



## Whole School Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils (Includes EYFS and Out of School Provision)

### Policy Statement:

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Cranford School. We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

Cranford School is committed to equal opportunities in education for all and will not discriminate against, or treat less favourably, any pupil at, or applicant to, the School on the grounds of race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief (or lack thereof), gender reassignment, or pregnancy or maternity ('protected characteristics'). We will also not discriminate against, or treat less favourably, any pupil at, or applicant to, the School because they are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. All pupils and staff shall be encouraged to value and respect others and to challenge inappropriate attitudes, behaviour and practices.

*'Equal Opportunities is about helping all children to fulfil their potential. Teachers are rightly concerned when their pupils under achieve and are aware that educational outcomes may be influenced by factors outside the school's control, such as a pupil's sex or social, cultural or linguistic background'.*

*'All schools whatever their location and intake have a responsibility to promote good relationships and mutual respect'. (Excerpts from 'The Whole Curriculum', National Curriculum Council Document 3)*

The School's '**Whole School Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils**' seeks to foster the self-esteem and confidence of all individuals in the institution and to maximise their potential. Only if each individual feels valued will she/he seek actively to participate, thereby enriching school life in general. The policy encompasses the Whole School community, including Governors and staff (both teaching and non-teaching), and is just as important for children in our Nursery as for pupils in the Sixth Form.

The School refers to the website of the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) and DfE non-statutory advice: [The Equality Act 2010 and Schools](#) (May 2014) among other relevant guidance for information and advice about how to avoid discriminating unlawfully. In brief, unlawful discrimination (treating less favourably) can take various forms such as direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and failure to make reasonable adjustments (which applies to pupils with disabilities). Direct discrimination on the basis of a protected characteristic is always unlawful.

Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Positive action is lawful to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.

No conscious or sub-conscious discrimination should prevent any pupil from following any academic course she/he wishes (i.e. all doors should be open) and all practical steps should be taken to encourage and support the progress of any pupil.

The School ensures that any teaching (teaching is interpreted in this context to include the hidden curriculum implicit in any school activity, such as arrangements for lunch, about their value as a person, their human rights, the options available to them and their expectations for adult life on account of their sex) is not discriminatory.

Please refer to the section on 'Avoidance of Sex Discrimination by Segregation' below for more details.

Cranford School believes that a successful equal opportunities policy will help to break down stereotypes. It is vital that teacher and pupil expectations of behaviour, performance and achievement should not be limited by stereotypical views. Ways of breaking down stereotypes include the provision of positive role models and a review of the curriculum to remove any instances of stereotyping. The School has undertaken reviews of the curriculum and literature used across both the Junior and Senior schemes of learning and libraries, to ensure they are inclusive and representative of wider society. For example, in 2022, an anti-racism audit was undertaken by all Departments and Key Stages and action plans put in place where they were needed. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

The Headmaster, Senior Leadership Team, Form Tutors and Heads of Year and Key Stage play an active role in monitoring the implementation of this policy. Use is made of Assemblies, PHSCEE lessons, RS, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote understanding 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 pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures;
- Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour;
- Provide age-appropriate training on the protected characteristics;
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our behaviour and anti-bullying policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination. All our staff are aware of the policies and ensure that they are implemented. All new staff receive information on induction.

This policy is available to all interested parties and staff via the School website. It is also available in the Cranford School Policies section of the Whole School Staff Teams area on Microsoft Teams for all staff to read. The policy is reviewed annually, and when events or legislation requires, by the SENCo, Headmaster and Governors. The next review date is June 2024.

## Related Policies:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policy documents:

- **‘Whole School Disability Policy for Pupils’**
- **‘Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils’**
- **‘Whole School Admissions Policy and Procedures’**
- **‘Whole School Accessibility Policy and 3 – Year Plan’**
- **‘Scholarships Policy and Procedures’**
- **‘Bursaries Policy and Procedures’**
- **‘Whole School Behaviour Policy and Procedures Including Rewards and Sanctions’**
- **‘Whole School Preventing Radicalisation Policy (Including EYFS)’**
- **‘Whole School and EYFS Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy’ (SMSC)**
- **‘Curriculum Policy for the Junior School (Including EYFS)’**
- **‘Curriculum Policy for the Senior School (Including Sixth Form)’**
- **‘Relationships and Sex Education Policy’**
- **Whole School EAL Policy’**
- **‘Equal Opportunities – Staff’**
- **‘Policy on School Uniform’**
- **‘Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures for Staff’**
- **‘Whole School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy’.**

School policies are available to access on the School website and upon request in the main School Office.

