

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Pupil)



Ellesmere College

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

Ellesmere College is committed to being an inclusive, internationally minded community in which every pupil is valued, respected and able to participate fully in school life.

The College complies with its statutory duties under the **Equality Act 2010** and has regard to relevant Department for Education guidance and the Independent School Standards. The College also aligns its approach, where appropriate, with the principles of the International Baccalaureate (IB), which promotes respect for cultures, identities, perspectives and diversity.

The College is committed to providing an environment in which all pupils can achieve, belong and thrive. We recognise that pupils may experience barriers to learning, participation or wellbeing for a range of reasons and we seek to identify and remove or reduce such barriers wherever reasonably practicable.

The College's approach to equality and inclusion is embedded throughout its curriculum, pastoral provision, boarding provision, behaviour and anti-bullying arrangements, safeguarding arrangements, admissions, SEND provision and wider school life.

Our approach is consistent with the Independent School Standards, including requirements relating to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the active promotion of fundamental British values. The Independent School Standards guidance emphasises respect for different faiths and beliefs, tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions and preparation for life in modern Britain.

The College supports the IB vision of inclusive education. We believe that every learner should have equitable access to high-quality learning experiences and meaningful participation in all aspects of school life.

Guided by these principles, we work to remove or reduce barriers to learning through inclusive teaching, appropriate support, reasonable adjustments, accessible information and well-planned access arrangements.

We cultivate a culture of collaboration, respect, dignity, belonging and inclusion, recognising that diversity enriches our community and strengthens learning.

Our EDI Policy supports the IB learner profile attributes, especially *open-minded*, *caring*, *principled* and *respectful*.

This policy should be read alongside the College's other relevant policies, including the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, SEND Policy, Accessibility Plan, Admissions Policy, RSE Policy and Complaints Policy.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The College supports equality of opportunity and does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

For the purposes of pupils and education, the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 that are particularly relevant are:

- disability;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation; and
- gender reassignment.

The College also recognises the wider protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. However, age and marriage and civil partnership do not apply as protected characteristics in relation to the College's treatment of pupils under Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

Pregnancy and maternity are also protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and will be considered where applicable to pupils.

The College will not unlawfully discriminate against pupils in the way it provides education, affords access to benefits, facilities or services, excludes pupils or otherwise subjects pupils to detriment.

The College will also take appropriate action to prevent and respond to prejudice, discrimination, harassment and bullying, including where such behaviour is motivated by a protected characteristic or relates to cultural, linguistic or other forms of identity.

The College aims to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of background, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or other relevant individual circumstances, can thrive academically, socially and personally.

The College recognises that equality does not necessarily mean treating every pupil identically. Fairness may require different or additional support to enable pupils to overcome barriers and participate fully.

3. Discrimination can take the following forms, including:

3.1 Direct Discrimination

This occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.

Direct discrimination may also arise because a person is perceived to have a protected characteristic or because of the protected characteristic of someone with whom they are associated.

3.2 Indirect Discrimination

This occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is applied which places persons sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with persons who do not share that characteristic, and the provision, criterion or practice cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

3.3 Victimisation

Victimisation occurs where a person is subjected to a detriment because they have done a protected act under equality legislation, or because the College believes that they have done, or may do, such an act.

The College will take steps to ensure that pupils who raise concerns about discrimination, harassment or victimisation are treated fairly and are protected from retaliation.

3.4 Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

The College will also take seriously other forms of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour which may not meet the legal definition of harassment but which undermine pupil safety, dignity, belonging or wellbeing.

3.5 Disability Discrimination

Disability discrimination can include:

- direct discrimination;
- indirect discrimination;
- discrimination arising from disability;
- failure to make reasonable adjustments; and
- other unlawful treatment prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

The College will consider reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils on an individual basis and will take reasonable steps to avoid disabled pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled pupils.

The College will also maintain an Accessibility Plan addressing access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information.

In addition, the College recognises bias, stereotyping and prejudice relating to cultural, linguistic or other aspects of identity as behaviour which is inconsistent with the College's values and may constitute bullying, misconduct or a safeguarding concern depending on the circumstances.

4. The aims of this policy and the School's ethos as a whole are to:

- 4.1** Eliminate unlawful discrimination on the grounds of relevant protected characteristics.
- 4.2** Challenge and address bullying, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour, including behaviour relating to disability, SEND, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and other characteristics or circumstances which may result in pupils being disadvantaged or marginalised.
- 4.3** Promote equality of opportunity and participation for all pupils in alignment with the College's values and, where appropriate, IB principles of international-mindedness.

