EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

APPLICABILITY: All Staff, Pupils and Governors

AUTHOR: College Deputy Head

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: ISS Part 1: 2(1); Part 2: 5; Part 3: 9, 10; Part 8: 3

1. This Policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS.

2. This Policy has been prepared with the aid of the following documents:

   a. Education and Inspections Act 2006;

   b. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014;

   c. The Equality Act 2010;

   d. Human Rights Act 1998;

   e. Employment Rights Act 1996

   f. Data Protection Act 2018

   g. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026

   h. ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

   i. Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026

3. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Policies on Admissions, SEND, EAL, SMSC, Behaviour, Exclusions, Safeguarding, Whistleblowing and Complaints, as well as the Accessibility Plan.

4. Tettenhall College prides itself on being an inclusive, tolerant and diverse community; it is firmly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all current and prospective stakeholders. It is committed to providing an environment that is free from unlawful or unfair direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religious beliefs, or other personal characteristics, but aims to create the conditions whereby pupils and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits and potential.

Aims and Objectives

5. Tettenhall College aims to:

   a. promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the whole School community;

   b. deal with incidents where there has been breach of this Policy promptly and in a sensitive manner;

c. strive to create an environment that is free from harassment or intimidation;

d. develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities;

e. promote good relations and celebrate the diversity between members of different racial, cultural and religious belief, linguistic background and communities;

f. make provision for and monitor the particular needs of gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, age, SEN and disability;

g. enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others and to challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs; and

h. ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.

Responsibilities

6. The Headmaster and SLT play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy, for delegating responsibilities and tasks to other staff, and for ensuring that the Policy is known and understood by staff, pupils and parents. They are supported in this by the Governing Body.

7. The College Deputy Head and the Head of Preparatory School are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made where necessary.

8. All staff are responsible for following the Policy and reporting any incidents involving a breach of the Policy to the Headmaster or another member of SLT. Any incidents of racist or homophobic bullying or sexual harassment or similar behaviour related to any other protected characteristics amongst pupils will be taken extremely seriously and must be dealt with appropriately. The matter must be reported to the Headmaster or another member of SLT. Procedures outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy will then be applicable.

9. All staff have a legal duty not to exclude, bully or otherwise harass other staff. The School will also have, from October 2024, a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of staff by third parties. For allegations of bullying and harassment, staff should refer to the Grievance Procedure.

Admission of Pupils

10. The School admits pupils on academic criteria and previous school reports; those who are applying for scholarships are tested and/ or interviewed. An individual's race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, and in most cases disability, do not form part of this selection process. Our main criterion for selection

is that a pupil should be able to flourish at Tettenhall College and that the School is able, by making reasonable changes to facility provision and by appropriate support, to provide adequately for his/ her needs.

11. We also welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities and refer parents to our Admissions and SEND Policies.

12. The School is committed to full educational inclusion (see SEND and EAL Policy).

13. Pupils have equal access to the programmes of study throughout the School, according to aptitude and ability.

14. All subjects will have equality of opportunity at their core.

15. Codes of Conduct for pupils and for staff clearly and explicitly forbid verbalisation, vocalisation or discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religion, gender, sexuality and ability/disability or any other protected characteristic.

16. Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity is specifically taught through the PSHE programme.

Access

17. Owing to the nature of the School buildings, not all rooms are fully accessible. Where necessary, the rooming timetable will be adjusted (whether temporarily or permanently) in order to allow all pupils and staff full equality of opportunity (see SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan for further details).

Monitoring

18. Tettenhall College monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy annually. As part of that process, we invite all parents who accept places at the School for their child to record their child's ethnicity on the acceptance form.

English as an Additional Language

19. In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Tettenhall College, pupils must demonstrate an adequate level of English.

20. Tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged at the parents' expense and is part of the requirement for international/ overseas recruitment (see Admissions Policy).

21. The College has an EAL department that offers additional support to pupils who need it during curriculum time.

Variation in the School Uniform

22. Although Tettenhall College has Christian roots, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief; we welcome pupils of all faiths and none, and we offer the opportunity for pupils to practise their own faiths.

23. The Headmaster will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds that are consistent with the School's ethos and its policy on health and safety. The Headmaster may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

Appointment and Development of Staff

24. Job descriptions will all carry a statement that this School is an Equal Opportunities employer and welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, age or any other protected characteristic.

25. Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities, experience) in selection for recruitment.

26. People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment and the School will comply with its legal obligations in relation to the making of reasonable adjustments.

27. All employees have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.

28. People becoming disabled while in employment will be given positive help to retain their jobs or to be considered for redeployment if that is necessary.

Freedom of Expression

29. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right protected under the Human Rights Act 1998 by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is also a fundamental right under common law. Tettenhall College promotes freedom of expression, as well as healthy and balanced debate of all issues, including those considered controversial or sensitive.

30. Freedom of expression does not extend to statements that discriminate against or harass, or incite violence or hatred against, other persons and groups, particularly by reference to their race, religious belief, gender or sexual orientation. In such cases, the School will take action against staff or pupils concerned. Such action could result in dismissal (in the case of staff) or expulsion (in the case of pupils).

31. Promotion of extremist views or attempts to radicalise groups or individuals are not protected under freedom of expression. The School actively works to protect pupils and staff from exposure to such views and to promote Fundamental British Values. Anyone who promotes extremism or attempts to radicalise others within school will be immediately reported to the police.

32. The boundary between the expression of intolerant or offensive views and hate speech is not always an easy one to draw. However, a number of factors are likely to be relevant, including the intention of the person making the statement, the context in which they are making it, the intended audience, and the particular words used.

33. The School has a duty not to promote partisan political views. When political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, the School ensures that pupils are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

34. In promoting freedom of expression, the School has a duty to protect vulnerable individuals. In particular, younger pupils will be protected from discussion of certain issues and debates.

Breaches of the Policy

35. Any breach of policy will be dealt with in line with procedures set out in the Behaviour Policy (in the case of pupils) and the Disciplinary Procedure (in the case of staff).

Examples of behaviour which is unacceptable and would be considered a breach of policy.

36. Unless stated otherwise, each statement embraces acts of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of either age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, disability or any other protected characteristic:

a. Physical assault against a person or group;

b. Verbal abuse, insults, threats or intimidation;

c. Graffiti;

d. Distribution of leaflets, magazines or insignia which incite hatred or encourage discrimination or harassment;

e. Excluding or inciting others to exclude a person or a group;

f. Recruitment to subjects and selection for teams, clubs etc. in preferential ways;

g. A refusal to co-operate with pupils or colleagues;

h. Making discriminatory comments in the course of discussion or lessons; or

i. Repeatedly making comments of a sexual or sexist nature.

37. In addition, pupils should be made aware, and staff vigilant, to the fact that the content of posters displayed on walls or leaflets distributed in school (including by electronic means) could be offensive. No pupil should display posters or distribute leaflets without the express approval of a member of teaching staff.

Policy Review

38. This Policy will be reviewed annually, in the light of statutory changes or when an incident has occurred which necessitates a change to policy and procedures. Any changes will be presented to be ratified by the Council of Governors.