



## **POLICY 45**

# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

Policy reviewed by	Headmistress
Governors' Committee	Full Board
Review date	Summer 2023
Approved by Governors	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Next review date	Summer 2026

# TRURO HIGH SCHOOL

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

### 1. Introduction

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

The policy has regard for the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 (January 2015);
- The Equality Act 2010;
- Human Rights Act 1998.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Learning Support Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- EAL Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Staff Development and Induction Policy
- Prevent Duty Policy.

Truro High School prides itself on being an inclusive, tolerant organisation and a diverse community; it is firmly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all current and prospective members of the community. 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.

Truro High School aims to:

- Promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the whole school community;
- Deal with incidents where there has been breach of this policy promptly and in a sensitive manner;
- Strive to create an environment that is free from harassment or intimidation;
- Develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities;
- Promote good relations and celebrate the diversity between members of different racial, cultural and religious belief, linguistic background and communities;
- Make provision for and monitor the particular needs of gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, age and SEND;
- Enable pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others and to challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs;
- Ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.

## **2. Responsibility**

The SLT and pastoral staff 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/carers. They are supported in this by the Governing Body.

The Director of Teaching & Learning and the Head of Prep are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities in the curriculum.

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

All staff have a legal duty not to exclude, bully or otherwise harass other staff. For allegations of bullying and harassment, staff should refer to the Capability, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

## **3. Admission of Pupils**

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, religion, disability, sexual orientation or social background do not form part of this selection process. The School's main criteria for selection is that a pupil should be able to flourish at Truro High School and that the School is able, by making reasonable changes to facility provision and by appropriate support, to provide adequately for her needs.

The School welcomes applications from pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and refer parents/carers to the Admissions and Learning Support policies.

### ***Pupils***

The School is committed to full educational inclusion (see Learning Support Policy). Pupils have equal access to the programmes of study throughout the School, according to aptitude and ability.

All subjects will have equality of opportunity at their core.

School rules and the Staff Code of Conduct explicitly forbid discrimination on the grounds of race, culture, religious, gender, sexuality and ability/disability.

Positive attitudes and awareness development for equality of opportunity are specifically taught through the PSHEE programme.

### ***Access***

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 Learning Support and Accessibility policies for further details).

### ***Monitoring***

Truro High School monitors its Equal Opportunities Policy annually. As part of that process, the School invites all parents/carers of candidates for entrance examinations, together with all parents/carers who accept places at the School for their child to complete an ethnic monitoring form.

Under no circumstances does the School link our ethnic monitoring data with pupil records. It is hoped that all parents/carers will feel able to participate in the ethnic monitoring scheme.

### ***English as an Additional Language***

In order to cope with the academic and social demands of Truro High School, pupils must demonstrate an adequate level of English.

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

### ***Variation in the School Uniform***

Although Truro High School has Christian roots, the School does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and it welcomes pupils of all faiths and none, and it offers the opportunity for pupils to practise their own faiths.

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

## **4. Appointment and Development of Staff**

Job specifications carry a statement that this School is an Equal Opportunities employer and welcomes applications for all posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of sex, race, religion, disability or age.

Candidates for vacant posts will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities, experience) in selection for recruitment. People with disabilities will be offered facilities at interviews to enable them to demonstrate their suitability for employment.

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

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.

See also the School's Staff Recruitment and Staff Development and Induction policies.

## **5. Freedom of Expression**

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. Truro High School promotes freedom of expression, as well as healthy and balanced debate of all issues, including those considered controversial or sensitive.

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 permanent exclusion (in the case of pupils).

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.

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.

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.

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.

See also the School's Prevent Duty Policy.

## **6. Breaches of the Policy**

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 and Grievance Procedures (in the case of staff).

Examples of behaviour which is unacceptable and would be considered a breach of policy include (unless stated otherwise, each statement embraces acts of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of either age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or disability):

- Physical assault against a person or group;
- Verbal abuse, insults, threats or intimidation;
- Graffiti;
- Distribution of leaflets, magazines or insignia which incite hatred or encourage discrimination or harassment;
- Excluding or inciting others to exclude a person or a group;
- Recruitment to subjects and selection for teams, clubs etc. in preferential ways;
- A refusal to co-operate with pupils or colleagues;
- Making discriminatory comments in the course of discussion or lessons;
- Repeatedly making comments of a sexual or sexist nature.

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.

## **7. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly, and also in the light of statutory changes or when an incident has occurred which necessitates a change to policy and procedures.