CANBURY SCHOOL

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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Policy Owner:	**P Rich**
Approved by:	**R. Marks and L.Clancy - Co-Chair of Governors**
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INTRODUCTION

Canbury School committed to equal treatment for all students and staff. Promoting equitable opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of the School.

We do not discriminate against any of our school community on the basis of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex, and sexual orientation

(Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)

We will not discriminate against a student, or prospective student, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent/carer, with whom the student or prospective student is associated.

We will not discriminate against any member of our school community, or prospective member of our school community, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
Human Rights Act 1998
The Equality Act 2010

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools, the technical guidance for schools from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and guidance from the Government Equalities Office on meeting the specific duties that support the Public Sector Equality Duty.

3. This policy is related to the following other school policies:

- SEND Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure
- Looked after children policy
- Family Leave Policy
- Access Arrangement Policy
- Accessibility Policy

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of all in Canbury School's Community are:

- to assist the school to meet its commitment to providing equity opportunities;
- to put equity opportunities into practice;
- to promote equity
- to treat all members of the school community and visitors with respect and not to behave in a way that could be offensive to others
- to report incidents (either to yourself or directly witnessed) to ensure that the school
- to react promptly and proactively.

The Head will:

- monitor the implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff and students apply its guidelines fairly in all situations
- ensure there are training sessions for all members of staff so they aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge
- take appropriate corrective action, when SLT become aware of incidents which contravene this Policy.

- have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action to whether it may have particular implications for people with particular protected characteristics.

The Head and governors will review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.

This policy will be available to staff, students and visitors via the School website.

SEX

We will ensure that staff and students of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to staff and students of other sexes, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

Where certain subjects or specialised topics may be temporarily delivered in single-sex classes (such as components of Relationship and Sex Education), the school will adopt a compassionate and cautious approach when supporting gender-questioning or trans students, in strict accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. While variations to single-sex class attendance may be determined on a case-by-case basis involving a robust risk and needs assessment, the school strictly complies with statutory requirements regarding single-sex spaces. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to use toilets, changing rooms, or residential accommodation designated for the opposite biological sex. Where a gender-questioning student does not wish to use the facilities designated for their biological sex, the school will offer the use of the self-contained individual facility that does not compromise the safety, comfort, privacy, or dignity of the child or other students.

There may be odd occasions where we deem it necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, such as sex and relationship education (SRE), but we will ensure that such classes do not give children an unfair disadvantage when compared to children of the other sex in other classes.

Where certain specialised topics are temporarily delivered in single-sex classes (such as components of Relationship and Sex Education), the school will adopt a compassionate, individualised, and cautious approach when supporting gender-questioning or trans students, in strict accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Rather than applying automatic or blanket placements, any variations to single-sex class attendance or access to single-sex spaces will be determined on a case-by-case basis. These determinations will involve a robust risk and needs assessment conducted by the Senior Leadership Team in partnership with the student’s parents or carers, focusing entirely on the child's best interests, wider well-being, and our collective duty of care to all students.

In our mixed-sex school environment, any separation of students by sex that denies them the choice of opportunity to interact with students of the other sex will be avoided, unless it falls strictly within one of the statutory exceptions contained within the Equality Act 2010. We ensure that any permitted separation does not subject students to a detriment because of their sex, and both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable educational activities.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

We will ensure that staff and students of all races and ethnicities (including those who have English as an additional language) are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other staff and students, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will not segregate students on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' cannot be sustained, and that such action will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

We may, however, take positive action to address the particular challenges affecting students of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

DISABILITY

We will ensure that staff and students with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other staff and students simply because they have a disability, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure they are fair.

We will ensure that we do not discriminate against staff and students with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability. For example, by not allowing a student on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out, unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

We will proactively implement reasonable adjustments and provide necessary auxiliary aids to guarantee the full inclusion of students with disabilities, paying specific regard to those who have identified special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) but do not possess a formal statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

We will meet our duty to undertake accessibility planning for students with disabilities, and ensure that any accessibility plan is duly implemented and reviewed where necessary.

Canbury school has a SEND Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for students with SEND.

