



Cokethorpe

SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils

September 2024

Reviewed: September 2024
Next review: September 2025

PUPILS' EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Specific Guidelines

The ethos of the School is found within the hidden and open messages and atmosphere which are shared amongst students and members of staff. Cokethorpe School strives to create an ethos that demonstrates its opposition to prejudice, discrimination and other inequalities which lead to lack of opportunity both socially and educationally. We should do the following to try and achieve this goal:

- Value the qualities of every member of the School to seek to increase the self-esteem of each person and encourage respect for each other as individuals irrespective of gender, race, class, ability, etc
- Encourage everyone to share in challenging discrimination and prejudice with regard to race, gender or class. Jokes, opinions, etc, should not pass 'unheard' or unchallenged as failure to deal with such comments could be seen as passive approval
- Establish a structured response to acts of discrimination and abuse, eg sexual or racial harassment, either physical or verbal. These should be responded to in context at an appropriate level
- Establish within the pastoral and/or academic curriculum, courses where issues of discrimination and prejudice can be encountered and explored in a controlled context, and where such attitudes do not go unchallenged
- Attempt to involve parents, students, governors and the local community in the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy and in future reviews
- Ensure that assemblies and events involving large groups of students, staff and parents are gender balanced in relation to individuals taking a leading role and that they are briefed as to the school's Equal Opportunities Policy with regard to any speech or presentation they are to give so as to avoid prejudice or stereotyping

Physical Environment of the School

The School environment should be one in which all can feel secure, physically and emotionally.

We should:

- Encourage the display of as wide a range of students' work as possible in both teaching areas and other public area. It is very important to show men and women in non-stereotypical situations to encourage boys and girls to have an open choice in options or career. Also, as Britain is a multicultural society, our displays in school should reflect this by showing positive images of different ethnic groups. In addition, images should be encouraged of people with disabilities in positive and active roles
- Ensure that disabled pupils and adults have access to school buildings, a toilet designed for their needs and clear signposts for special facilities. For students with disabilities we should provide help where possible and ensure staff are aware of the nature of any disability, seen or unseen

Promoting Equal Opportunities

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Cokethorpe School. The School welcomes 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 feel valued and can flourish.

Cokethorpe School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. We are a selective school, 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.

We also welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities and refer parents to our policy covering Special Education Needs (SEN), learning difficulties, and disability.

Means tested 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 website or obtained from the bursar's office.

The Headmaster supported by the Senior Management Team, Housemasters, Chaplain, School Nurse and the Tutors play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the School's policy on equal opportunities. Use is made of assemblies, WIT, PRE, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 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.

Harassment in all its forms unlawful and unacceptable; our behaviour and anti-bullying policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination. All our staff receive anti-discrimination training. Teaching and medical staff attend regular INSET sessions on the subject. Reference should be made to the School's Prevention of Bullying Policy and School Rules.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and guardians, and full acceptance of the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

Requests for Variation in the School Uniform

Although Cokethorpe School is a Joint Foundation (Roman Catholic and Church of England) Christian School, we do not select for entry based on religious belief, and we welcome pupils of all faiths and offer the opportunity for pupils to practice their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that all pupils at Cokethorpe School are required to wear a uniform until the Sixth Form and that a "business dress" code operates in those years. The Headmaster will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on Health and Safety. The Headmaster may seek 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 website or can be sent to you on request.