

Equal Opportunities Policy

Berkhamsted Prep and Pre-Prep

Berkhamsted Senior Schools & Sixth

Heatherton

Berkhamsted Day Nursery Ltd.

Berkhamsted School Enterprises Ltd.

Revision and Terminology: Please refer to the School's Policies Policy.

Policy owner:	Chief People Officer
Type of policy:	Regulatory
Last reviewed by / date:	Exec on 3 October 2019
Last approved by / date:	Governors' Risk & Regulatory Committee on 12 November 2019
Next review due:	Michaelmas 2022
This version published:	4 May 2022
Circulation:	<div> <div> ✓ All Staff & Governors ✓ School Website ✓ Senior & Sixth Pupils </div> <div> ✓ Inspection Portal ✓ Parent Portal </div> </div>
Linked Policies:	Accessibility Plan Admissions Behaviour and Discipline Children Looked After Collective Worship Disability English as an Additional Language Prevention of Bullying Recruitment of Support Staff, Peris and Sports Coaches Special Educational Needs Relationships Education and PSHE (Preps) RSE and PSHE (Senior & Sixth) Teaching Staff Appointment Procedures

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Scope of this policy

1 Introduction

Berkhamsted Schools Group is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the school community and the wider community are treated equally, fairly, and with respect by the School and by each other. This applies to the School as a place of education, a business, and an employer. Prejudice, discrimination, and victimisation are not tolerated, and we work hard to instill in our pupils a strong understanding of right and wrong, including the importance of inclusion, acceptance, and compassion towards others.

This plan sets out how the School will satisfy its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate all behaviour prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, to foster good relations between persons with and without protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity regardless of whether a person has a protected characteristic (such as race, gender, transgender, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation).

The School aims to comply with this duty, in both the delivery of its education and services and the employment of its staff. It is created by the School's executive committee and governing body in line with the Equality Act 2010 and is the foundation of all the School's other policies – particularly the Special Educational Needs Policy, Admissions Policy, Prevention of Bullying Policy and the Behaviour and Discipline Policy (which can be found on the school website and Parent Portal and are available to staff via Berkhamsted Hub).

The School's main priority is to provide the best education and care that we can, and establish a cooperative working relationship between home and school, so as to aid the development, progress, and needs of all the children in our care.

2 Overall responsibility

- 2.1 The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Governors has delegated to the Executive day-to-day responsibility for operating the Policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Creating a school environment that promotes equality and denounces discrimination is a whole-school responsibility and requires all members of the school community to be actively involved in breaking down barriers to learning and barriers to social and emotional development that prejudice can create
- 3.2 The Executive have responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices that promote and value diversity and difference and report back to the governing body on how these practices are working and any amendments that they feel should be made.
- 3.3 All those working at a management level have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the School with regard to equal opportunities. They are responsible for:

- 3.3.1 promoting the School's policy on equality and diversity both within the School and externally to the rest of the community
- 3.3.2 ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities regarding the promotion and delivery of equality in school
- 3.3.3 challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
- 3.3.4 tackle bias and stereotyping
- 3.3.5 take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs
- 3.4 Following a Middle Leaders Working Party on Equality and Diversity, a Standing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (SEDIC) has been established. The terms of reference of the SEDIC can be found at Appendix I.
- 3.5 Individual staff in the School are expected to take responsibility for supporting and promoting equality in school above and beyond the responsibilities listed below:
 - 3.5.1 ensure that they are up to date and aware of the contents of this plan and the School's policy towards all types of discrimination
 - 3.5.2 challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
 - 3.5.3 tackle bias and stereotyping
 - 3.5.4 work to promote anti-bullying strategies as outlined in the School's Behaviour and Prevention of Bullying Policy
 - 3.5.5 show a commitment to undertake development and training within this area
 - 3.5.6 engage with the School in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to pupils
 - 3.5.7 promote a positive working environment
 - 3.5.8 report back to their line managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, either by staff, pupils, or any other member of the school community, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary.
- 3.6 Pupils at the School will:
 - 3.6.1 engage with the School in eliminating any discrimination
 - 3.6.2 promote a positive work environment and a positive attitude towards equality when both in school and off the school site
 - 3.6.3 report to school staff any incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour, discrimination or victimisation that they know to have occurred
 - 3.6.4 work to promote the anti-bullying strategies outlined in the School's Behaviour and Prevention of Bullying Policy
 - 3.6.5 set a good example regarding behaviour and social awareness to younger pupils and their peers.
- 3.7 Parents, carers and visitors to the School are expected to:
 - 3.7.1 familiarise themselves with the School's policies and promote a positive attitude towards equality at home