RELIGION AND BELIEF

We will ensure that staff and students are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure that staff and students are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

Furthermore, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief.

Parents and carers should be aware that all students at our School are required to follow a dress code. The Head will consider written requests from parents for variations in the dress code on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on health and safety. The Head may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

We will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bi-sexual staff and students, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents/carers, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other staff and students, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will ensure that students are taught about marriage of same-sex couples whilst meeting our legal requirement to teach about the nature of marriage in RSE lessons.

We will ensure that there is a designated safe space (Wellbeing Hub) within our school where gay, lesbian and bi-sexual students can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

We will ensure that staff and students are not singled out or treated less favourably because they have undergone, or are proposing to undergo, gender reassignment, or have trans* parents/carers, regularly checking our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for treatment and support of trans* students by external sources. Any such absences will be recorded accurately and sensitively to ensure the privacy of the student.

Staff and students have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity within the constraints of our dress code.

We will ensure that there is a designated safe space (wellbeing hub) within our school where Trans* students can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

We will ensure that staff and students are not singled out or treated less favourably because they become pregnant, or have recently given birth, or because they are breastfeeding.

We will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of students who are pregnant, or just given birth.

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

We will ensure that students are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

A personal education plan will be created, and implemented, for all CLA and PCLA, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

We will ensure that any special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) affecting a child looked after (CLA) or previously looked after child (PCLA) are robustly assessed, resourced, and accommodated, whether supported through our school-based provision maps or via a statutory, publicly funded EHC plan.

THE CURRICULUM

We will ensure that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way as to prevent discrimination, and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.

Our curriculum policy, schemes of work, and classroom teaching actively promote the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The school precludes the promotion of partisan political views across all subjects and extra-curricular activities. Where political or controversial issues are brought to students' attention, the school ensures a balanced, fair, and dispassionate presentation of opposing views. Teaching resources and library holdings are selected to challenge prejudicial stereotypes, prevent political indoctrination, and guarantee equal opportunity for all students to make good progress according to their abilities.

The observation of inclusive teaching strategies is a key aspect of the senior leadership team's monitoring systems.

In accordance with Standard 2A of the Independent School Standards, Canbury School makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy regarding the provision of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We consult with the parents of registered students before making or revising this statement. A copy of the RSE policy is published on the school website and a hard copy is provided to anyone who asks for one.

PROMOTING INCLUSION

We will promote inclusion and equality at our school through:

- Ensuring that students are called by their preferred names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that our governing body and school staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Instilling in students an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.
- Providing a variety of educational visits that expose students to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all students, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- Communicating our policy to parents/carers to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
- Discussing equality issues as an agenda item for the school council.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

We will ensure that any medical conditions of students are fully supported.

BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

Our Anti-bullying Policy explicitly addresses prejudice-based bullying targeting any Protected Characteristic, alongside cyberbullying, misogyny, misandry, and AI-generated digital harms (including deepfakes or non-consensual image sharing). In accordance with Department for Education guidance, Canbury School operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default throughout the school day to eliminate digital harassment, support positive behavior, and safeguard pupil well-being.

Any incidents of a child protection or safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Safeguarding Policy.

Any incidents or behaviors that raise a suspicion of a safeguarding or child protection nature will be immediately recorded and referred to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to be handled in strict accordance with our Safeguarding Policy and child protection frameworks. Where an incident indicates that a student has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the school will immediately execute a statutory referral to local authority children's social care and, where a criminal offense is suspected, to the police, in alignment with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Concerns with regard to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in our Complaints Policy.

In alignment with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the school recognizes that a child is a victim of domestic abuse in their own right if they see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse. To support this, the school actively cooperates with statutory information-sharing schemes, specifically Operation Encompass, whereby police forces notify our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. This ensures our pastoral and safeguarding teams can provide timely, informed, and sensitive support.

EQUAL TREATMENT FOR STAFF

We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our students for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere in which each individual feels valued and can flourish. We believe that the educational experience for our students will be enriched if they are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are growing up.

