



Equal Opportunities Policy for Pupils

This whole school policy also applies to the Prep School

Table of contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Aims and Values.....	2
3. Regulatory Framework	3
4. Admissions.....	3
5. Behaviour.....	4
6. English as an Additional Language	4
7. School Uniform	4
8. Other Policies.....	5
9. Monitoring.....	5
10. Complaints	5

1. Introduction

1.1 Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Tormead and we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

2. Aims and Values

2.1 *Our mission statement:*

We are committed to providing an excellent, all-round education in a warm, stimulating and supportive environment.

2.2 *Our values:*

- We treat everyone with respect and dignity
- We deliver academic excellence
- We enrich through a broad and varied curriculum
- We celebrate effort and achievement
- We bring out the best in our girls
- We prepare our girls for life beyond school

2.3 *Fundamental British Values:*

The ethos at Tormead is underpinned by the Fundamental British Values of:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and those without faith

2.4 Tormead is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of age, race, sex¹, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity / paternity. We are an academically selective school, and we believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if pupils are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

2.5 We welcome applications from pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, and refer parents to our Accessibility and SEND policies. We do not treat pupils with a disability less favourably and also take reasonable steps to avoid putting pupils with a disability at a substantial disadvantage.

2.6 Means tested bursaries are offered to enable as many as possible who meet our admission criteria to attend the school. Details of our provision for bursaries can be found on our website or obtained from the Bursar's Office.

2.7 We recognise our legal duty to uphold the law on equal opportunities for pupils and staff alike.

2.8 This policy concerns equal opportunities for pupils (and our policy on equal opportunities for staff is contained in our Employment Manual).

¹ In line with the advice pertaining to single-sex schools, according to paragraph 2.2 of the Equality Act Advice 2010

3. Regulatory Framework

3.1 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.

3.2 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 with Safeguarding Children (July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)
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- The Equality Act 2010
- Paragraph 3 (j) of the ISSRs - teaching must not discriminate against pupils contrary to part 6 of the Equality Act 2010; and
- Paragraph 5 (b) of the ISSRs - schools must ensure that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, taking responsibility for their behaviour and supporting the participation in the democratic process.

3.3 We ensure that teaching at Tormead does not unlawfully discriminate in relation to protected characteristics and recognise that unlawful discrimination can take various forms, such as direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and failure to make reasonable adjustments (for pupils with disabilities). We further recognise that 'teaching' may also include the 'hidden' lessons to children implicit in school activities (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.

4. Admissions

4.1 The School 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, each application will be considered on its merits in accordance with the School's selection criteria based on an applicant's ability and aptitude. The School accepts applications from, and admits all prospective pupils irrespective of their gender, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief) or special educational needs.

4.2 Parents must 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 ability to fully participate in the education provided by the School so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the child 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.

5. Behaviour

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

5.2 The Head, SMT, Heads of Year, Form Tutors and medical staff all play an active role in monitoring the implementation of our policy on equal opportunities. Through the use of assemblies, PSHE, Religious Studies, Drama, English and other lessons, the School::

- Promotes tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- Promotes positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issue
- Fosters an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures; bias should be recognised and addressed
- Helps pupils to understand why and how we deal with offensive language and behaviour and why we deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

5.3 At Tormead, we do not have a set of official School rules; however, we do have high expectations of pupils with respect to their behaviour. This is set out in our Girls' Code of Conduct which requires, amongst others, that pupils:

- Behave politely and courteously to everyone at all times, being especially considerate of visitors to the School as well as members of the public when they are on an educational visit.
- Be considerate of others' needs; treat them as you would wish to be treated yourself
- Be kind to others: never mock, criticise or insult.
- Respect their views and opinions, remembering that they will not always agree with you. Do feel free to disagree with them, but do so in an appropriate and respectful manner.

5.4 Any occurrences of discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine.

5.5 Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable. Our Anti-Bullying and Behaviour policies provide guidance on dealing with discriminatory behaviour. There will be zero tolerance of abusive behaviours.

5.6 A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and guardians and the School's commitment to equal opportunities

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6. English as an Additional Language

6.1 As set out in the EAL Policy a “3.3 If a student is deemed to need extra support, we will review our provision and look to increase our support in accordance with the level of need”. Please refer to the EAL policy for additional information.

7. School Uniform

7.1 Tormead is inter-denominational and welcomes pupils, and staff, from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds and offer the opportunity for pupils to practice their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that all pupils are required to wear a uniform until the end of Year 11. A 'smart dress' code operates thereafter. The Head will consider written requests from parents for variations in uniform on religious grounds, taking expert advice where necessary.

8. Other Policies

8.1 This policy is available on the School's website and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Accessibility Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Pupils' Code of Conduct
- SEND Policy
- EAL Policy

9. Monitoring

9.1 This policy is regularly monitored and the Head reports to the Governors any failures, or deemed failures, to provide equality of opportunity to our pupils (current or prospective).

10. Complaints

10.1 Should you have any complaint about the operation of this policy or you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to a child's detriment, please refer to our Complaints Policy available on the School's website

Date of Last Review: **May 2023**

By Resolution of the Governing Body:

MR MATTHEW HOWSE
Chair of Governors

MR BOYD
Head

22nd May 2023