- 4.4** Comply with the College's equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.5** Provide a secure, respectful and supportive environment in which all pupils can achieve, belong and thrive.
- 4.6** Provide a learning environment in which pupils feel valued, respected and included and have a sense of belonging.
- 4.7** Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society in which they can take their place in the local, regional, national and international community.
- 4.8** Include and value the contribution of pupils and families to the College's understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 4.9** Provide and promote accurate, balanced and age-appropriate information about the diversity of British society and the wider world.
- 4.10** Actively challenge discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, bullying and harassment and ensure that the College learns from incidents and uses appropriate preventative measures.

Any behaviour motivated by discrimination, prejudice or hatred, or which otherwise undermines the dignity, safety or wellbeing of another pupil, will be dealt with under the College's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies and, where appropriate, its safeguarding procedures.

The College will maintain appropriate records of discriminatory incidents and use these, where appropriate, to identify patterns, assess risk and inform preventative action. Such records will be maintained and processed in accordance with the College's data protection obligations and records management arrangements.

5. To achieve these aims we will:

- 5.1** Promote justice, equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all pupils, recognising that different pupils may require different forms of support to achieve equitable access and participation.
- 5.2** Establish an environment where prejudice is challenged, positive relationships are developed and pupils' confidence, dignity and self-esteem are supported.
- 5.3** Provide a safe and welcoming environment for all pupils without unlawful discrimination.
- 5.4** Challenge sexist, racist, ableist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, religious or other discriminatory assumptions, attitudes and behaviour.
- 5.5** Provide a curriculum which develops pupils' understanding of equality, respect, diversity, relationships and citizenship and equips them to challenge prejudice and discrimination appropriately.
- 5.6** Contribute towards developing pupils' understanding of citizenship, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

5.7 Avoid unnecessarily reinforcing stereotypical views of society through careful use of language, teaching approaches and choice of resources.

6. Curriculum

The curriculum reflects UK requirements and, where appropriate, IB frameworks by promoting inclusion, respect, equality and international-mindedness.

The College uses the curriculum, assemblies, pastoral and wellbeing programmes, RSE, PSHE-related provision, enrichment activities and appropriately selected external speakers to develop pupils' understanding of equality, respect, different cultures, faiths, identities and perspectives.

The College will have regard to the statutory **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education** guidance, as amended from time to time. The College will ensure that teaching is consistent with applicable statutory requirements relating to equality, respect and protected characteristics.

6.1 Shared Values

We welcome pupils from all backgrounds and expect all members of the College community to respect the dignity and rights of others.

While the College recognises and celebrates diversity, all pupils are expected to respect the College's shared values and the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

6.2 Cultural Celebration

We respect and celebrate cultural traditions and festivals in an educationally appropriate manner.

Opportunities may include learning about cultural and religious festivals, shared activities and meals, subject-specific study, assemblies and community events.

The College will ensure that such activities are respectful, age-appropriate and inclusive and do not stereotype or misrepresent particular cultures or faiths.

6.3 IB Alignment

Learning fosters open-mindedness, cultural understanding, critical thinking, respect for others and the ability to engage constructively with differing perspectives.

6.4 Language Awareness

We value linguistic diversity and recognise the contribution of multilingualism to the College community.

The College will provide appropriate support for pupils who use English as an additional language where this is necessary to enable them to access education and participate effectively.

6.5 Challenging Stereotypes

The College recognises that some subjects, activities and careers may be affected by stereotypes relating to sex, race, disability or other characteristics.

Our teaching plans should:

- 6.5.1** Celebrate the achievements and contributions of people of different sexes, races, cultures, faiths and backgrounds across all fields.
- 6.5.2** Use effective classroom management to ensure that all pupils have an equitable opportunity to participate.
- 6.5.3** Value the experiences and contributions of all pupils equally.
- 6.5.4** Ensure learning is relevant, accessible and appropriately challenging for the pupils being taught.

The College recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect or arise from disability, whether intentional or otherwise.

Harassment and bullying are never acceptable and will be addressed through the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies and, where appropriate, safeguarding procedures.

The College will ensure that teaching about protected characteristics is age-appropriate, accurate and consistent with applicable statutory guidance. In relation to RSE, the College will have regard to the current statutory guidance and any subsequent revisions.

