



## ST. EDWARD'S OXFORD

### **Equal Opportunities Policy**

The School is actively aware that it must seek at all times to offer all its pupils equality of opportunity, access to its services and facilities and fairness of treatment. There will clearly be some differentiation of treatment. For instance, senior pupils may have more privacy than junior ones, girls may require separate time and space, pupils of other faiths may require access to worship outside the School and so on.

Equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of race, creed, gender, ability or social background is fundamental to the aims of the School. The active pursuit of these aims should be evident in our daily work, activities and in our relationships with one another.

The School welcomes a diversity of pupils both in status, (there are both boarders and day pupils) gender distribution (the School is, at present, 40% girls, 60% boys) and ethnic/cultural diversity. (There are usually pupils from over 25 different countries.)

There is an Overseas Pupils Committee chaired by the Head of Pupil Wellbeing that supports the needs and concerns of overseas pupils.

Teachers should be aware of the absolute necessity to avoid discrimination against any minority group or single pupil in their care especially in the classroom and in the boarding house where all pupils have a right to expect equality and fairness in their treatment and accommodation.

Staff are expected to seek positive opportunities to stress the advantages of a multi-cultural approach in all that we do from major areas like assignments and activities to what might seem small things like the correct pronunciation of forenames and surnames. Teaching staff are asked to be vigilant in identifying any racist behaviour involving name-calling, insults and jokes, graffiti or incitement by others to racist behaviour. Particular care must be taken to watch up for the ridiculing of cultural differences in such things as dress, food, music and the deliberate spreading of prejudice and misinformation.

Similar vigilance should be maintained in relation to gender ensuring equality of access to all areas of the curriculum and being careful to avoid in the classroom any sexist behaviour on the part of the teacher as well as discouraging discrimination among pupils.

In all these areas, at appropriate levels and in appropriate circumstances, teachers should confront pupils with the reality of stereo-typing and encourage their critical analysis of its implications for all members of the School.

The School is an Anglican Christian Foundation and parents know before they enrol their child that he or she is required to attend certain religious gatherings, not necessarily ones involving worship. Pupils of other Christian denominations or of a different faith may, with permission, attend services of worship or specific instruction outside the School. This will be negotiated on an individual basis with parents. All pupils will be expected to attend religious education lessons which are wide-ranging in scope and though they involve knowledge of Christianity at certain stages of the course, are not used for proselytizing.

Parents are aware that the School requires their daughters or sons to spend at least one year - the second - on a compulsory basis in the Combined Cadet Force and to attend both Field Weekends. Many pupils, both girls and boys, choose to stay on beyond that in the CCF. Any pupils not wishing to join the CCF has to take part in the Life Skills course. This requires them to learn First Aid, camp craft as well as some Community Service.

The School seeks to provide for any special dietary needs and there is a registered list of vegetarians with a special menu provided at mealtimes.

All pupils, parents and staff are aware of the Complaints Procedure required by the Children Act 1989 which is published in boarding houses. Parents may also make a formal complaint as outlined in the School's Complaint Procedure.

The School employs three visiting Counsellors who would be available to discuss any issues of equality or discrimination.