



ORCHARD HOUSE
SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & CULTURAL DIVERSITY POLICY

September 2025

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Introduction

The Equal Opportunity and Cultural Diversity Policy of Orchard House School applies to staff and pupils in the school, including those pupils in the EYFS. It reflects the following legal requirements and guidance:

- Department for Education advice in The Equality Act 2010 and schools - Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, May 2014
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>)
- Paragraphs 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)(i) and 5(a) of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations, 2014
(<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/3283/schedule/made>)
- 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice' (2015)
(https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)
- The requirements in Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (July 2025, effective September 2025)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>)

1. Orchard House is committed to equal opportunities and aims to be a school which:

- promotes mutual respect and tolerance so that a positive attitude towards self and others is encouraged and maintained
- develops the children's awareness of the diversity of the society in which they live
- creates opportunities for all children to develop individual aptitudes, abilities and potential.
- provides an environment where undesirable discrimination does not occur and where children learn from positive rôle models
- prevents stereo-typing on the basis of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion, colour, ethnic origin, marital status or nationality
- encourages everyone to act positively against any form of undesirable discrimination
- is aware of and sensitive to different learning styles
- is aware of and sensitive to different family structures, backgrounds and values

- is committed to working with parents and other agencies
 - does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
2. This is based on the ethos that no one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, religion, colour, ethnic origin, marital status or nationality.
3. This includes:
- Girls, boys, women, men and transgender individuals
 - People from different ethnic backgrounds
 - People from different faith backgrounds
 - Pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
 - Pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with an Educational and Health Care Plan (EHC plan)
4. The following policies and practices also support the implementation of this policy:
- Ethos & Aims
 - Special Needs Policy and the SEN Code of Practice
 - SENDA Policy
 - EAL Policy
 - More Able and Talented Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Admissions Policy
 - Inclusion Policy
 - Pastoral Care Policy
 - PSHCE scheme of work
5. At the school, teachers and staff are committed to providing a friendly, caring and stimulating environment for children regardless of their status, gender, religion, ethnic origin, age or abilities. The school believes that every pupil has the right to achieve his or her potential, to be held in equal esteem and to have his or her individual needs met in the light of his or her abilities, talents and experiences. The school believes that all people, children and adults, are of equal importance and are entitled to equal dignity and respect.
6. All members of staff must recognise and accept the unique rôle and responsibilities the school has in fostering positive attitudes and values in its children. Every child should have equal access to the curriculum. Such access

can be provided only by methods and practices which take into account children's different needs and not necessarily by treating everyone in the same way.

7. The school promotes the principles of fairness and equality for all. It aims to achieve this through educational opportunities provided in school. These opportunities reflect the facts, among other things, that:

- The curriculum allows all pupils to participate in a wide range of activities, building on previous experience and extending learning
- The school provides a balanced and positive range of images for all groups regardless of gender, religion, ethnic origin, age or ability
- Appropriate and varied teaching styles are used to maximise expectations and achievements of all individuals
- There are opportunities for pupils to work with other children in a variety of groups within their class and across the school
- The timetable ensures that all children have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school
- There is a wide range of sporting activities offered to all pupils, some of mixed gender and others of single sex
- The school provides positive educational experiences and support for each child's individual point of view, with the aim of promoting positive social attitudes and respect for all
- As the school is not ethnically diverse, staff are conscious of the need to put effort into the celebration of cultural diversity within the local community.

Race equality

8. The school is committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity and to promoting good relations between people of different race and nationality
- dealing effectively with any racial discrimination or racial harassment
- promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff
- challenging stereotyping and prejudice

9. Any racist incidents will be recorded and will be subject to sanctions as set out in the school's Behaviour Policy.

Gender

10. All pupils should have equal access to all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, subject choices and extra-curricular activities. It may be necessary for children to receive different treatment in order to ensure equality of opportunity and the school pursues strategies to ensure that all pupils achieve to their full potential.

11. Approaches are promoted and monitored to provide equality of opportunity including:

- Awareness of the possibility of gender bias in teaching and learning materials and teaching styles
- Ensuring teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to all children regardless of gender
- Encouraging children to work and play freely with others of both sexes
- Teaching and other groupings are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship
- Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving / delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children
- Discipline procedures - notably rewards and sanctions - are the same for both sexes.

Disability

12. The nature of the facilities in the school for the disabled is limited due to the age and configuration of the buildings. The school will do all that is reasonable to ensure accessibility in order to accommodate

- Pupils who may be disabled, including those children do not have an EHC plan nor be on any stage of special needs assessment
- Teachers and other school staff
- All visitors to school.

13. In line with the 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice' (2015) the school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with disabilities are not disadvantaged in their access to:

- the physical environment
- the programme of learning and development offered
- the information provided to children and parents
- high aspirations and outcomes

14. The school will ensure that undesirable discrimination does not occur and that disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with others who are not disabled.

The rôle of the staff and curriculum

15. It is the responsibility of the head and all staff at the school to implement and monitor this policy.

16. The school will not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010 and will

- ensure that policies, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan and do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensure an effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society
- ensure all children receive a rich provision of classroom and extra-curricular activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and grit, which underpin success in education and employment
- promote an awareness of other cultures and religions through the whole curriculum
- ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly, equally and with respect
- challenge discriminative attitudes and behaviour and select appropriate methods of addressing these issues
- encourage everyone to value the contributions of others regardless of cultural and religious differences
- be sensitive to the effects of competition and/or collaborative work
- provide the children with the opportunity to experience aspects of different cultures at first hand
- use rôle-play to help children develop empathy and understanding for each other
- include literature, music and art which promotes the achievements of women, ethnic groups and people with disabilities
- select classroom materials with regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature, including checking displays, reading schemes and resources
- use positive images to combat negative stereotypes
- understand different types of learning and develop and encourage different teaching methods to take account of these.
- ensure that children with special needs have access to the curriculum through the implementation of the special needs policy.
- use assemblies as a forum where the children are encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate individual differences.
- include events and visits with the aim of promoting equal opportunities and which promote the positive contribution of women to society, racial equality, cultural diversity and awareness of disability.

- involve pupils, staff and parents in the cultural and ethnic diversity of the school's community.