7. Educational Experience

To ensure every pupil has a positive learning journey, Ellesmere College will:

7.1 Respect and Dignity

Treat every member of the College community with respect and provide a learning environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

7.2 Meeting Needs

Meet pupils' individual educational and pastoral needs wherever reasonably practicable and without unlawful discrimination.

This includes appropriate provision for pupils with SEND, EAL and high attainment needs.

Where a pupil has an identified special educational need or disability, appropriate assessment, support and review arrangements will be put in place in accordance with the College's SEND arrangements, the Equality Act 2010 and relevant statutory guidance.

Parents and pupils will be involved appropriately in identifying needs and reviewing support.

Identification may be achieved through:

- teacher observation;
- parental information;
- pupil self-referral;
- assessment and tracking;
- pastoral information; and
- advice from appropriately qualified external professionals.

Support may be articulated through an Individual Education Plan (IEP), pupil support plan or other appropriate documentation.

Interventions will be tailored to the individual pupil and may include:

- assistive technology;
- accessible or adapted resources;
- colour overlays where appropriate;
- specialist teaching;
- individual or small-group support;
- adjustments to teaching approaches;
- reasonable adjustments; and
- access arrangements where applicable.

The needs of individual pupils will be considered in partnership with pupils and parents, where appropriate, and support will be reviewed regularly.

Monitoring may include termly review of individual support plans and half-termly or other appropriate tracking by relevant staff, including Section Leaders, Department Leaders, SENCO, Head of EAL and relevant programme coordinators.

The College is committed to ensuring equitable access to its educational programmes, including GCSE, IGCSE, A level, International Baccalaureate Diploma and BTEC programmes, subject to the academic, regulatory and other requirements applicable to each programme.

The College will seek to identify and reduce barriers to participation and will consider reasonable adjustments where required by law.

7.3 Special Educational Needs

Support pupils with an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** in accordance with the requirements of the plan and the College's legal duties.

Where an EHCP identifies provision that the College is responsible for delivering, the College will ensure that such provision is appropriately considered and implemented.

7.4 Academic Support

Provide appropriate additional help in English, Mathematics and other areas where assessment identifies a need.

Where additional provision attracts a charge, parents will be informed clearly in advance.

7.5 Academic Stretch

Provide appropriate challenge for high-attaining pupils to help them reach their potential.

7.6 Language Support

Offer appropriate additional support for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Where additional provision attracts a charge, parents will be informed clearly in advance.

7.7 Active Intervention

Challenge discriminatory, prejudicial, bullying or harassing behaviour from pupils, staff, parents or others immediately and appropriately.

Where behaviour raises a safeguarding concern, the College's safeguarding procedures will also apply.

7.8 Full Access

Seek to ensure that pupils can access the curriculum, educational benefits, facilities, services and extracurricular opportunities provided by the College.

Where a disabled pupil would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage, the College will consider and implement reasonable adjustments where required and reasonable.

The College will maintain an Accessibility Plan addressing:

- increasing access to the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment; and
- improving access to information.

7.9 Staff Training

Ensure staff receive appropriate training and information relating to equality, diversity, inclusion, disability, SEND, bullying, prejudice, safeguarding and the College's expectations concerning respectful behaviour.

Training will be reviewed in light of emerging risks, incidents, inspection findings and changes to statutory guidance.

7.10 Partnerships

Work appropriately with pupils, parents, carers, external agencies and other relevant professionals to prevent discrimination and promote inclusion.

8 Religious Belief

Although the College has a Christian ethos and tradition, the College is inclusive and welcomes pupils from different religious backgrounds and pupils who have no religion or belief.

The College will respect pupils' rights to hold, change or express religious or philosophical beliefs, subject to lawful and proportionate limitations required to protect the rights, safety and wellbeing of others and to enable the College to fulfil its educational and safeguarding responsibilities.

As a Woodard School, the College has a Christian ethos and worship/church services form part of the College's educational and spiritual life.

Where a pupil or parent raises a concern relating to religious observance, participation or reasonable adjustment, the College will consider the circumstances individually and seek an appropriate and lawful response.

The College will promote mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs and will challenge religious prejudice, intolerance and discrimination.

9 Reasonable Adjustments

9.1 The College has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where they would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled pupils.

The College will consider reasonable adjustments on an individual basis, taking account of the pupil's needs, the effectiveness of the proposed adjustment, practicability, resources, cost, disruption and the impact on the College and other pupils.

Reasonable adjustments may include changes to policies, practices or procedures, provision of auxiliary aids and services, or other appropriate steps.

