

POLICY STATEMENT ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - STUDENTS

The School as an Equal Opportunities Employer

Extensive guidance on equal opportunities in relation to employees can be found in section 6 of the staff handbook. This document is therefore concerned with managing diversity and equal opportunities for pupils.

Introduction

Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Cobham Hall. We welcome applications from students with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

Cobham Hall is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

We also welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities, and refer parents to our policies on SEND, which include information on special educational needs (SEN), learning difficulties, and disability.

Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the school's 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.

Code of Conduct

The Leadership Team, pastoral staff and housemistresses, play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the School's policy on equal opportunities. Use is made of assemblies, Wellbeing lessons, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the school community.
- Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
- Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures. Bias should be recognised.
- Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour.
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

Harassment in all its forms is unlawful and unacceptable; our behaviour and anti-bullying policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and Guardians, and full acceptance of the School's ethos and core values.

English as an additional language

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Cobham Hall pupils must have an adequate understanding of the English language. This is assessed by the School as part of the Entrance Assessment. Tuition in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can be arranged at the parent's expense.

Requests for variation in the school uniform

Cobham Hall welcomes pupils of all faiths and offers the opportunity for girls to practise their own faiths. However, parents should be aware that all pupils at Cobham Hall are required to wear a uniform. The Head will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the school's policy on health and safety. The Head may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

Complaints

We hope that parents or students do not have any concerns about the operation of our equal opportunities policy; but copies of the Raising a Concern policy can be sent to parents on request and is also available on our website.

Related Policies and Documents

- Policy Statement on Safeguarding
- Staff Handbook Section 6.1: Personal Issues
- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Three Year Accessibility Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy Statement
- Raising a concern policy
- Religious, dietary, language and cultural needs
- Admissions policy