

## Equal Opportunities for Pupils Policy

The policy applies to the whole of the Stephen Perse Foundation (the **Foundation**). It is applicable to the whole school community including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**) and the Foundation boarding community.

This policy has been written having regard to the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2016, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding, the Equality Act 2010 and the non-statutory guidance document produced by the [Department for Education, the Equality Act 2010 and Schools, May 2014](#).

### Guiding Principles

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of the Foundation. We welcome applications from pupils with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

### Objectives

The Foundation is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's age, race, sex, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. All of the Foundation's schools are academically selective and we believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing. Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination.

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

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics or because of a pupil's cultural background, linguistic background, special educational need or academic or sporting ability;
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the Foundation community;
- Comply with the Foundation's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010.

All members of the Foundation community are expected to comply with this policy.

## Code of Conduct

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and guardians, and full acceptance of the Foundation's ethos of tolerance and respect. The Foundation expects all members of our community, which includes but is not limited to, staff, pupils, parents and contractors to:

- Respect and promote equal opportunities for all;
- Promote and encourage acceptance, harmony and understanding;
- Recognise and challenge prejudice and discrimination in any form;
- Promote diversity and enable differences to become a positive attribute;
- Encourage an environment where people share equally;
- Assist people to communicate without fear or prejudice.

We promote equal opportunities and diversity through a variety of means including:

- An inclusive curriculum that utilises assemblies, lessons, form time, our pastoral system and our restorative justice system to actively promote equal opportunities for all;
- Promoting the Foundation values of individuality and the unique potential of every child;
- Being vigilant and alert to any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation;
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination efficiently and fairly;
- Staying up to date with existing legislation;
- Encouraging and welcoming applications from a diverse set of pupils;
- Actively promoting our Bursary scheme in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the Foundation's admission criteria to attend the Foundation. Details of our provision for bursaries can be found on our website or obtained from the Bursar's office;
- Welcoming applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities, and referring parents to our policies covering Special Educational Needs (**SEN**), learning difficulties, and disability.

The Senior Leadership Teams, Curriculum Leaders and Pastoral Leaders play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the Foundation's policy on equal opportunities.

Use is made of assemblies, PSHEE, RS, Drama, English and other lessons, as well as house meetings for boarding students, as appropriate to:

- Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the other characteristics set out on page 1 above;
- Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues;

- Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures. Bias should be recognised;
- Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour;
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

### **Admissions**

The Foundation treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the Foundation's Admissions Policy. Although we are academically selective, each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the Foundation's selection criteria at the time of admission and entry to the Foundation, based on an applicant's academic ability and character requirements, irrespective of an applicant's sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief), special educational needs, cultural background, linguistic background or academic or sporting ability.

Parents must inform the Foundation when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect a child's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the education provided at the Foundation.

### **Education**

The Foundation is mainstream and English-speaking. The Foundation will provide appropriate support for children with special educational needs or for whom English is not their first language. The Foundation's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy and Language Policy include details about the support provided.

As a diamond school, the Foundation is committed to equality of opportunity to all pupils. This means over any individual's time at the Foundation, opportunities of the same range and quality will be available. This may not be identical or occurring at the same time.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability**

The Foundation has an inclusive ethos and welcomes applications from pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Applications will be processed and considered fairly.

The Foundation adheres to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. We recognise our ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils in respect of education and associated services to ensure that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. Where the Foundation is required to consider its duty to make reasonable adjustments, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the Foundation is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. The Foundation will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the

Foundation. Information regarding how the Foundation supports pupils with special educational needs can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy and separate Disability Policy.

The Foundation monitors the physical features of its premises and, where possible and reasonable, steps will be taken to improve access for disabled users of the premises. An Accessibility Plan is drawn up to cover a three year period and includes relevant actions to improve access to the physical environment, the curriculum and availability of accessible information. The Accessibility Plan is reviewed regularly and revised as required.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of the Foundation, pupils need to be able to access the curriculum in English. Support for pupils with EAL is arranged within the Foundation on the basis of individual need. This includes reasonable adjustments to enable parents and pupils to whom this applies to access school material. Information regarding how pupils for whom English is not their first language are supported can be found in our Language Policy.

### **Catering**

The Foundation aims to accommodate all pupils with special dietary requirements, including those with allergies, intolerances, or requirements based on religious or cultural reasons, in both our teaching and boarding provision. Pupils' specific needs are identified through the development of an individual healthcare plan, if necessary, and with support from an allergen ambassador from the catering team.

### **Uniform**

All pupils are expected to wear the prescribed uniform of their school within the Foundation. The Foundation will consider reasonable requests to alter the school uniform, for example, for religious requirements or in the case of a disability. Requests for variation of the uniform may be made, in writing, to the Principal who will consider the request if it is made on reasonable grounds that are consistent with our policy on Health and Safety and it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the Foundation's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Principal, or Head of School on behalf of the Principal, may invite parents to discuss their request. The Principal's decision will be final, subject to the Foundation's Complaints Policy and Procedures.

### **Symbols of faith**

Items of jewellery and headwear, such as a headscarf, may be worn by pupils where doing so is based on a genuine religious or racial belief. This is subject to the relevant items being consistent with our policy on Health and Safety and subject to safety and welfare. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the pupil or their parents to the Principal, whose decision will be final, subject to the Foundation's Complaints Policy and Procedures.

**Religion and cultural needs**

The Governing Body, through the Senior Leadership Teams, 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.

The majority of assemblies at the Foundation are non-sectarian. Requests from parents to withdraw their child from religious assemblies or events can be made to the relevant Head of School. The Foundation respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with their faith, or to have no faith.

**Bullying**

The Foundation aims to prevent bullying and effectively respond to any incident that does take place. The Anti-Bullying Policy details the Foundation's anti-bullying practices.

**Exclusions**

The Foundation will not exclude pupils on the grounds of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, special educational needs, cultural background, linguistic background or academic or sporting ability.

**Monitoring**

The Foundation monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy regularly and reports to the Governors in order to ensure its effectiveness. As part of that process, we invite all parents of candidates who register for a place in the Foundation, together with all parents who accept places at the Foundation for their child, to complete an ethnic monitoring form. The Information Commissioner recommends that young people aged 11 or older have the opportunity to decide their own ethnic identity. Parents, or those with parental responsibility, are asked to support or advise those children aged 11-15 in making this decision, wherever necessary. Pupils aged 16 or over can make this decision for themselves.

The Chair of the Board of Governors will oversee an annual review of this policy and associated procedures to ensure their legal compliance and continuous improvement. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all persons who need to be made aware.

**Complaints**

The Foundation's Complaints Policy and Procedures is available on the Foundation's website.

**Related policies**

This policy has been written with reference to and must be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Admissions  
Anti-Bullying  
Behaviour and Discipline  
Disability  
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities  
The Foundation's Accessibility Plan (available on request).

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**Version Control**

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Policy owner	Head of SPF International and Boarding
Authorised by	Governing Body