



THE PERSE
SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

Policy on Equal Treatment

The Perse School

April 2022

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This policy applies to the Perse School (“the School”) which comprises the Perse Pelican Nursery and Pre-Preparatory School including the EYFS setting (“the Perse Pelican School”), the Perse Preparatory School (“the Perse Prep School”) and the Perse Upper School (“the Upper School”).

This Policy is available on the School’s website or on application to the Head.

The Policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format it required.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 **The School Community:** The School is an independent day school for pupils aged 3-18 years and is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. It has a Christian, non-denominational ethos and tradition. The school community is made up of children, parents, legal guardians, teachers and other employees and governors from many different races, creeds and backgrounds.
- 1.2 **Admissions:** Candidates for admission as pupils are required to satisfy the academic and character requirements current at the time of admission and entry to the School. The School will not discriminate in relation to sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, or special educational needs. The School's *Admissions Policy* reflects the School's approach towards equal treatment and is consistent with this Policy. Every application will be considered on its merits within the School’s criteria for selection on grounds of the pupil’s ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of excluding pupils with a disability or special educational needs subject to section 4 below.
- 1.3 **Education:** The School is mainstream and English-speaking. The School will provide appropriate support for children with special educational needs or for whom English is not their first language. The School's *Policy on Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and Learning Support* includes details about the welfare and educational provision for pupils with special educational needs. See also paragraph 3.5.2 below.
- 1.4 **Related Policies:** This Equal Treatment Policy is in accordance with and must be read and applied in conjunction with all of the School's policies, including the *Admissions Policy*, *Policy on Behaviour and Discipline*, *Permanent Exclusion and Removal: Review Procedure*, *Anti-Bullying Policy*, *Disability Policy*, *Policy on Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and Learning Support*, *School Rules and Inclusion Equality and Diversity Policy*. All policies are available on the School’s website or Perse Portal and can also be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. The School also has separate Accessibility Plans for The Perse Pelican School, The Perse Prep School and the Upper School. The Plans are available on request from the Domestic Bursar.
- 1.5 **Guidance and Advice:** This Equal Treatment Policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:
 - 1.5.1 Equality Act 2010: explanatory notices (2010);
 - 1.5.2 Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission, July 2014);
 - 1.5.3 The Equality Act 2010 and schools; departmental advice for school leaders, school

staff, governing bodies and local authorities (DfE, May 2014);

- 1.5.4 Advice and Guidance; How can we stop prejudice based bullying in schools? (Equality and Human Rights Commission);
- 1.5.5 Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, July 2018 as amended in December 2020);
- 1.5.6 Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE), September 2021; and
- 1.5.7 Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education guidance (DfE, June 2019).

2 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 **Application:** This policy applies to all pupils of the School and their parents or legal guardians.

2.2 **Equal Treatment:** The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse school community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. As set out in the *IE&D Policy*, all members of the community will be taught to value and respect others and other cultures. The School is committed to promoting inclusion in order that every individual feels a sense of belonging at the School. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and will promote equal treatment for all members of the school community. It is committed to fostering mutual tolerance and positive behaviours, practices and attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School. In the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

- sex;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- gender reassignment;
- race;
- disability;
- religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief);
- sexual orientation;
- (in the case of adult members of the School Community) marital or civil partnership status; and
- age.

These are called the **Protected Characteristics**. The School also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need (**SEN**) or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The School aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunities. The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the PSHE, relationships education / the School's relationships and sex education policy and programmes, through assemblies, through the supportive school culture and through the School's policies.

Inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged. Children will be encouraged to value and respect appropriately all those they encounter at or through the School.

2.3 **Approach:** The principles of equal treatment and the principles of the *IE&D Policy* guide the School's approach both to the admission of pupils and to the establishment of its expectations of pupils during their time at the School. The principles are also employed to guide the

School's approach to the provision of access to facilities, services, opportunities and responsibilities.

