



Policy Name: **Equal Opportunities for Pupils Policy**

Owner: Senior Deputy Head

Review Date: September 2023

Next Review Date: August 2024

This policy will be revised as regulations or review demands

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Mayfield as a Catholic School. This commitment is shared by all members of staff and Governors. We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our girls 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. Our fundamental objective is to nurture the identity of all students.

Mayfield School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, sex, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, learning difficulty, body image or social background. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are girls to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

We also welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities and refer parents to our Policies covering Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Accessibility.

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. (Details of our provision for bursaries can be found on our web site or obtained from the Bursar's office).

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Headteacher, the Senior Management Team, the pastoral staff, the Boarding House Staff, the Lay Chaplain and the Medical staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the School's Policy on Equal Opportunities. Use is made of Assemblies and Liturgies, Personal Development, Lifeskills, RE, Drama, English and all other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the whole School community.
- 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.

Discriminatory harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination. Teaching and medical staff attend regular INSET sessions on equal opportunities.

A successful Equal Opportunities Policy requires strong and positive support from parent and guardians, and full acceptance of the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

HOW THE SCHOOL WILL RESPOND

Any and all acts of discrimination on any of the 'protected characteristics', whether they appear serious or not, must be responded to. Failure to challenge any form of prejudice, especially on the part of adults, can be viewed by the pupils as condoning it. It is the responsibility of the individual who hears or witnesses an expression of a discriminatory nature to judge the impact and seriousness of the incident.

Action to be taken:

- Challenge those involved unless a member of staff is either the victim or the perpetrator. In this case the matter must be reported directly to the Senior Deputy Head.
- All pupils in the School have a responsibility to act and to report. **If in doubt, TALK TO A MEMBER OF STAFF OR TO A PREFECT. What you must not do is DO NOTHING.**
- If distress caused is evident, the incident must be reported to a member of staff who will fill in an incident form, available in the Working Staffroom. Copies of this form should then be given to the relevant staff dealing with the pastoral care of both sides of the case and to the Senior Deputy Head.
- In the case of a serious case of harassment the School will seek advice from the Police Liaison Officer before any contact with parents is made.

MONITORING

Mayfield School monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy regularly and reports to the Governors annually in order to ensure its effectiveness. As part of that process, we invite all parents of candidates for our entrance exams, together with all parents who accept places at the School for their child to complete an anonymous ethnic monitoring form. When the completed forms arrive at the School, they are separated from any other material that might identify the individual child. The data is logged onto a computer spreadsheet by year of both entrance examination and entry. The individual forms are then shredded.

Under no circumstances would we link our ethnic monitoring data with our pupil records.

We hope that all parents will feel able to participate in the ethnic monitoring scheme.

Although Mayfield is a Catholic School, we do not select for entry solely on the basis of religious belief and we welcome pupils of all faiths and offer the opportunity for pupils to practise their own faiths. The Headteacher will consider written requests from parents and guardians for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on health and safety. The Headteacher may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our Equal Opportunities Policy; but a copy of the School's Complaints Procedure is available on the School website and can be sent to you on request.

Related Policies:

- Accessibility Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equal Opportunities Policy – Staff;
- Complaints Policy;
- Code of Conduct- Pupil/Staff.