The College will consult appropriately with pupils and parents when determining reasonable adjustments.

The College will also consider appropriate and lawful adaptations or adjustments relating to other protected characteristics where required to prevent unlawful discrimination.

Any arrangements concerning a pupil who is questioning their gender or experiencing gender-related distress will be considered sensitively, individually and in accordance with the College's safeguarding arrangements and the statutory framework applicable at the time.

The College will not make assumptions about a pupil's circumstances and will consider the pupil's welfare, safeguarding, privacy, dignity and the rights of others when making decisions.

The College will have regard to the current version of Keeping Children Safe in Education and any relevant statutory guidance concerning children who are questioning their gender.

9.2 The College will maintain and regularly review an Accessibility Plan.

The Accessibility Plan will address:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improving the accessibility of information for disabled pupils.

The College will consider improvements to the physical environment through its accessibility planning and wider estates planning.

The College recognises that the Equality Act reasonable-adjustment duty for schools operates alongside the separate statutory accessibility-planning duty. The College will therefore address physical accessibility through its Accessibility Plan rather than treating alterations to physical features as part of the reasonable-adjustment duty.

10. Rights and Responsibilities

All members of the College community have the right to respect and dignity within a learning environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

It is the responsibility of all members of the College community, including pupils, parents and legal guardians, teachers, coaches and boarding staff, specialist staff and programme coordinators, to:

- 10.1** Positively role-model inclusive, respectful and courteous behaviour.
- 10.2** Actively challenge or report discrimination, victimisation, harassment, bullying and prejudicial behaviour.
- 10.3** Promote an inclusive curriculum and identify and challenge inappropriate bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and College culture.
- 10.4** Commit to broadening their knowledge, confidence and inclusive behaviour by participating in relevant training and accessing appropriate information.

Pupils are expected to follow the College's Behaviour Policy and to treat others with dignity and respect.

Staff are expected to act consistently with the College's Staff Code of Conduct and safeguarding procedures.

11. Concerns and Complaints

- 11.1** The College will provide a supportive environment for pupils who raise concerns about discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying or other prejudicial behaviour.

Any pupil who believes that they have been discriminated against or subjected to discriminatory or prejudicial conduct should speak to a trusted member of staff, their House staff or a Deputy Head, or use the College's complaints procedure where appropriate.

Concerns involving safeguarding will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- 11.2** Any pupil who discriminates against, harasses or bullies another pupil will be subject to the College's Behaviour Policy and disciplinary procedures.

The response will be proportionate to the circumstances and may include educational, restorative, pastoral or disciplinary measures.

Where appropriate, incidents will also be managed under the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and safeguarding procedures.

- 11.3** If parents or legal guardians believe that this policy has been breached, they should raise their concern or complaint through the College Complaints Policy, which is available on the College website or on request.

The College will monitor complaints and discriminatory incidents to identify recurring issues, trends or areas requiring preventative action.

12 Positive Action

In some circumstances, meeting the needs of a particular pupil or group of pupils to ensure equitable access to education and opportunities may require a different approach from that used for other pupils.

Where lawful, the College may take proportionate positive action to:

- overcome or minimise a disadvantage connected to a protected characteristic;
- meet different needs connected to a protected characteristic; or
- enable or encourage participation in an activity where participation by persons sharing a protected characteristic is disproportionately low.

Any positive action will be lawful, proportionate and based on identified need.

Positive action will not be used as a means of unlawfully discriminating against other pupils. The College will not operate quotas or provide automatic preference to individuals solely on the basis of a protected characteristic.

13. Related Policies

- Admissions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Prevent Duty Policy / arrangements within the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- RSE Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy – Staff
- Educational Visits Policy
- Boarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy

14. Review

A review of this policy will be conducted annually and sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, inspection requirements or College practice.

The policy will also be reviewed following significant equality-related incidents, complaints, safeguarding concerns or relevant inspection findings where this would assist in improving the College's practice.

The review will consider, where appropriate:

- equality-related incidents;
- bullying and harassment data;
- pupil voice;
- complaints;
- participation and access;
- SEND and accessibility information;
- curriculum and RSHE developments;
- relevant inspection findings; and
- changes to statutory guidance.

The policy will be reviewed alongside the College's Accessibility Plan, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, SEND Policy and relevant safeguarding policies to ensure consistency.

Authorised by	The Head	
Date	September 2026	

Reviewed by	Head/DSL/Deputy Pastoral	
Date	September 2026	

Effective date of policy	September 2026	
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