In order to promote an environment within which the school can call upon the widest possible range of knowledge, skill and experience, as well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we are committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which represents the population within our recruitment area in terms of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics") as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

To this end, we shall regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion, training and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular but not only, in relation to:

1. Recruitment and selection;
2. Promotion, transfer & training opportunities;
3. Benefits, terms and conditions of employment;
4. Grievance and disciplinary procedures;
5. Termination of employment including redundancies;
6. Conduct at work;

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff must treat visitors, students, parents, suppliers and former members of staff.

Implementation

The School with the assistance of the staff will:

1. Break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit;
2. Advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job;
3. Promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary;
4. Ensure that all members of staff are fully informed and trained on this Policy;
5. Monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices;
6. Review existing procedures to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation;
7. Language used in official communications reflects the letter and spirit of this policy.

Recruitment and Selection

All staff recruitment procedures strictly comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education, maintaining a robust Single Central Record (SCR) that includes identity, right to work, medical fitness, enhanced DBS, overseas suitability, prohibition, and Section 128 management checks. Staff are empowered to raise EDI or safeguarding concerns safely via the school's Whistleblowing Policy without fear of detriment. In alignment with ISS Part 8 (Standard 34), the Headteacher and Governing Body maintain appropriate skills and knowledge to ensure all statutory standards and EDI commitments are met consistently across the school.

The staffing process is governed by the school's principles of non-discrimination and is designed to achieve the best match between, on the one hand, the individual's knowledge and skills, experience and character and, on the other hand, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

1. The capability of the individual to perform in the position will be the major selection criterion but the ability both to work with others and to be trained, coupled with individual potential will be taken into account;
2. All applicants will be dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible;
3. Carefully selected and validated skills and/or psychometric tests may be used as part of the selection process and will be administered by a trained tester;
4. Appointments will be confirmed on receipt of satisfactory references and DBS checks and/or medical report, and/or satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

Disability

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact the Head to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. The Head may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments, and you may be required to give your consent to a report being produced about your state of health and ability to perform your duties. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible. Once an adjustment has been made, its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or school premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out his or her duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job re-design or flexible hours.

Dignity at Work

You should not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to harassment of another person at work. Harassment of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence and in serious instances may lead to instant dismissal.

Harassment may take the form of unwanted conduct which is related to a relevant Protected Characteristic which is perceived as affecting an employee's dignity at work. It may also take the form of unwanted conduct towards someone based on their appearance or other personal characteristics, which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It is not only unwanted physical contact, assault or propositions; it includes suggestive remarks or gestures, pin-ups, graffiti, offensive comments, jokes and banter. Harassment may include bullying, intimidatory behaviour, persistent teasing or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities, or exclusion from normal workplace conversation. It may be directed towards one individual or a group. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave.

See our 'Grievance Procedure' for further details

EQUAL TREATMENT FOR STUDENTS

We aim to create a friendly, caring and supportive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively toward the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each student. They are encouraged to share their experiences and concerns. Use is made of assemblies, tutors times, PSHE, extracurricular activities, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the school community
- Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues
- Foster an open-minded approach and encourage students 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.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Canbury School recognises that command of the English language is a developing skill for our bilingual learners. In accordance with the Independent School Standards, the school does not utilise English language proficiency as an exclusionary barrier to a broad and balanced curriculum. Instead, we provide targeted, adaptive teaching, localised interventions, and high-quality EAL support tailored to each student's level of English acquisition. This ensures that all students, regardless of their linguistic background or initial fluency, are fully equipped to access our academic and social provisions, communicate confidently, and make excellent progress.

Accessibility

In accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school maintains, publishes, and regularly reviews a formal 3-year Accessibility Plan. This plan sets out targeted actions to improve physical access to school premises, increase access to the curriculum for disabled students, and enhance the delivery of written information in accessible formats.

See our 'Accessibility Plan' for further details

For complaints, please see the school's 'Complaints policy' which is available on the school website and in the staff shared area. The school ensures that this complaints procedure is adapted to meet our obligations under Section 164A of the Data Protection Act 2018, facilitating the handling of complaints from data subjects safely and without conflict with our standard parental complaints processes.