- 3.7.2 attend any relevant meetings/awareness-raising sessions that they are invited to relating to the School's equality policies
- 3.7.3 work with the School to resolve any incident relating to discrimination or victimisation that their child is involved in
- 3.7.4 respect and follow our equality policies when visiting the School or attending a school event

4 Key Groups at Risk

- 4.1 While the School recognises that any person or group of people can become victim to discrimination, victimisation or unfair treatment, people may be more at risk of becoming victims of inequality due to:

- 4.1.1 Race

- 4.1.2 Disability (temporary or permanent)

- 4.1.2.1 Educational and related decisions and actions regarding any pupils who have some sensory impairment, communication problem or physical handicap, are taken only after consultation with parents, health professionals and staff who have specific responsibility for their pastoral support. The School encourages any such pupils to use their normal aids for speaking, listening, reading or writing. In striving to meet individual needs, teachers may provide recommended computational, technological or other facilities, in order to adapt work spaces, equipment, instruments or furniture. The School's accessibility plan, approved by governors in accordance with The Disability Discrimination Act, specifies where adaptations to educational facilities are deemed appropriate.

- 4.1.2.2 You can find all the information about our School's SEN provision including our provision for inclusion in the School's SEN Policy and the School's Accessibility Plan

- 4.1.2.3 Reasonable adjustments will be made following consultation with a medical professional for staff with a temporary or permanent disability.

- 4.1.3 Gender, transgender and Sexual orientation

The School will ensure that:

- All members of the School community are treated equally, regardless of gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation
 - The School will promote understanding and respect of all these issues through its pastoral tutor programme and PSHE programme
 - Guidance is given on subject choices and careers encouraging pupils to consider non-stereotypical opportunities
 - Gender issues are considered when planning all aspects of the curriculum and provision

4.1.4 Religion or belief

The School's policy is that religious studies should be accessible to all pupils. The School seeks to make appropriate arrangements to reflect the requirements of different religious faiths. These may include reasonable arrangements to allow for specific acts of religious observance in school.

4.1.5 Looked After Children (CLA) and previously Looked After Children (PLA)

This policy has regard to the Government guidance "The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children: Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities" (DfE, February 2018): the circumstances and particular needs of Looked After Children (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLA) will be considered and provided for in the application and review of this policy. For further details, please refer to the Children Looked After policy.

5 Diamond Structure

- 5.1 The five schools of the Berkhamsted Schools Group based in Berkhamsted are organised in a Diamond Model, with boys and girls taught co-educationally up to the end of Year 6, then in single-sex classes between Year 7-11, with a co-educational Sixth Form.
- 5.2 Between Year 7-11, boys and girls at Berkhamsted have lessons taught to them separately, on different sites, and on different timetables. Whilst this may appear to be merely for historical reasons, it forms part of the School's positive action both to ensure that boys and girls are able to achieve more in their academic studies during the GCSE years, and to help to ensure that A level choices are not gender biased. Whilst the timetables are separate, the curriculum in Years 7-11 is identical: the same subjects are provided with the same timetable allocations, and equality of provision is of the highest priority.
- 5.3 Boys and girls also receive co-education in the broader sense, via trips, Drama, Music, Outdoor Education, CCF, and Clubs and Societies.

6 Community Cohesion

- 6.1 The School expects all of its pupils and staff to act respectfully towards members of the wider community that the School is part of at all times, whether this is part of a structured interaction such as community service or an informal interaction within the community.

7 Inclusion

- 7.1 Promoting and practising inclusion in school lessons, around the school site, during all school activities and into the wider community is a key part of developing a positive attitude towards equality and people from different backgrounds. You can find more information regarding our provision for and policy on inclusion for SEND in the School's SEN Policy. The School provides internal schemes to support the inclusion in lessons and around school.

8 Student Voice

- 8.1 Through our support of Student Voice we encourage our pupils to have confidence in voicing their opinions and taking responsibility for the world around them. It is important that we teach our children how to engage in mature social interactions and get along with a variety of different types of people. This is developed through student voice by interactions between pupils from different year groups, pupils and staff, and pupils and the wider community. The student council, School debating teams, pupil observers with teacher recruitment and positions of responsibilities provide examples of where we value pupil voice.

9 Recruitment

- 9.1 Berkhamsted is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation.
- 9.2 Berkhamsted acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy outlined in this plan is the foundation for all its activities.
- 9.3 Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel, it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to. More information about our recruitment procedures can be found in the School's recruitment policies.

