

The Wren School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Purpose and Background

The Wren School Academy Trust members, governing body and staff of The Wren School acknowledge the importance of equality whereby everyone feels valued within the school. All members of The Wren School have the responsibility to challenge stereotypes and promote equality of opportunity, experience and treatment.

The Wren School recognises the link between poor educational attainment and reduced employment opportunities and lower earnings later in life, and is, therefore, committed to promoting and developing equality of opportunity for all of its students. The Wren School appreciates that there are many groups of children and young people who may be vulnerable to underachievement, including looked-after children, young carers, bereaved children, children from service families and others.

The Wren School takes responsibility for the areas outlined below which have been identified as 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Other issues of vulnerability affecting young people's attainment at school will be addressed and, where appropriate, outlined in the school development plan. The school's curriculum opportunities will be used to support the three aims of the public sector equality duty:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other such conduct;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who have a shared characteristic and those who do not.

This policy takes account of all relevant legislation.

Policy objectives

By actively promoting equal opportunities and not discriminating against anyone on the grounds of any of the previously stated 'Protected Characteristics', the school will ensure that:

- all students have opportunities to aspire and aim high;
- expectations of all students are high;
- all students and staff have access to, and can make full use of, the school's facilities and resources;
- the school reflects the community it serves and responds to its needs;
- all students are prepared for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic community;
- all students and staff understand the meaning of prejudice, how discrimination occurs and how to take a stand against these;
- The Wren School has a positive ethos and environment;
- racist and discriminatory incidents are dealt with effectively (see Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies); and
- inclusion issues are taken seriously and considered in all aspects of school life.

Management of the policy

School	This policy is implemented and managed by the Headteacher.
Governing body	The governing body will review and update this policy every 3 years in line with all relevant legislation.
Approval	Approved by Full governing body - May 2018 (updated September 2019)
Next review due	May 2021

Associated policies

Able, Gifted and Talented policy

Anti-Bullying policy

Behaviour policy

Learning and Teaching policy

Literacy policy

SEN/D policy

Practice and procedures

All students and adults within the school have a right to be treated with respect. This includes a right to:

- study, learn and work;
- physical, emotional and verbal respect, free from violence, bullying and abusive language;
- respect for their gender, race and age;
- freedom from sexual comments, harassment and inappropriate use of humour; and
- the safety of their property.

Responsibilities

Students and adults within the school are encouraged to challenge any inappropriate behaviour or comments. All students are taught that being a bystander (being silent and not saying something in the case of comments/incidents witnessed by others) means they have added to the negative incident.

The trust's responsibility is to ensure that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy and for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities by presenting all staff with the updated policy. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that appropriate training and support is given through the normal staff development programme and that this issue is highlighted in the school development plan as appropriate; and
- taking appropriate action in any case of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to encourage tolerance to incorporate principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work. They are expected to deal with racist incidents that may occur; to know how to challenge racial and cultural bias and stereotyping, and follow school procedure.

We have a school uniform. On occasion we have non-uniform days; if a student attends school wearing anything with a slogan, writing or illustration that may be perceived as offensive they will be asked to change. Students may wear headgear pertaining to a religious belief or a medical condition. The school uniform for PE will also be adapted for similar reasons, within the context and guidelines of safety protocol.

The remainder of this policy refers to specific 'Protected Characteristics' and how they will be covered under this policy at The Wren School.

A. Racism

The Wren School curriculum incorporates multi-faith teaching and learning about other cultures. This universal approach may include visits to places of worship, sites of specific religious/cultural interest, and the use of speakers from different faiths and cultures.

Racist language and behaviour will not be tolerated. All incidents are recorded and parents/carers notified. Persistent racism will result in serious consequences and possible exclusion.

The Wren School welcomes its duties under the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. We are committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity;
- promoting good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities; and
- eliminating unlawful discrimination.

In order to achieve these criteria, we are guided by the following principles:

- every student should have the opportunities to achieve the highest possible standards and the best possible qualifications for the next stages of their life and education;
- every student should be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities; and
- every student should develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need in order to participate in Britain's multi ethnic society, and in the wider context of an interdependent world.