**Parts of this policy have been written with particular reference to the Government guidance “Political impartiality in schools” (17 February 2022)**

This policy embraces the following areas:

### **Avoidance of Sex Discrimination by Segregation:**

The School refers to the DfE non-statutory guidance Gender Separation in Mixed Schools (June 2018). As a co-educational school, Cranford School avoids any kind of strict gender segregation which has been judged as unlawfully discriminatory against both boys and girls. (Al-Hijrah Case Court of Appeal Judgment).

In the case of single sex sport, the School follows the advice given in the DfE’s guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and Schools (May 2014), and has regard in particular to the following passage (3.20):

*‘Although the Equality Act forbids discrimination in access to benefits, facilities and services; the Act does contain an exception which permits single sex sports. It applies to participation in any sport or game, or other activity of a competitive nature, where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average woman (or girl) would put her at a disadvantage in competition with the average man (or boy). But while this exception might permit a mixed school to have a boys-only football team, the school would still have to allow girls equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities. The judgement on whether girls would be at a physical disadvantage needs to take into account the particular group in question, so it is much less likely to justify segregated sports for younger children. Where separate teams exist, it would be unlawful discrimination for a school to treat one group less favourably – for example by providing the boys’ hockey or cricket team with much better resources than the girls.’*

Under the Equality Act, section 158, single sex classes may be justified on the grounds of ‘positive action’ if the school reasonably thinks that:

- Girls or boys suffer a disadvantage connected to their sex;
- Girls or boys have needs that are different from the needs of the other sex;
- Participation in an activity by girls or boys is proportionately low.

The School may therefore take proportionate action to address these issues.

For example, it is lawful to teach Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and elements of the Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCEE) programme in single sex classes or do more to encourage girls to participate in STEM (Science, Technology, Economics and Maths) subjects. However, it would be unlawful to provide remedial classes for boys who needed help with reading, for example, to close a gap in average attainment between boys and girls, without doing the same for girls in a similar position.

Where single-sex classes are provided, pupils undergoing gender re-assignment would be allowed to attend the single-sex class that accords with the gender role in which they identify. The School only segregates by gender in sport and in the puberty sections of the RSE curriculum for those pupils in Years 6 and 7 as per the guidelines above.

Subject to the above examples where the Equality Act expressly allows for it, the School recognises that segregation by protected characteristics is unlawful and that it is not the mere fact of segregation which gives rise to discrimination, rather it is the impact on the quality of education which pupils would receive but for their respective sex.

### **Admissions and Progression:**

At Cranford, places are not offered due to academic ability alone. Our School is a place where children with a whole host of interests both inside and beyond the classroom thrive. We aim to provide a well-rounded, opportunity-rich education to children ready and willing to make the most of it and it is this fit that we seek to identify during the admissions process. Prospective pupils are not expected to prepare before our entry assessments and the process is designed to allow everyone the chance to showcase their talents, abilities and enthusiasms.

Continuity of education for pupils from the Pre School to Sixth Form is anticipated throughout each age range (i.e. the Junior and Senior Schools). Please see the **‘Whole School Admissions Policy and Procedures’** for details.

### **Access:**

In addition to admission, pupils with protected characteristics (as defined above) will not be discriminated against in relation to access to the School’s benefits, facilities or services.

There are special considerations and reasonable adjustments in relation to pupils with a disability and access for pupils with disabilities are set out in the policy documents detailed at the start of this policy and in brief in the paragraph entitled **‘Disability and Access for People with Disabilities’** below.

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities:

Cranford School has established guidelines for responding to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) which are set out in the **'Whole School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy'** and the **'Whole School Admissions Policy and Procedures'**. The SENCo and teaching staff ensure that initial and on-going pupil assessment enables pupil difficulties to be identified and supported.

## Religious Observance:

Cranford School provides assemblies which bring together the community to reflect on moral, spiritual and ethical issues, and promote a sense of the existence of God or of a reality which transcends the purely material.

This is generally achieved within a broadly Christian framework but takes account of and actively promotes tolerance, understanding and respect for all religious beliefs. Arrangements can be made for pupils to be excused from attendance at such events, at the written request of parents to the Headmaster.

Although Cranford School has Christian roots, we do not select on the basis of religious belief, and we welcome pupils of all faiths and offer the opportunity for pupils to practice their own faiths. Parents should be aware, however, that all pupils are required to wear a uniform. As per our **'Policy on School Uniform'**, the Headmaster will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and our **'Whole School Health and Safety Policy'**. The Headmaster may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

The School will seek to make appropriate arrangements to reflect the requirements of different religious faiths with regard to acceptable variations to the school uniform, catering arrangements and authorised absence for religious festivals falling during term time.

