



## Equal Opportunities Policy

Including all of the Pre-Prep Department and Early Years Foundation Stage

DJCF

Updated September 2024

## Review and Amendment Record

Date	Person Conducting the Review	Changes Made
1/9/21	DJCF	Re-written policy
1/9/22	DJCF	Annual update
1/9/23	DJCF	Annual update (including KCSIE 2023)
1/9/24	DJCF	Annual update (including KCSIE 2024 & Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023)

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Summer Fields.

The school recognises the benefits of having a diverse school community, with individuals who value one another; we recognise the varying and valuable contributions that everyone can make. Pupils are taught to value and respect others. Summer Fields is committed to being an equal opportunities school and to ensuring equal treatment for all pupils, regardless of race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy and the school's ethos as a whole 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 equal treatment for all members of the school community.
- Create and maintain an open and supportive environment, free from discrimination.
- Foster an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and positive attitudes, so that everyone can feel valued within the school.
- Comply with the school's equality duties as contained in the Equality Act 2010.
- Remove or help to overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist.
- Enforce the understanding that all discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

All members of the school community are expected to comply with this policy and treat others with dignity, respect and tolerance at all times. All parents are expected to support the aims of this policy and the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

All staff at Summer Fields have a specific responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the school with regard to equal opportunities.

## **Regulatory framework**

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

- Equality Act 2010
- Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
- 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 (2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023)

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Countering bullying Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Learning Support (SEND) Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy (Staff)
- Safer Recruitment Policy

## **Admissions**

Summer Fields treats every application for admission in a fair, open-minded and equal way in accordance with this policy and the school's Admissions Policy. Although an academically selective school, every application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the school's selection criteria. Summer Fields accepts applications from, and admits subject to assessment, all prospective pupils irrespective of any disability, gender reassignment, or their race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief)] or special educational needs.

The school's Equality and Diversity Policy (Staff) details the approach taken to staff recruitment and selection.

Parents should 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 their ability to participate fully in the education provided at Summer Fields; the school will then consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the candidate is not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other children. The school will not offer a place to a child with disabilities if, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, the school cannot adequately cater for or meet their needs.

All school bursaries are means tested awards, offered to those who meet the school's admissions criteria but may otherwise be unable to afford to attend Summer Fields. The Maclaren Foundation exists to raise and allocate funds for this purpose. Details of our bursary provision can be found on our website or obtained from the Registrar.

## **Educational services**

Summer Fields 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). The school will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detrimental treatment.

The 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 robustly any inappropriate and unacceptable discriminatory behaviour by pupils or staff.
- Encourage children to work and play freely and have respect for all other pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic.
- 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 at Summer Fields.
- Ensure that it reviews, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices.
- Use the educational curriculum, school assemblies (some age-specific), chapel services, tutor meetings and the PSHE programme 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.
  - Encourage children to question and challenge assumptions and stereotypes in order to better understand discriminatory behaviours and bias.

The school recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms (including cyberbullying and sexual harassment) are unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Countering Bullying policies].

### **Religious belief**

Although Summer Fields is a Church of England foundation, with the school chapel at the heart of the school both physically and metaphorically, the school is wholly inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or those 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.

## **Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability**

The 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, including during the admissions process.

Where the school is required to consider its reasonable adjustments duty, it will consult with parents about what reasonable adjustments, if any, the school is able to make to avoid their child being put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other pupils. The school will carefully consider any proposals for further help or support in the light of a pupil's disability and the resources available to the school.

The School has an Accessibility Plan in place which can be found on the school website, while a hard copy can be made available upon request. This sets out the school's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum; improve the physical environment of the school to allow disabled pupils increasingly to take advantage of the education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered; and improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

## **Monitoring and review**

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

## **Breaches of this policy**

Pupils who are in breach of this policy may be sanctioned in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.