CRANLEIGH
SCHOOL
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Equal opportunities policy (pupils)

Version control

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Policy table of contents

	Page		**Page**
Introduction	2	Victimisation	5
Aims	2	Admission	5
Scope	2	Education and associated services	6
Regulatory framework	2	School uniform	7
Responsibility statement	3	Religious belief	7
Publication and availability	3	Disability and SEN	7
Definitions	3	Pupils with EHC plans	10
Policy statement	3	Pupils with EAL	11
Discrimination	4	Risk assessment	11
Harassment	5	Record keeping	11

Introduction

- This is the equal opportunities (pupils) policy of Cranleigh School (the **School**). The School comprises Cranleigh School and Cranleigh Preparatory School.

- **The School:** Cranleigh School is an independent mainstream boarding and day school for girls and boys aged from 3 to 19 years. The School is a registered charity with a Christian ethos and welcomes staff, workers, volunteers, pupils, parents, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. The term 'School Community' includes staff, governors, pupils, parents, visitors and volunteers.

Aims

Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- communicate the commitment of the School to the promotion of equal opportunities;
- promote equal treatment within the School for all members of the School Community;
- create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- foster mutual tolerance and positive behaviours, practices and attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the current and prospective School Community. There is also an Equal Opportunities Policy for Staff in the Staff Handbook.

Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- *Boarding schools: national minimum standards* (Department for Education (**DfE**), September 2022);
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Children Act 1989;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR); and
- Children and Families Act 2014.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Equality Act 2010: explanatory notes (2010);
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, May 2015);
- Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, July 2014);
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools: departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (DfE, May 2014);
- Gender separation in mixed schools (DfE, June 2018);
- Advice and Guidance: How can we stop prejudice-based bullying in schools? (Equality and Human Rights Commission);

- Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, July 2018 as amended in December 2020);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2026); and
- Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education guidance (DfE, June 2019, as updated December 2026)

The following School policies, procedures, documents and resource material are relevant to this policy:

- Equal opportunities (staff) policy;
- Admissions policy
- Policy on discipline and behaviour;
- School rules/Conventions;
- Anti-bullying policy;
- Disability policy;
- Accessibility plan;
- Special educational needs policy (including English as an additional language)
- Relationships education/Relationships and sex education policy;
- The terms and conditions of the contract for educational services made between the School and the parents.

Responsibility statement

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

Publication and availability

This policy is published on the School website and is available in hard copy on request from the Director of Operations. A copy is available for inspection from The School Office during the School day and can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Definitions

Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

- reference to **EHC Plan(s)** is to Education and Health Care Plan(s);
- references to **Protected Characteristics** are as defined in Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010;
- reference to **PSHE** is the personal, social, health and economic education programme;
- references to the **School Community** includes staff, supply staff, governors, pupils, parents, carers, visitors and volunteers.

Policy statement

The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse School Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Pupils will be taught to value and respect others and other cultures. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the School Community.

In the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under law to oppose discrimination on the basis of the following Protected Characteristics:

- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief);
- sex;
- sexual orientation and (in the case of adult members of the School Community);
- marital and civil partnership status; and
- age.

The School also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need (SEN) or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The School aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunities. The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes, behaviours and practices through staff leading by example, through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, relationships education / relationships and sex education policy and programmes, through the supportive School culture and through the School's wider policies.

Discrimination

Types: Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. This policy covers the following forms of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting an applicant of one race because it is considered they would not "fit in". This would be a decision based on grounds of their race and would be direct discrimination. Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity). For example, if a pupil is harassed or victimised because a sibling is disabled, this would be direct discrimination against that pupil.

- **Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race. For example, a minimum height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If these criteria cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, they would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex.

- **Discrimination arising from disability:** Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, where a pupil with cerebral palsy who is a wheelchair user is told they will unable to attend a school trip because there is no wheelchair access available and other options are not investigated.

Harassment

This policy covers the following forms of harassment:

- **Harassment related to a Protected Characteristic:** Harassment may occur where someone engages in unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that person. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a Protected Characteristic.
- **Sexual harassment:** Harassment may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature and that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for that person. It is also harassment to treat someone less favourably because they have either rejected, or submitted to, sexual harassment.

The School will not tolerate harassment for any reason. Further information relating to the following types of harassment can be found in the relevant school policies below:

- Harassment relating to a protected characteristic by a pupil is likely to be contrary to the School's Anti-Bullying Policy and Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Harassment relating to a protected characteristic by a member of staff is likely to be contrary to the School's Code of Conduct / Dignity at Work / Disciplinary Policy.
- Sexual harassment relating to pupils and the School's response will be dealt with in the safeguarding policy.
- Sexual harassment relating to staff in the Dignity at Work Policy.

Victimisation

- Victimisation may occur where a person is treated less favourably than otherwise may be the case, because of some action (referred to as a 'protected act') that they have taken, they may take or they are believed to have taken in connection with the Equality Act 2010. Protected acts are, broadly, any actions taken by a person in good faith in connection with the Equality Act, such as making or supporting an allegation of discrimination or harassment.
- It is also unlawful to victimise a child for anything done in relation to the Equality Act by their parent or sibling.
- It is important that no one is afraid to raise genuine concerns about discrimination because of fear of retaliation.

Admission

- **Applicants:** The School accepts applications from, and admits pupils irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, or religion or belief or special educational needs (**SEN**) and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered. The School will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way.

- **Selection:** Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the pupil's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of excluding pupils with a disability or special educational needs, subject to the details below.

- **Admissions Policy:** The School's Admissions Policy reflects the School's approach towards equal opportunities for prospective pupils and is consistent with this policy.