These principles apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those which are concerned with:

- students' progress, attainment and assessment;
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- students' personal development and pastoral care;
- admissions and attendance;
- the curriculum content;
- staff recruitment and professional development; and
- partnership with parents/carers and communities.

The Wren School is opposed to all forms of prejudice including racism, sexism and xenophobia. This includes prejudice which is directed towards religious groups and particular communities such as Islamophobia, travellers, refugees and asylum-seekers. The school aims to teach respect, tolerance and understanding towards different beliefs, cultures and lifestyles. Racist/sexist jokes will be regarded as any other form of bullying and dealt with as such.

Breaches of policy

Breaches of policy will be dealt with as determined by the Headteacher. Racist incidents are reported; information is held centrally by the assistant headteacher (Pastoral) so that any incidents can be monitored.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), lists of all students of ethnic minorities and Looked after children are held centrally. The following data is collected and evaluated by both gender and ethnicity:

- assessment and progress;
- attendance;
- bullying incidents;
- exclusions - both internal and external; and
- the number of referrals – both positive and negative.

B. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEN/D)

1. Disability

The School Census provides the opportunity to record whether or not students have a disability. To assist with the collection of this information, The Wren School will work with parents/carers and students to identify which students may be considered to be disabled under the Equality Act, and therefore benefit from this legal protection.

Students who are young carers may, in some circumstances, have legal protection from discrimination, for example, because of their 'association' with a disabled parent. We ask parents/carers to inform us if their child is a young carer.

2. Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Data is collected on whether or not students have SEN/D and whether students have an Education and Health Care Plan. *The term 'special educational needs' (SEN) has a legal definition, referring to children who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn or to access education than most children of the same age.*

At The Wren School, students on our SEN/D Register will meet with his/her lead professional three times per year to review and agree targets and appropriate support and intervention.

C. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The Wren School will work to ensure that EAL students are supported. We will work closely with parents/carers to encourage students to continue to use and develop their first language while they learn English, as it is recognised that this is a vital factor in helping students to achieve their full academic potential. At The Wren School, we see having students and families from different cultures and speaking diverse languages as part of our community as something that benefits all. We recognise that being able to speak more than one language is a valuable skill, and we nurture our EAL learners to feel proud of their abilities.

We support learners of EAL so that they can both develop their English and learn the curriculum alongside our English first language learners. For example, we will:

- support EAL learners to take examinations in their first language when/where appropriate;
- liaise with outside agencies to have accurate reports about our EAL learners, which we share with staff;

- track the progress of our EAL learners carefully, so we can celebrate their successes and target their needs;
- allow learners to use all their languages for learning; and
- teach the language of the curriculum alongside the content.

D. Religion and belief

The Wren School aims to contribute significantly to each student's understanding of religion and belief. All students will have access to citizenship, philosophy and religion weekly in all year groups from Years 7 – 11. In lessons we will encourage students to learn about a variety of world religions, and to learn from the way in which religion shapes people's actions and their views of the world. We encourage reflection and discussion so that students develop their ability to articulate their own beliefs and, also, to explain those beliefs that are different to their own. Students will be regularly encouraged through assemblies to reflect on issues of commitment and belief. Students may also be involved in tutor group assemblies where they are required to complete research and present an assembly on a particular issue or theme.

Religious Observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, students and their parents/carers and will comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

E. Pregnancy, maternity and paternity

The Wren School recognises that with the raising of the participation age, the number of students who have a child while in full-time education is likely to increase.

The Wren School believes that being pregnant or having a very young child should not, in itself, be a barrier to a student applying for, succeeding in, or completing a programme of study. The school is committed to being as flexible as possible, and does not exclude students solely on grounds of pregnancy, motherhood or fatherhood. The school will do its utmost to facilitate education for pregnant students and parents of school age.

Our school will:

- ensure that it avoids less favourable treatment on the grounds that a student is pregnant or has recently had a baby; and
- not exclude students solely on the basis of pregnancy, maternity or paternity.

For staff, The Wren School adheres to the guidance published in The Wren School Staff Employment Manual.

Associated documents

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance, including:

- General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000
- The Wren School Development Plan

- The Wren School Staff Employment Manual