

NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT



Equal Opportunities Policy

LAST UPDATED	Pastoral Deputy Headteacher	June 2015
LAST REVIEWED	Pastoral Deputy Headteacher	October 2020

POLICY TYPE	Voluntary
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RESPONSIBLE	
Leadership Team	Pastoral Deputy Headteacher
Governing Committee	Resources Committee

APPROVED	
Approved by:	Resources Committee
Date:	16 th November 2020

UPDATED	
Shared Drive:	17 th November 2020
Website (if applicable);	17 th November 2020

At Newlands we create confident and responsible young women equipped with the skills they need for the twenty first century. We empower all students to realise their potential as part of a community committed to lifelong learning.

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School Description

Newlands is a girls' 11-18 Comprehensive School. Our single sex status results in our having a much wider catchment area than many secondary schools. Each year we take pupils into Year 7 from over thirty primary schools, some of which are across boundaries in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. In the immediate vicinity the school serves an area which is mostly prosperous, with pockets of financial hardship. Our pupils come from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds: all the major Christian denominations are represented, as are most of the other major world religions, with a significant number following Islam. We are an inclusive school.

Philosophy

The staff, pupils and governors of the school are committed to the principle of equality of opportunity for all members of the school community. This includes both the education provided for the pupils and the employment of staff. In accordance with the aims of the school, staff and governors believe that all pupils are entitled to a stimulating educational environment which provides opportunities for them to develop self-confidence, to make better academic progress, to develop their talents in a range of spheres and to prepare them to become good citizens. We also aim to foster an ethos based on respect for all members of the school community and where hard work and high expectations go hand in hand with enjoyment.

Equalities Legislation

We endorse the philosophy enshrined in The Equality Act (2010) in respect of both education and employment through our inclusive practices. The Equality Act 2010 brings together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. It covers 8 'protected characteristics': race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

The Act includes a new public sector equality duty (the equality duty), replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The public sector equality duty is made up of a general equality duty supported by specific duties.

The General Equality Duty

The general equality duty covers all eight protected characteristics. We also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status. We must have due regard in the exercise of our functions to the three aims under the equality duty. These are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The second aim of the Equalities Act (advancing equality of opportunity) involves having due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

For Newlands Girls' School, having 'due regard' means:

- When deciding or taking an action we will assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- We will consider equality implications before and at the time that we develop policy and take decisions and we will keep them under review.
- We will consciously consider each aspect of the duty, both 'having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination' and 'having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity'.
- We will assess the risk and extent of any adverse impact that might result from a policy or decision and the ways in which the risk may be eliminated before the adoption of a proposed policy.
- The equality duty is integrated into the carrying out of the school's functions. The analysis necessary to comply with the duty will be carried out rigorously and with an open mind.

We understand that the equality duty supports good education and improves pupil outcomes. It helps us to identify priorities such as the underperformance of identified groups. It does this by requiring us to collate evidence, analyse the issues and consider acting to improve the experience of different groups of pupils. It then helps us to focus on what can be done to tackle these issues and to improve outcomes by developing measurable equality objectives.

The Equality Duty is supported by specific duties. The specific duties require us to publish annually relevant, proportionate information demonstrating our compliance with the Equality Duty and to set ourselves specific, measurable equality objectives at least once every four years.

To achieve this, we intend to:

1. Ensure measures are in place to enable students and staff to make the most of their abilities, experiences and opportunities in school, in their lives outside school, and in their futures.
2. Seek equality of opportunity across the nine protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010:
 - a. age
 - b. disability
 - c. gender reassignment
 - d. marriage and civil partnerships
 - e. pregnancy and maternity
 - f. race
 - g. religion and belief
 - h. sex
 - i. sexual orientation

3. Raise the ambitions, increase the expectations and widen the horizons of all students; the school recognises its responsibilities to provide auxiliary aids as a reasonable adjustment.
4. Promote staff awareness of teaching strategies and classroom management techniques which contribute to students' achievement and motivation
5. Provide a curriculum and teaching materials free from bias and stereotyping;
6. Ensure that all students are presented with a wide range of positive role models
7. Remove barriers in developing a staffing and management structure, including that of the governing body, which reflects the school's policy on equalities
8. Encourage a positive and supportive response from parents to our equalities policy.

The information we publish that demonstrates how we meet the equality duty includes school performance data, our Anti-bullying Policy, our school development plan and equality milestones, curriculum materials, governing body minutes, equality training materials, and parent and pupil surveys. Information can also be found in national surveys and other relevant information from the DfE, OFSTED, the teaching unions and the voluntary sector.