



CHARTERHOUSE

PUPIL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

M Jolly | Lead: Principal Deputy Head | Last reviewed: September 2026 | Next Review: September 2027

1. Purpose

Charterhouse is committed to providing an environment in which every pupil is treated with dignity, respect and fairness and is able to participate fully in School life.

The principles set out in this policy are underpinned by the Charterhouse values of Kindness, Open-mindedness, Perseverance, Moral Courage and Responsibility, which guide how members of the School community are expected to treat one another.

The School seeks to ensure that every pupil:

- is treated with dignity and respect
- feels safe and supported
- has fair access to opportunities
- is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment
- develops intellectual independence and critical thinking
- understands their responsibilities to others

The School recognises that pupils may hold a wide range of lawful beliefs, values and opinions. Charterhouse seeks to ensure that all pupils are treated respectfully and are able to express lawful views without fear of intimidation, provided they do so in a manner that respects the rights, dignity and wellbeing of others.

The School recognises that respect for others does not require agreement with all opinions, beliefs or viewpoints.

2. Promoting Inclusion and Belonging

Through education, pastoral support, pupil voice, co-curricular opportunities and community engagement, the School aims to promote understanding, challenge prejudice and encourage respectful relationships across a diverse community.

The School supports pupil-led and staff-supported initiatives that promote equality, diversity, inclusion, belonging and mutual respect.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- current pupils
- prospective pupils
- all aspects of School life, including boarding, educational provision, pastoral care, trips and co-curricular activities.

This policy does not apply to staff employment matters, which are governed through separate employment and workplace policies.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- relevant Department for Education guidance.

The School will comply with its legal obligations while exercising professional judgement in the best interests of pupils.

5. Equality Act Protected Characteristics

The School will not subject a pupil to unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of a protected characteristic recognised by the Equality Act 2010. See Appendix A for definitions.

The protected characteristics relevant to pupils are:

- disability
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity.

The School recognises that sex and gender reassignment are distinct protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and will seek to comply with its obligations in relation to both.

6. Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation

The School will take appropriate action where there is evidence of:

Direct discrimination

Treating a pupil less favourably because of a protected characteristic than another pupil is, has been, or would be treated in similar circumstances.

Indirect discrimination

Applying a provision, criterion or practice equally to all pupils, but which places pupils who share a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with others, unless this can be objectively justified as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a pupil's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that pupil.

Victimisation

Subjecting a pupil to a detriment because they have made, supported or participated in a complaint or

concern relating to discrimination, or because they have otherwise exercised rights under equality legislation.

The School recognises that harassment, bullying and discriminatory behaviour relating to any protected characteristic are unacceptable and will be addressed promptly and appropriately.

Charterhouse will investigate all allegations of inappropriate behaviour fairly and in accordance with School procedures, including incidents involving discrimination, prejudice, or intolerance, whether online or offline. All incidents will be recorded and monitored for patterns of concern.

7. Equality of Opportunity

Equality of Opportunity

The School seeks to provide fair and equitable access to the opportunities, services and benefits it offers, while recognising that different pupils may require different support or arrangements in order to participate fully in School life.

Admissions

The School will apply its admissions procedures fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against prospective pupils on the basis of a protected characteristic. Admission decisions will be made in accordance with the School's published admissions arrangements and relevant legal requirements.

Curriculum and Educational Provision

The School will seek to provide equal access to educational opportunities and will not unlawfully discriminate in the delivery of teaching, learning, assessment or the wider curriculum.

The School values intellectual enquiry and encourages pupils to engage with a broad range of ideas, perspectives and viewpoints in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Pastoral Care and Co-Curricular Activities

The School will seek to ensure that pupils have fair access to pastoral support, leadership opportunities, trips, visits, clubs, societies and other co-curricular activities.

Decisions relating to participation or additional support will be made having regard to the welfare, safety and individual needs of pupils, as well as any relevant legal obligations.

Reasonable Adjustments

The School will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required by law and where reasonable in the circumstances.

The School will seek to remove or reduce substantial disadvantages experienced by disabled pupils and will consider appropriate adjustments to policies, practices, facilities and activities where reasonably practicable. Further information is set out in the School's Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Plan.

Uniform and Appearance

The School's uniform and appearance requirements will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with legal requirements.

Requests for adjustments to uniform, appearance or related requirements arising from disability, religion or belief, health needs or other relevant circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.

Individual Circumstances

The School recognises that treating pupils fairly does not always require treating all pupils identically. Decisions may be made to meet individual needs, fulfil safeguarding responsibilities, accommodate disability, support pupil wellbeing or comply with legal obligations.

This approach maintains fairness while recognising that different pupils may require different forms of support, provision or adjustment.

8. Freedom of Thought, Belief and Expression

As a school committed to intellectual enquiry and personal development, Charterhouse values freedom of thought, belief and expression.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- explore ideas critically
- engage in reasoned discussion
- consider differing viewpoints
- express lawful opinions respectfully

No pupil will be disadvantaged solely because they hold or express a lawful belief or opinion. However, freedom of expression does not extend to behaviour that amounts to bullying, harassment, intimidation, unlawful discrimination or abuse of others.

