive extra tuition until they reach an IELTS score of 6 across all areas of assessment. We also work with local tutors to facilitate GCSEs and A Levels in subjects linked to the pupils primary language such as Russian.

A supportive environment for LGBTQ+ pupils

It is recognised that pupils are developing their personal identity whilst at school. At Wisbech Grammar School we aim to foster a supportive community where pupils are able to explore their own views within a safe environment. Through PSHCE, assemblies, Religious Education lessons, History lessons and English classes, pupils are offered opportunities to discuss issues around gender identity.

- Pupils who decide to identify as LGBTQ+ will be offered support by their Form Tutors and section Teams.
- Pupils who identify as transgender will be supported where it is possible and appropriate for the pupil and others in the community and are entitled to dignity during their period of transition or during the time when they decide to identify as a gender separate from their birth gender. Whilst the school has developed a set of guidelines to support transgender pupils it is recognised that this is a personal journey that requires a positive and supportive approach unique to each pupil. Comments or actions which are homophobic or felt to be homophobic will not be tolerated and will be treated under the school Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.

Leadership and management

All School policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities:

- The management of the School and governing body set a clear ethos which reflects the School's commitment to all its pupils and staff.
- Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the School and wider community.

Staffing

All staff, including non-teaching staff and part-time staff are given status and support:

- Staff induction and handbooks include equal opportunities issues.
- All members of staff have access to INSET which will enable professional development. Recruitment and selection procedures are fair and equal.
- The skills of all staff members are recognised and valued, and staff are encouraged to share their knowledge.
- Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

Partnership with parents and the community

- Parents are asked to give information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc., on admissions forms.
- Parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the School.
- Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all.

Former Pupils

The School is also aware of the obligation arising from the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that it does not discriminate against, harass or victimise a person who has left the School. This includes circumstances such as providing a reference for a former pupil or making reasonable adjustments for disabled former pupils