



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Date of Approval: 8 th March 2026	Approved By: Georgina Mendez (Proprietor)
Effective Date: 8 th March 2026	Next Review Date: 9 th March 2028

Introduction

Orion is committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all pupils, parents / carers /, staff, governors and visitors. We believe that all people are of equal value and are entitled to equality of opportunity and that our diversity enriches our community. The purpose of this policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity and
- Foster good relationships between groups.

Equality Policy Aims

Orion seeks to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life. To achieve this we aim to:

- Develop an ethos which respects and values all people
- Actively advance equality of opportunity
- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society
- Promote good relations amongst people within Orion and the wider communities within which we work
- Eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other oppressive behaviour
- Deliver equality and diversity through our School policies, procedures and practice
- Make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to School and activities
- Take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural expectations
- Monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within the School
- Set targets for improvement and evaluate the impact of equality and diversity action in achieving our goals.

Legislation

This policy has been written to reflect key legal requirements relating to equality and diversity as detailed in the Equality Act 2010. The Act identifies nine protected characteristics,

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| • Age | • Race | • Sexual orientation |
| • Disability | • Religion or belief | • Marriage and civil partnership |
| • Gender reassignment | • Sex | |
| • Pregnancy and maternity | | |

The Act outlaws unfair discrimination against an individual because of a protected characteristic and this includes the following types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination (including discrimination based on association or perception) – occurs when you treat a person less favourably than you treat another person because of a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination - occurs when a practice has the effect of putting people sharing a protected characteristic within the general group at a particular disadvantage
- Harassment – occurs when someone behaves in a way that creates an offensive, hostile, degrading, humiliating or intimidating environment for a person
- Victimisation - occurs if you treat someone badly because they have been involved in a claim or complaint about discrimination

Values, Principles and Standards

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- Equality and social justice
- Acknowledging and valuing diversity
- Respect for others
- Compliance with equality legislation
- Elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination
- Active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour
- Commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all pupils to develop their full potential
- Commitment to the positive development of all staff and governors
- Accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the school and others engaged in school business or activities

Communication of the Equality Policy

We will take active steps to communicate this Equality Policy to all pupils, parents/carers/, staff, governors, partners, stakeholders, contractors and visitors to the School.

Responsibilities and Accountabilities

The Governors are responsible for:

- Making sure the School follows all of its Equality Policy aims, and meets its legal responsibilities with respect to equality

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Giving a consistent and high-profile lead on equality and diversity

- Advancing equality and diversity inside and outside the School
- Ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation
- Ensuring that the School implements its Equality Policy and codes of practice
- Making sure that all staff know their responsibilities for enforcing the Equality Policy and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out
- Following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) are responsible for:

- Promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination harassment, bullying or victimisation
- Actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination harassment, bullying or victimisation, related to protected characteristics perpetrated by pupils, other staff or visitors
- Keeping up-to-date with the equality law and participate in equal opportunities and diversity training

Pupils/Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Respecting others in their language and actions
- Obeying all of the School's Equality Policy and codes

Equality Policy: Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, non-teaching staff, leaders and trainees/apprentices) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics.

With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled. This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures.

We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 we do not enquire about the health of an applicant until a job offer has been made.

We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators. We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice-based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or a group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism.

We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour. We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses. We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying.

We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our pupils, young people and communities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.