3 FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

- 3.1 **Types:** Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- 3.2 **Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as set out in paragraph 2.2 above. Direct discrimination also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic (other than pregnancy or maternity).
- 3.3 **Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for example, their sex or race.
- 3.4 **Discrimination arising from disability:** Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and the treatment cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- 3.5 **Disability and Special Needs:** The School is inclusive and welcomes pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. The School maintains and promotes a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all its activities and will not treat pupils and their parents or legal guardians less favourably on these grounds without proper justification. However, at present, the School's facilities, physical and otherwise, for the disabled and those with special educational needs are limited but all that is reasonable will be done to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone.
- 3.5.1 **Disability:** Subject to the above constraints, the School welcomes applications for school places from people who have a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010. Every application will be processed and considered fairly. The School will make reasonable adjustments to its systems and procedures in order to accommodate disabilities of which it has been made aware as set out in the School's Policy on Disability (Pupils) which is available on the school website or on request from the Bursar.
- 3.5.2 **SEND:** The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years is adhered to in the School. The Prep and Pelican Learning Support Coordinator, Julia Halbert, and Head of Learning Support, Holly Singleton (Upper) are available for consultation as appropriate. Children with special needs may have an Individual Education Plan (including Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans) which will be reviewed and monitored carefully. Please see the *Policy on Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and Learning Support* for further details of the procedures offered by the School to assist these children.
- 3.5.3 **Reasonable Adjustments:** The School has an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. In making "reasonable adjustments", the School is

required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. The School will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids or services.

3.5.4 **Confidentiality:** The School will have due regard to any request by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

3.5.5 **Access:** The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The School has an Accessibility Plan, which is kept under review and revised as necessary. The Plan is available on request from the Domestic Bursar.

4 EDUCATION AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES

4.1 **Equal access:** The School will provide all pupils equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare, paragraph 4.2 below and paragraph 3.5 above. In PSHE and sport, the School applies paragraphs 9 and 10 of non statutory guidance [Gender Separation in Mixed Schools June 2018](#). The School affords boys and girls equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities while recognising that single sex teams are formed for competitive sports where physical strength, stamina or physique may put the average boy or girl at an unfair advantage or disadvantage.

4.2 **Positive action:** The School may provide pupils of a particular minority or protected group, or pupils with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the pupils in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.

4.3 **Exclusions:** The School will not discriminate against any pupil by excluding them from the School, or by subjecting them to any other detriment, on the grounds of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, or special educational needs, subject to paragraph 3.5 of this Policy.

4.4 **Teaching and School materials:** Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, sexual or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

4.5 **Pupil interaction:** All pupils are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other pupils, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, pregnancy or maternity or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and pupils will be encouraged to question assumptions, stereotypes and negative behaviours and practices. The School's PSHE and relationships education and / or relationships and sex education curriculum encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the Protected Characteristics.

4.6 **Bullying:** Bullying is always unacceptable and will not be dismissed as being normal or as "banter", "just having a laugh", "boys will be boys" or simply "part of growing up". The School

will not tolerate bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based bullying and discriminatory-based bullying) for any reason. Examples of bullying include:

- bullying relating to race, religion, belief or culture,
- bullying related to SEN, learning difficulties or disabilities,
- bullying related to appearance or health conditions,
- bullying relating to sexual orientation,
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances,
- sexist or sexual bullying or bullying related to gender reassignment.

The School's *Anti-bullying Policy* contains more details about the School's anti-bullying practices.

5 SCHOOL UNIFORM

- 5.1 **The School Uniform Policy is consistent with this policy:** The same School Uniform Policy applies equally to all pupils, irrespective of their sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the School will consider reasonable requests to alter the School Uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled children.
- 5.2 **Symbols of faith:** Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle worn by Sikhs, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by pupils when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the School's existing School Uniform Policy principles (in regards to, for example, the school colours). Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the pupil or their parents to the Head, whose decision will be final, subject to the Complaints procedure.
- 5.3 **Disabled pupils:** Reasonable adjustments may be required to the School Uniform for disabled pupils who require them. The pupil or their parents should refer the matter to the Head to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the pupil.

6 RELIGIOUS BELIEF

- 6.1 **Religion:** The School's religious ethos, is set in accordance with the Christian tradition, but the School respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith. In accordance with the *IE&D Policy*, the rights and freedoms of the whole school community will be respected.

7 PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH PARTICULAR RELIGIOUS, DIETARY, LANGUAGE OR CULTURAL NEEDS

- 7.1 **Individual Needs:** The School is keen to respect individual needs and the School will actively:
- promote racial equality and good race relations,
 - promote equality of opportunity and access,
 - oppose all forms of prejudice and negative discrimination.