Education and associated services

Equal access

- The School will afford all pupils equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, or religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to overriding considerations of safety and welfare.

Positive action

- The School may afford pupils of a particular racial group, or pupils with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the pupils in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

Exclusions

- The School will not discriminate against any pupil by excluding them from the School, or by subjecting them to any other detriment, on the grounds of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, or religion or belief, or special educational needs.

Teaching and School materials

Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, on the grounds of sex or race), so that this can be eliminated in both the School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

Pupil interaction

All pupils are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other pupils, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and pupils will be encouraged to question assumptions, stereotypes and negative behaviours and practices.

The School's PSHE and relationships education and/or relationships and sex education curriculum encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the Protected Characteristics. At the Senior School, the pupil-led Cranleigh Being groups including the Pupil Wellbeing Group and Diversity Alliance, and their associated sub-committees, promote activities to raise awareness and support inclusion for all pupils.

Bullying

Bullying is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal or as "banter", "just having a laugh", "boys being boys" or simply "part of growing up". The School will not tolerate bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory-based bullying) for any reason and adopts a zero-tolerance approach. Specific types of bullying include:

- bullying relating to race, religion, belief or culture;
- bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or disabilities;
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions;

- bullying relating to sexual orientation;
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances;
- sexist or sexual bullying or bullying related to gender reassignment.

The School's Anti-Bullying Policy contains more details about the School's anti-bullying practices.

School uniform

The School Uniform is consistent with this policy. The same School Uniform Policy applies equally to all pupils, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, or religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the School will consider reasonable requests to alter the School Uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled children.

Symbols of faith

- Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle worn by Sikhs, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by pupils when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the School's existing School Uniform Policy principles (in regards to, for example, the School colours). 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 Head, whose decision will be final, subject to the Complaints procedure.

Disabled pupils

- Reasonable adjustments may be required to the School Uniform for disabled pupils who require them. The pupil or their parents should refer the matter to the Head to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the pupil.

Religious belief

Religion

- The School's religious ethos, services and school timetable are set in accordance with the Christian tradition, but the School respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith, subject always to their respecting the rights and freedoms of the School Community as a whole and considerations of safety and welfare.

Disability and special educational needs

Our approach

We are an inclusive School which welcomes members of the School Community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the School and we will not treat a member of the School Community less favourably on these grounds without justification.

At present, our facilities, physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited. However, we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our policies on

Special Educational Needs and Disability are consistent with this policy. For a copy of these policies, please contact the Director of Operations.

Reasonable adjustments

The School has an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, including pupils with special educational needs where this falls within the definition of "disability" in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life, for example:

- the curriculum
- classroom organisation and timetabling
- access to school facilities
- clubs and visits
- school sports and
- school policies.

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room;
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam;
- providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment;
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building;
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

In making "reasonable adjustments" the School is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils where to do so would be reasonable. The School will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

The School reserves the right to charge for the provision of additional teaching where it is lawful to do so.

Additional activities

As well as providing educational services, the School provides services to the public, for example at:

- open days;
- parents' evenings;
- concerts and plays;
- exhibitions;
- conferences (including residential conferences during holiday periods);
- use of sports facilities.

When providing such services, the School will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are able to use the School's services as far as is reasonable to the same extent and standard as non-disabled people.

For reasonable adjustments for staff please see the Equal Opportunities Policy for staff.

Informing the School

In accordance with the School's terms and conditions, parents of pupils must, as soon as possible, disclose to the School if they are aware or suspect that the pupil (or prospective pupil) has a disability

or if the pupil (or prospective pupil), or any member of their immediate family, have at any time had or have a learning difficulty.

The registration form enables prospective parents to give details of their child's disability when applying for a place at the School. Parents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the School with such information will enable the School to support the pupil as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis. The School will have due regard to any request made by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

Admission of children with a disability or special educational need

Applications for a place at the School will be considered on the basis that reasonable adjustments have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's disability or other arrangements for a child's special educational need where this does not fall within the definition of "disability".

The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments (or other arrangements) have been made, the School will not be able to provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs. The School shall inform the parents of their decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments (or other arrangements) they are going to make or give reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

Existing pupils

Where the School becomes aware of a disability of an existing pupil (or the special educational need of an existing pupil where this does not fall within the definition of "disability") the School will do all that is reasonable to assist the pupil whilst at the School, which may include making reasonable adjustments (or other arrangements).

If in the professional judgement of the Head, and after consultation with the parents and the pupil (where appropriate), the School cannot provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs after all reasonable adjustments (or other arrangements) have been made, parents will be asked to withdraw the pupil, without being charged fees in lieu of notice and with the acceptance deposit returned. The School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

Access

The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The School has an Accessibility Plan, which is kept under review and revised as necessary. The Plan is available on request from the Director of Operations.

Learning Support

The School's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators are Krystle Flack at Cranleigh School and Jean Salt at Cranleigh Preparatory School.

Pupils with EHC plans

The School's Policy on SEN & Learning Support includes details about the welfare and educational provision for pupils with education and health care plans.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) will receive additional learning support if necessary. The School will consult with the pupil and the parents as appropriate. The School has appropriate welfare support for all such pupils through the supportive House culture.

Risk assessment

Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focused.

Record keeping

- All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Director of Operations.
- The records created in accordance with this policy may contain personal data. The School has a number of privacy notices which explain how the School will use personal data. The School's approach to data protection compliance is set out in the Overarching Data Protection Policy. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy; this includes the School's Data Protection Policy: Practical Guidance for Staff and the Information Security Policy.