These may include reasonable arrangements to allow for specific religious observance in school. Please see the School's **Whole School and EYFS Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy (Including Collective Worship) (SMSC)**, **'Relationships and Sex Education Policy'** and **'Curriculum Policy for the Junior School (Including EYFS)'** and **'Curriculum Policy for the Senior School (Including Sixth Form)'** for details.

## Political impartiality:

The school takes its duty to meet the legal requirements relating to political impartiality seriously and recognises the duty of care we have to provide the pupils with balanced views in a whole range of global, political, religious and ethical ideas. With this in mind all staff are made aware of their duty to prohibit the promotion of partisan political views and should therefore "take such steps as are **reasonably practicable** to secure that, where **political issues** are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a **balanced presentation of opposing views**" (Political impartiality in schools 17 February 2022)

Staff are also made aware that when they remain unsure if a topic is a 'political issue' it is advisable to avoid promoting a particular view to pupils. Instead, they must ensure they give a balanced factual account of the topic, in line with the legal duties on political impartiality, set out in the guidance given in the Government document "Political impartiality in schools" (17 February 2022). Staff are also made aware that "Not all areas of ethical debate are political issues. There are some concepts

and views that can be considered as shared principles that underpin our society and not political issues in this context. Examples include a belief in upholding certain rights, such as freedom of speech and protection from violence and criminal activity - or challenging discrimination and prejudice, including racism." (Political impartiality in schools 17 February 2022)

### **Disability and Access for People with Disabilities:**

In this policy, 'disability' has the meaning set out in the Equality Act 2010, that is, '*a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*'. The School will make reasonable adjustments to address the individual needs of all pupils and prospective pupils with disabilities as explained in the relevant policy documents: '**Whole School Disability Policy for Pupils**' and '**Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils**'.

Statutory requirements regarding access for people with disabilities to new buildings are met and the School has published a '**Whole School Accessibility Policy and 3-Year Plan**'. Some of the School's existing premises are subject to listed building and other planning restrictions or cannot be readily modified. However, our '**Whole School Accessibility Policy and 3 – Year Plan**', sets out a structured programme to increase access over time to the School's facilities, curriculum and the provision of information.

### **Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards:**

Arrangements for the award of Scholarships, bursaries and awards are made with the intention of facilitating increased access for candidates. Please see the '**Scholarships Policy and Procedures**' and the '**Bursaries Policy and Procedures**' for details.

### **Exclusion:**

Pupils will not be excluded from the School on the basis of a protected characteristic (as defined above) or because they are perceived to have protected characteristic or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Where a pupil with a disability is facing exclusion, the Headmaster will consider whether or not the pupil's disability has a behavioural component, and reasonable adjustments will be made to take account of the possible effect of this, alongside the impact of the pupil's behaviour on the School community. In some circumstances, it may still be appropriate to exclude the pupil. Please see the '**Whole School Exclusions Policy and Procedures**' for details.

### **Breach of Policy:**

Where a staff member is found to have breached the '**Whole School Equal Opportunities Policy**' through his/her actions, the member of staff concerned may be subject to the School's '**Disciplinary Procedures**'.

The School has Codes of Conduct in place ('Golden Rules' for Junior Pupils and 'Code of Behaviour' for Senior School Pupils) which clearly outline our expectations and gives positive guidance as to the expected standards of behaviour. These Codes of Conduct are designed to reinforce and encourage positive behaviour and mutual respect.

In cases where a pupil breaches the '**Whole School Equal Opportunities Policy**' the School's sanctions system, as set out in the '**Whole School Behaviour Policy and Procedures**

**Including Rewards and Sanctions’** and the guidelines within the **‘Whole School Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures’** will be followed.

Reviewed: June 2020: Deputy Head (Academic) and SENCo, Headmaster and Governors  
Reviewed: September 2020: Deputy Head (Academic) and SENCo, Headmaster and Governors  
Reviewed: June 2021: Deputy Head (Academic) and SENCo, Headmaster and Governors  
Reviewed: June 2022: Deputy Head (DSL), Deputy Head (Academic T&L), SENCo, Headmaster and Governors  
Reviewed: June 2023: Deputy Head (DSL), Deputy Head (Academic T&L), SENCo, Headmaster and Governors  
Reviewed: June 2024: Deputy Head (DSL), Deputy Head (Academic T&L), SENCo, Headmaster and Governors

Review due: June 2025: Deputy Head (Academic T&L), SENCo, Headmaster and Governors