DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

Where every child is known and valued

Equal Opportunities Policy Pupils

Compiled by	Headmaster
Approved by	Council
Date of Review	Spring 2025
Next Review	Spring 2027

Equal Opportunities Policy

INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Ditcham Park School. Our School is committed to equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity ('protected characteristics') or background.

Aims

The aims of this policy and the School's ethos is to:

- Communicate the School's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for its pupils
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of any of the protected characteristics.
- Promote equality of opportunity for all members of the Ditcham Park School community.
- Comply with the School's equality duties contained in the Equality Act 2010.
- Remove or help overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist.

All members of the School community are expected to comply with this policy.

All parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and the School's ethos of tolerance and respect.

All staff are expected to support the aims of this policy, particularly those working at management level.

Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's obligations under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2024
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This policy has regard to the following statutory guidance and advice:

- Equality Act 2010 explanatory notes
- Equality and Human Rights Commission Technical Guidance for Schools in England (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

  - Admissions Policy
  - Behaviour Policy

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Discipline and Exclusions Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-harassment Policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equality Policy for Staff Policy

Admissions

The School treats every application for admission in a fair and equal way in accordance with this policy and the School's Academic Standards and Admissions Policy. The School accepts applications from, and admits, prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief) or special educational needs and disability ('SEND').

Parents must inform the School when submitting the Registration Form of any special circumstances relating to their child which may affect their child's performance in the admissions process and/or ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School. Ditcham Park School will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, we believe we cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

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 on our website or obtained from the Head of Admissions or the School Bursary.

Educational services

Ditcham Park 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). We will not discriminate against a

pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Ditcham Park School 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 children 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 discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff.
- 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.

Ditcham Park School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether it was intentional or not. Harassment and bullying in all its forms is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Religious belief

Although Ditcham Park School's religious ethos is based on Christian values and tradition, we are inclusive and welcome and respect 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.

The governing body, through the senior leadership 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.

Requests for variation in the school uniform

All pupils are required to wear a uniform. The Headmaster will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations in 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 it is reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn to School, parents are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Head in advance.

Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability

Ditcham Park School has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with a disability to ensure they do not suffer a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils.

Where the School is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, Ditcham Park School is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage. We will carefully consider any proposals for auxiliary aids and services in light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the School.

Ditcham Park School has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the School's website and a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out Ditcham Park School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in our curriculum; improve the physical environment 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 to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Monitoring and review

The Headmaster monitors and reviews the effectiveness of this policy and reports to the governors annually on the policy's effectiveness in practice.

Breach of this policy

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

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.