The School seeks to balance freedom of expression with the rights, dignity, wellbeing and safety of all members of the School community.

9. Respectful Conduct

All pupils are expected to:

- treat others with courtesy and respect
- use language responsibly
- recognise the dignity of others
- avoid behaviour that humiliates, excludes, intimidates or demeans others
- contribute positively to the School community

The School recognises that disagreement is often an important part of education. Pupils should be able to disagree respectfully while maintaining appropriate standards of conduct.

10. Bullying and Prejudice-Related Behaviour

The School will not tolerate bullying.

This includes behaviour motivated by hostility or prejudice relating to:

- disability
- race, nationality, or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- family circumstances

Concerns will be managed through the School's Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and safeguarding procedures, as appropriate.

11. Safeguarding and Support for Individual Pupils

The School recognises that individual pupils may from time to time require support relating to personal identity, health, family circumstances, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other matters affecting wellbeing.

The School will consider such matters:

- individually
- sensitively
- confidentially where appropriate
- in accordance with safeguarding obligations
- with regard to the best interests of the child

The welfare of the child will be a primary consideration in all decision-making.

12. Pupils Questioning Their Gender

The School recognises that some pupils may experience questions or uncertainty regarding their gender. Such matters will be approached sensitively and in accordance with safeguarding principles and the School's Gender Questioning Pupils Guidance.

The School will:

- consider each case individually
- prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of the child
- ensure appropriate oversight by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- involve parents or carers unless there are safeguarding reasons not to do so
- take account of relevant professional advice where appropriate
- comply with current safeguarding guidance and legal requirements.

The School will not assume that interests, appearance, behaviour or preferences that differ from gender stereotypes indicate that a pupil is questioning their gender.

Requests relating to names, pronouns, uniforms or other aspects of social transition will be considered on a case-by-case basis through safeguarding and pastoral processes.

13. Boarding, Facilities and Sport

The School will seek to ensure that boarding provision is managed fairly and in accordance with its safeguarding, welfare and equality responsibilities.

Boarding arrangements may take account of factors including age, maturity, wellbeing, privacy, dignity, safeguarding requirements and the needs of individual pupils.

Boarding Accommodation

Boarding arrangements will be determined in accordance with legal requirements, safeguarding considerations and the welfare of pupils.

Toilets, Washing and Changing Facilities

The School will provide facilities in accordance with legal and safeguarding requirements.

Where appropriate, alternative arrangements may be considered for individual pupils provided that these arrangements remain consistent with safeguarding responsibilities and the privacy, dignity and welfare of all pupils.

Sport

Participation in sport will be managed in accordance with legal requirements, safety considerations, sporting regulations and the welfare of pupils.

The School may provide single-sex sporting activities where lawful and appropriate.

14. Responsibility

The Governing Body will:

- oversee compliance with legal obligations;
- review this policy;
- monitor significant equality-related issues.

The Head is responsible for:

- implementation of this policy;
- promoting a respectful School culture;
- ensuring appropriate staff training and awareness.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will:

- Oversee pastoral matters arising under this policy
- Advise on individual cases where pastoral considerations are relevant

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- oversee safeguarding matters arising under this policy
- advise on individual cases where safeguarding considerations are relevant

Director of Wellbeing and Inclusion will:

- Lead the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) vision
- Promote whole-school EDIB and wellbeing
- Support staff and pupil consultation, events, and training

Staff

Staff are expected to:

- uphold this policy
- model and promote respectful behaviour
- challenge inappropriate conduct
- report concerns through appropriate channels

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- uphold School standards
- treat others with respect
- report concerns appropriately

15. Complaints and Concerns

Concerns relating to discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying or equality matters should be raised through appropriate pastoral, safeguarding or complaints procedures.

The School will investigate concerns fairly, proportionately and sensitively.

16. Monitoring and Review

The School will review this policy annually, and sooner where necessary, to reflect:

- changes in legislation
- changes in statutory guidance
- developments in safeguarding
- operational experience

The School will monitor equality-related concerns, complaints and prejudice-related incidents to identify patterns, inform pastoral and safeguarding responses, and support the wellbeing, inclusion and safety of pupils.

Findings from monitoring may be used to inform staff training, policy development, pupil education and other measures aimed at promoting equality, respect and belonging within the School community.

Appendix A: Protected Characteristics

Disability

A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Race

Includes colour, nationality, ethnic origin and national origin.

Religion or Belief

Includes any religion, religious belief or philosophical belief protected by law, as well as a lack of religion or belief.

Sex

Refers to being male or female.

Sexual Orientation

Refers to a person's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, the opposite sex or either sex.

Gender Reassignment

Protection applies to a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process to reassign their sex.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Protection against discrimination associated with pregnancy or maternity.