10 Teaching and Learning

- 10.1 Strategies should be adopted by all departments to ensure equality across the School in terms of access to courses, resources and support.
- 10.2 Departments should ensure that their learning and teaching methods and resources:
- 10.2.1 depict a world view as seen by all genders and from differing racial or cultural perspectives;
 - 10.2.2 are factually accurate and use contemporary text, illustrations, maps etc
 - 10.2.3 do not stereotype individuals or groups or perpetuate stereotypical ideas;
 - 10.2.4 show the achievements of all genders, past and present;
 - 10.2.5 show the achievements and attributes of different societies, past and present;
 - 10.2.6 do not use caricature;
 - 10.2.7 accurately reflect the diverse population of Britain today;
 - 10.2.8 use dialect appropriately and avoid ridicule
- 10.3 Inappropriate or out-of-date material should be replaced.

11 Pupils with English as an Additional Language

- 11.1 Curriculum support should be provided where necessary for pupils whose first language is not English. The School is fully committed to providing an integrated language support system in the School Curriculum.

12 Access to Courses

- 12.1 The School aims to ensure that:
 - 12.1.1 all pupils have similar access to the curriculum in each year group, as appropriate;
 - 12.1.2 all pupils follow a similar Scheme of Work in each year group, as appropriate;
 - 12.1.3 efforts are made to offer all pupils their entitlement to the whole curriculum using a variety of modes of delivery and resources;
 - 12.1.4 the current Schemes of Work satisfy the needs of pupils of all abilities, are sufficiently demanding to test the most able pupils to the full, and encourage those of average abilities and below to higher levels of achievement;
 - 12.1.5 Since pupils do not necessarily learn fundamental concepts in a linear fashion, care is exercised in the development of Schemes of Work. These should contain a spiral/progressive element that allows, as far as possible, for certain concepts to be revisited and at different levels (most courses are topic/theme based with several topics/themes being visited in each of the school years as appropriate);
 - 12.1.6 In line with National Policy, parents can withdraw their children from certain elements in the curriculum e.g. aspects of sex education. Please refer to the RSE and PSHE (Senior & Sixth) Policy for more information.

Appendix I - Terms of Reference of the Standing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (SEDIC)

Terms of reference Standing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (SEDIC)

Purpose

The main goal of the Committee is to champion a school culture where everyone feels fairly treated, safe, included and respected.

Scope

The Committee will explore, investigate, support and make recommendations to the Exec on issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion across the Berkhamsted Schools Group. They will run projects and events. The Committee's remit does not extend to HR functions such as dealing complaints or staff grievances, nor does it encroach on the responsibilities of the Learning Support department or Wellbeing team. It may signpost staff or students to alternative support as required e.g. the Counselling service; and propose to work alongside other teams in School as required.

Membership

Chair: SEDIC will select a Chair (or two co-Chairs if there are two volunteers who would welcome sharing the role) who will hold the post for a maximum of 2 years from volunteers within the Committee. The Chair will ensure that SEDIC addresses an appropriate balance of issues across the protected characteristics and protects the Committee from being biased or focussed only on a single issue. SEDIC will also ask for volunteers to support the Chair, to ensure that communications, documentation and events are well managed.

Staff : Membership will be open to volunteers from across the Group. An invitation will be announced to all staff in the Group at the beginning of each academic year. SEDIC will endeavour to be as diverse, inclusive, and representative as possible and will ensure that there is participation from each School including BDNL. All colleagues who would like to join are welcome to volunteer and SEDIC will organise and structure itself accordingly. The group will aim to find the best possible balance between being inclusive and manageable.

Students : Representation from the student body of the Senior and Sixth will be invited to attend meetings as agreed by the Chair. Student voice for the Preps will be gathered through School Councils and shared with the SEDIC.

Meeting arrangements

Meetings will take place weekly online on an informal 'come when you can' basis. Documents will be shared within Microsoft Teams for members, and a summary of current progress and

projects will be shared as appropriate, including as a standing item at Senior and 6th staff meetings. Project groups / working parties may meet informally in the interim and provide updates as appropriate.

Subgroups

SEDIC subgroups exist to work on issues which directly affect particular protected characteristics.

- -Prism is the SEDIC group for students in the LGBTQ+ community and allies
- Spectra is the SEDIC social group for LGBTQ+ staff and allies
- The Hera Project is a group undertaking a listening project on issues which predominantly affect women and families.

Reporting

SEDIC will report to the Chief People Officer and the Deputy Head Pupil Wellbeing. Both the CPO and DHPW have an open invitation to attend meetings.

Resources and budget

Training requests may be made on behalf of the SEDIC to the CPD budget. Some books and pastoral resources may also be required. For the first time in 2022-23, SEDIC has a budget for speakers, resources and training materials.

Review

These ToR will be reviewed annually and will next be reviewed in June 2023.

Trinity 2022