

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Pupils)

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Mill Hill Education Group (the 'Group') is the trading name of The Mill Hill School Foundation. It is a group of independent mainstream schools which together educate children aged 6 months to 18 years. It currently comprises the following schools:

Pre-Prep/Prep	Pre-Prep/Prep/to GCSE	Senior Schools (Day & Boarding)
Grimsdell*	Abbot's Hill*	Mill Hill School
Lyonsdown*	Kingshott*	Mill Hill International
St Joseph's in The Park*		Cobham Hall
Keble Prep*		
Belmont		

\* denotes school with EYFS pupils

- 1.2 This policy applies to all Group Schools including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) settings.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following which are available on the [Mill Hill Education Group](#) or School website:
- Accessibility Plan
  - Admissions Policy
  - Anti-bullying Policy
  - Early Years Policy
  - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Staff) Policy
  - Expulsion, Removal and Review Policy
  - Handling of Concerns and Complaints from Parents including EYFS
  - Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy (including Expectations & Standards)
  - Recruitment and Selection Policy
  - Safeguarding and Protecting the Welfare of Pupils Policy
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- 1.4 You may contact the Group or the School to request hard copies of policies which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. The Group's contact details are found [here](#).

## 2. Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and objectives of the Group.
- 2.2 The Group 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. The Group is committed to being equal opportunities schools and is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity ("protected characteristics").
- 2.3 The aims of this policy and the Group's ethos as a whole is to:
- Communicate the Group's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for current and prospective pupils
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics
  - Promote equal treatment for all members of the School community
  - Create and maintain an open and supportive environment, free from discrimination
  - Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School
  - Comply with the Group's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010
  - Remove or help to overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist
  - Enforce that all discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic is unacceptable and will not be tolerated

## 3. Statutory and regulatory framework

- 3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the Group's obligations under the following:
- [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024](#)
  - [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
  - [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
  - [Equality Act 2010](#)
  - [Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England \(July 2024\)](#)
  - [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(December 2023\)](#)
  - [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2024\)](#)

#### **4. Scope and responsibilities**

- 4.1 All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy and treat others with dignity at all times.
- 4.2 All pupils are expected to act in accordance with this policy, to treat other pupils, staff and visitors with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against, harass or victimise other pupils, members of staff, or visitors.
- 4.3 All parents/guardians are expected to support the aims of this policy and the Group's ethos of tolerance and respect.
- 4.4 Staff at the Group, particularly 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 Group with regard to equal opportunities.
- 4.5 The Court of Governors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Court of Governors has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operation of this policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review to the Heads of each of the Group Schools.

#### **5. Forms of Discrimination**

- 5.1 Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. The Group must not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or prospective pupil:
  - in relation to admissions
  - in the way it provides education for pupils
  - in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service
  - by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 5.2 Direct discrimination occurs where:
  - i. Someone is treated less favourably because of one or more Protected Characteristics and is put at a disadvantage for a reason related to one of the Protected Characteristics. For example, rejecting an applicant because they would not "fit in" because of their race or sexual orientation would be direct discrimination.

- ii. Someone is less favourably treated because of their association with someone who has a Protected Characteristic. For example, an applicant may be treated less favourably because they have a disabled sibling.
  - iii. Someone is treated less favourably because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic. For example, an applicant may be treated less favourably because they are believed to be (but may not actually be) homosexual.
- 5.3 Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to a provision, criterion or practice, applied to a group of people, which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of a Protected Characteristic, and it cannot be objectively justified. An example might be a school policy which negatively affects only women.
- 5.4 Victimisation is when someone suffers less favourable treatment because of action taken to assert legal rights against discrimination. Harassment is unwanted conduct due to Protected Characteristics with the purpose or effect of intimidating, degrading or humiliating an individual.

