

Equal Opportunities Policy

Whole School including EYFS and Boarding

The Mount School York is an equal opportunities institution and does not discriminate against anyone, valuing every individual – member of staff, pupil or volunteer. We strive to create a culture of respect and to promote tolerance and diversity at every opportunity. This policy applies to all members of the school community, including pupils, prospective pupils, parents and carers, employees, applicants for employment, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors. It applies to the school's educational provision, admissions, employment practices, boarding provision, co-curricular activities, trips and visits and other services and facilities provided by the school.

Statement of Policy

- Discrimination is unacceptable and equality of opportunity has been a longstanding feature of school practices and procedures.
- The school is committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010 and to promoting equality of opportunity. We oppose unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of any protected characteristic, as applicable under the Act: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- The school recognises that equality does not necessarily mean treating everyone in exactly the same way. Different treatment may be appropriate or necessary in order to meet individual needs, remove disadvantage or make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.
- We seek to maintain an inclusive, respectful and supportive environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and is free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and intimidation.
- The school values the diversity of its community and seeks to foster an environment in which difference is respected and everyone has a sense of belonging. Through the curriculum, pastoral care, co-curricular opportunities and wider School life, pupils are encouraged to understand and respect people from different backgrounds, cultures, faiths, beliefs and identities.
- The school promotes the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education provided for pupils and the working environment provided for both staff and pupils.
- The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities and constantly strives to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.

Equal Opportunities of Learning

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum designed to meet the needs, abilities and interests of its pupils. We seek to ensure that all pupils are able to access the curriculum and wider life of the school and that unnecessary barriers to participation and achievement are identified and addressed. This is done by:

- Setting suitable learning challenges on an individual basis.
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning, extra-curricular provision and assessment for individuals.

The school promotes educational inclusion through high-quality teaching, appropriate support and the regular review of pupils' needs and progress. Teachers have high expectations for all pupils while recognising that individuals may require different approaches, support or reasonable adjustments in order to participate fully and achieve their potential. When planning their work, teachers take into account the abilities of all of their pupils and ensure pupils:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Participate safely in clothing that is appropriate to their religious beliefs.
- Use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping.
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles.
- Have challenging targets that enable individuals to succeed.
- Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.

Children Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The school is committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to participate fully in School life and are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. The school has regard to the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, where applicable, and complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and prospective pupils and will provide auxiliary aids and services where it is reasonable to do so. The school seeks to identify and respond to individual needs at the earliest appropriate stage. Teaching and assessment are adapted where appropriate, and pupils are supported to access the curriculum, co-curricular programme, educational visits, boarding provision and wider School life.

Teachers ensure that the work given to pupils:

- Takes account of their pace of learning and the equipment they use.
- Takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, vision aids.
- Is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where pupils are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials.
- Allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies.
- Will include approaches that allow hearing-impaired pupils to learn about sound in science and music, and visually impaired pupils to learn about light in science, and to use visual resources and images both in art and design and in design and technology when appropriate.
- Uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities.

In the EYFS and throughout the school, pupils' needs and progress are monitored appropriately. Where SEND is identified, the school works in partnership with pupils, parents and carers and, where appropriate, external professionals, following an assess-plan-do-review approach.

Further information is contained within the School's SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan.

Pupils with EAL

The school welcomes pupils from a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Having English as an additional language is not in itself a special educational need, and the School distinguishes between language acquisition needs and SEND when assessing and supporting pupils. Pupils' proficiency in English is considered when planning teaching, learning and pastoral support. Appropriate EAL provision

is made according to individual need to enable pupils to access the curriculum, participate fully in school life and make appropriate academic progress.

The school recognises and values pupils' home languages, cultures and experiences and seeks to ensure that pupils with EAL are not disadvantaged because of their linguistic background.

Pupils with more limited English language skills are immersed in using English in the curriculum and broader school life. Should they require it, pupils will receive extra EAL lessons either instead of a curriculum lesson, during break time, after school or in a study period. Extra help is also provided to pupils in Year 10 and College who need some extra tuition in preparation for internationally recognised English language exams such as Cambridge B2 First Certificate in English and IELTS.

Pupils Including Boarders

The principles of this policy apply equally to pupils within the boarding community. The school recognises the particular importance within boarding of respecting pupils' cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and individual needs. Boarding practice seeks to ensure that all pupils are treated with dignity, are able to participate fully in boarding life and have appropriate opportunities to observe their religion or belief, maintain cultural practices and express their identity, subject to reasonable requirements relating to safeguarding, welfare and the rights of others.

If at any time a pupil or boarder feels that they have been treated less favourably than others in relation to equal opportunities they should raise the matter with a member of the pastoral staff or the Head of Boarding.

No pupil or boarder will be treated less favourably on the grounds of disability or special educational need. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and prospective pupils where required by the Equality Act 2010 and will take reasonable steps to avoid substantial disadvantage. This includes consideration of the provision of auxiliary aids and services where reasonable.

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

- The process for recruitment and selection of staff does not discriminate. Recruitment and selection decisions will be based on objective, role-related criteria, subject to the school's safeguarding and safer recruitment responsibilities.
- Job descriptions are in line with our aims, our equal opportunities policy and job requirements are reflected accurately in any person specifications.
- Promotion and advancement is made on merit, and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of equality of opportunity
- Short-listing and interviewing will be carried out by more than one person.
- Selection criteria and interview questions will relate to the requirements of the role and will be applied fairly and consistently. Reasonable adjustments will be made to the recruitment and selection process for disabled applicants where required.

Employment

The school is committed to equality of opportunity throughout employment, including recruitment, induction, training, professional development, appraisal, promotion, pay and benefits, flexible working and the application of disciplinary, capability, attendance and grievance procedures.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and applicants where required and will consider appropriate support for employees experiencing pregnancy, maternity or other circumstances protected by law.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by or against employees will not be tolerated and may be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedures.

The Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with its legal obligations in relation to equality. The Head is responsible for the implementation of this policy and for promoting a culture in which equality, inclusion and respect are embedded throughout the school. All staff are expected to uphold the principles of this policy, challenge discriminatory behaviour appropriately and report concerns in accordance with the school's safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, grievance or other relevant procedures.

Pupils who believe that they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment or victimisation should speak to a member of staff they trust. Staff should report concerns to their Line Manager, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or through the appropriate grievance or whistleblowing procedure. Concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately. No person should suffer adverse treatment because they have raised a concern in good faith or supported another person in doing so.