7.2 **Catering:** The Perse can provide for most special dietary requirements whether related to allergen, intolerance or for religious or cultural reasons. Individual care plans are created for pupils with food allergies. Allergen Champions are identified within the catering teams and pupils are encouraged to ask the catering team if they have a specific allergy to make sure that they know exactly what each dish contains.

7.3 **Religious and cultural needs:** The Upper Room is a multi-faith room to allow pupils and staff of any belief to carry out their religious observances during break and lunch time. The School will grant requests of absence wherever possible on grounds of belief. The majority of school assemblies are non-denominational and cater for pupils of any or no religion. Parents may write to the Head if they wish to withdraw their child from religious assemblies/events. The School, through the pastoral structure, will make every effort to support individual pupils with particular cultural needs (religious, ethnic, creative, etc.) provided that the same are consistent with the law and the inclusive ethos and tradition of the School.

7.4 **Language:** The School attempts to use succinct and inclusive language whenever possible. The School will also make reasonable adjustments to ensure that parents and pupils for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) will be able to access school material. Pupils for whom English is not a first language receive support, as appropriate, from the Learning Support Department.

8 **AWARENESS** of this policy among employees will be raised and maintained by means of discussion at staff meetings and will form part of the School's education programme for pupils (in PHSE lessons and assemblies). Children will be valued for their diversity and differences and, in turn, encouraged to value and respect others.

9 **RISK ASSESSMENT:** Where a concern about a pupil's welfare is identified, the risks to that pupil's welfare will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken to reduce the risks identified.

The format of risk assessment may vary and may be included as part of the School's overall response to a welfare issue, including the use of individual pupil welfare plans (such as behaviour, healthcare and education plans, as appropriate). Regardless of the form used, the School's approach to promoting pupil welfare will be systematic and pupil focussed.

10 **WORKING TOGETHER:** The School is committed to working with parents and other agencies for the good of each child.

11 COMPLAINTS

11.1 A pupil, parent, or guardian who believes that they (or the pupil) have received less favourable treatment on any of the grounds referred to in this policy may make a formal complaint in writing. The complaint should be made to a member of staff (usually the class teacher or tutor, or to any other adult who is in a position to report the complaint). The complaint will be handled in accordance with the School's Complaints Procedure, a copy of which will be available on request.

11.2 All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Bursar.

12 RECORD KEEPING

12.1 All records created under this policy are managed in accordance with the School's *Records Management Policy* and *Records Retention Schedule*.

- 12.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data. The School's approach to data protection compliance is set out in the School's data protection policies and procedures. In addition, staff must ensure that they follow the School's data protection policies and procedures when handling personal data created in connection with this policy. This includes the School's *Data Protection Policy for Staff, Governors and Volunteers* and *Information Security and Sharing Data Guidance*, which are contained in the *Data Protection and Information Security Handbook*.

13 RESPONSIBILITIES, MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 13.1 **Responsibilities:** The **Board of Governors** has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's Equal Treatment Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Governors has delegated to the Bursar day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.
- 13.2 **Monitoring:** To ensure that this policy is operating effectively and encourages diversity in the School, the School will seek to monitor diversity data as part of the Admissions procedure. The School also maintains records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy.
- 13.3 **Review:** The Bursar is responsible for the on-going monitoring and regular analysis of the data monitored under paragraph 13.2 above and will arrange for the taking of appropriate positive steps to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and discrimination arising from disability where necessary. The Bursar is also responsible for evaluating whether the aims of this Policy are carried out throughout all areas of the School and taking appropriate action where necessary. This policy is reviewed annually by the Bursar. A report of their findings and recommendations for any amendments are reported annually to the Board of Governors.

- 14 **ENFORCEMENT:** All complaints will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the school community who is found to have acted in contravention of this Policy.

15 VERSION CONTROL

Date of adoption of this policy	19 th April 2022
Date of last review of this policy	22 nd March 2022
Date for next review of this policy	March 2023
Policy owner (SLT)	Deputy Head (Pupil Development and Welfare) / Prep School Head / Pelican School Head
Authorised by	Jonathan Scott On behalf of the Board of Governors
Circulation	Governors / all staff / parents / pupils [on request] Published on the School's website and PersePortal and available from the School Office on request
Status	Complies with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (SI2014/3283) , Equality Act (2010) , the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 Years