## **6. Admissions**

- 6.1 The Group treats every application for admission in a fair, open-minded and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Admissions Policy. The Group's aim is to encourage applications from prospective pupils with as diverse a range of background as possible. The Group is committed to equal treatment for all and as such accepts applications from, and admits, all prospective pupils irrespective of their sex, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnicity, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief)], social background or special educational needs.
- 6.2 Please see the Group Recruitment and Selection Policy in relation to approach to staff recruitment and selection.
- 6.3 The Group does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The Group welcomes pupils with disabilities and/or special education needs, provided the individual School can offer them any support that they require, cater for any additional needs and that the School site can accommodate them.

- 6.4 Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any disabilities and/or special education needs which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School so that the School can consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the child is not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other children. The School will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the School feels that they cannot adequately cater or meet their needs, that the prospective pupil is not going to be able to meaningfully access the education offered, or that their health and safety, or those of other pupils or staff, may be put at risk.
- 6.5 Bursaries are means tested awards offered to those who meet the School's admission criteria but may otherwise be unable to attend the School due to financial hardship. Details of our provision for bursaries can be found in the Group Bursary and Financial Assistance Policy a copy of which can be obtained by contacting the Group or the School.

## **7. Educational Services**

- 7.1 The School affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services, and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.
- 7.2 The Group will:
- Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination
  - Endeavour to meet the needs of all pupils and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics
  - Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support
  - Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds
  - Challenge inappropriate and unacceptable discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff

- Encourage pupils to work and play freely and have respect for all other pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic
- Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities
- Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices

Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:

- Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular 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
- Encourage pupils to question and challenge assumptions and stereotypes in order to better understand discriminatory behaviours and bias

7.3 The Group recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms (including cyberbullying) is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. The School's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

## **8. Religious beliefs**

- 8.1 Although the Group's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, the Group is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the School community.
- 8.2 The Court of Governors, through the Executive Team, actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **9. Requests for variation in School uniform**

- 9.1 All pupils are required to wear a uniform. The Head of each School will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations to the uniform for reasons

related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and that such request/s are reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

- 9.2 Certain items of jewellery, such as a Cross or a Kara bangle, 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 Group's existing school Uniform Policy principles (in regard 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 as set out in the Group's Handling of Concerns and Complaints by Parents Policy.
- 9.3 Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn to School, pupils or their parents are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Head, in advance.

## **10. Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities**

- 10.1 The School is committed to treating all pupils fairly and in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the School will seek to ensure that pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage, by comparison with pupils who are not disabled. As such, the School has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability which includes:
- making reasonable adjustments to our policies, criteria and practices (i.e. the way the School does things); and
  - providing auxiliary aids and services (i.e. provision of additional support or assistance).
- 10.2 Where the School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, the Deputy Head, the staff member responsible for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, and (with the parents' consent) any appropriate third party, which may include for example, a medical practitioner or educational psychologist.
- 10.3 The School will discuss what reasonable adjustments, if any, the School is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other pupils. The School will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources

available to the School. Further information on the School's reasonable adjustments duty can be found in the School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.

- 10.4 The School is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or prospective pupils. Similarly, the School is not required to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with its provision of education and services.
- 10.5 All the Group Schools have an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the School website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

## **11. Breaches of this Policy**

- 11.1 Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.
- 11.2 If you believe that a pupil has received less favourable treatment as a result of a protected characteristic, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to a pupil's detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's complaints procedure which is available on the Group website or by contacting the individual School.

## **12. Monitoring and review**

- 12.1 The policy will be reviewed every two years (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require) by the Pastoral lead at each school.
- 12.2 The Heads and Executive Team will review and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy every two years (or more frequently if changes to legislation, regulation or statutory guidance so require).

- 12.3 The Court of Governors have delegated authority to the Executive Team to review and approve this policy.

Policy Lead	Heads
Reviewed by	Deputy Heads and Regulatory Compliance Manager
Authorised by	Executive Team
Date of Authorisation	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
Date of next review	March 2027