



## **MOWDEN HALL SCHOOL**

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/ ACCESSIBILITY POLICY 2019-2020**

**Headmaster: Mr Neal Bailey**  
**Chief Executive: Mr Tom Beardmore-Gray**

#### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Mowden Hall School is fully committed to upholding the principles of equal opportunities in employment and in the provision of its services. In particular, Mowden Hall School opposes discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as "Protected Characteristics").

Each individual associated with Mowden Hall School (whether or not an employee), is individually responsible for implementing the Trust's commitment to the principle of equality.

Employees must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, pupils, parents, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace, and on work-related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- (a) Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
- (b) Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- (c) Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- (d) Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- (e) Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying and should include a short policy statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy will be made available on request.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law: for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

Individuals who are disabled or become disabled, are encouraged to tell Mowden Hall School about their condition so that it can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

Mowden Hall School takes a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If an Employee believes that they have suffered discrimination, they can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

Employees must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under Mowden Hall School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Mowden Hall School is committed to Equal Opportunities and Inclusion. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to learners who may have experienced previous difficulties. We model Equal Opportunities and Inclusion in our staffing policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community in order to meet legislative requirements as laid down in the Equality Act 2010.

Equal Opportunities is the responsibility of the whole school community and must be reflected throughout the organisation of the School and be addressed in all areas of the curriculum. The School ensures that staff expectations of different race/religious belief groups are no different. All staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender and socio-economic background, are welcome and will be encouraged to participate in the life of the School.

The School recognises its responsibilities under the Race Relations Act, Sex Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Act to eliminate discrimination and to promote good race relations.

### **Equal Opportunities - Multi-Cultural**

It is our school policy:

- To incorporate a balanced view of the world through a multi-cultural approach.
- To recognise that our pupils are world citizens who will meet a wide variety of cultures throughout their lives.

### **Equal Opportunities – Gender**

It is our school policy:

- To seek to promote non-sexiest attitudes in both children and staff.
- To allow children equal access to opportunities which will equip them for adult life and to achieve challenging expectations.
- To work towards the eradication of sexual stereotyping.
- Should a pupil of transgender join the school, Mowden Hall School will take a risk-based approach which is sensitive to the needs of, and ensures protection of, all pupils including the pupils of transgender.

In order to work towards the eradication of such differences we will ask ourselves the following types of questions when evaluating our practice.

- 1) Are all children able to try out new roles in play and learning activities?
- 2) Are all classroom tasks shared equally between girls and boys?
- 3) Do all children get an equal chance to use equipment and resources?
- 4) Do all our displays and teaching aids present a non-sexiest attitude?
- 5) Are our responses to bad behaviour the same to both boys and girls?
- 6) Are men and women from other cultures presented to children in a non-stereotypical way?
- 7) Do all children have equal access to playground space and other play facilities?

### **Equal Opportunities - Race**

It is our school policy:

- 1) That no child or adult should be treated in any way differently, or in a derogatory manner, because of their race.
- 2) To challenge racism in the context of a caring school community.

**In order to fulfil the above, the following types of behaviour will not be tolerated:**

- Provocative behaviour, i.e. wearing of any racist badges or insignia.
- The use of verbal abuse or name calling of a racist nature.
- The encouragement of others to behave in a racist manner.
- The ridiculing of an individual for cultural differences.
- The telling of racist jokes or stories.
- The exclusion of others because of their culture, ethnicity or race.

**Equal Opportunities - Ability**

It is our school policy:

- To recognise good effort and attitudes regardless of academic achievement.
- To allow all children access to equipment, resources and teacher time regardless of their academic achievements.
- To value all efforts and achievements of children in all areas of the curriculum.
- We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background, including those identified as having special educational needs. All children have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them, and to be fully included in all aspects of school life. Mowden Hall School sees the inclusion of children identified as having special educational needs as an equal opportunities issue.

This does not mean that we will treat all learners in the same way, but that we will respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs. We recognise that pupils learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and maturity. We believe that many pupils, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

At Mowden Hall School we aim to identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve his or her full potential. We pay particular attention to the provision for, and the achievement of, different groups of learners. Every child has an entitlement to a positive, helpful learning environment, with carefully planned work which matches individual needs, in order that they may reach their potential. This will be through differentiated planning by class teachers and support staff as appropriate.

Within each class, teaching and learning styles and organisation will be flexible to ensure effective learning. Grouping to support children identified with additional needs will be part of this process. Those pupils recorded as having additional support will have a specific plan.

Pupils who are withdrawn for individual or small group lessons do not lose access to the curriculum. These lessons are organized on a rotational basis to ensure this.

### **Equal Opportunities - Class**

It is our school policy:

- That children should not be treated in any way differently because of an assumed social class.
- That assumptions will not be made with regards to class difference.

### **Equal Opportunities - Physical Disability**

It is our school policy that:

- Children should not be treated in any way differently to others due to their individual physical disabilities and needs.
- A provision should be made for the individual special needs of any disabled children within our school community.
- A physically disabled child has a right to take part in all activities within the school environment in so far as their individual disability allows them to do so.

### **MANAGING EQUALITY IN PRACTICE**

1. Admission - The School follows the CET Admission Policies that do not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.
2. Registration - Pupils' names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Pupils will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.
3. Discrimination - All forms of discrimination by any person within the School's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.
4. Language - The School views linguistic diversity positively. Pupils and staff must feel that their natural language is valued.
5. Resources will be provided for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability or ethnic origin. Current resources and new acquisitions will be monitored by Heads of Departments to ensure the promotion of a positive image regarding race, gender and special need. The library resources are regularly reviewed to ensure they include books that reflect the range of special educational needs issues.
6. The P.S.H.E.E curriculum will help to promote a positive image of all members of society, with particular reference to race/religious belief, gender, physical ability and special need.
7. Displays reflect a positive image of race/religious belief, gender, physical ability and special need.
8. The School's Tracking System for regularly assessing and recording the progress of children is used to identify children who are not progressing satisfactorily and who may have additional needs.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

All of the Trust's schools have in place locally applicable policies which are updated regularly and will adhere to relevant guidance issued from time to time.

Mowden Hall School is committed to complying with its legal and moral responsibilities. If a learning difficulty, medical condition or disability becomes apparent after admission, the School will consult with the parents about reasonable adjustments that can be made and which may allow the child to continue at the School. If it is felt that the School can no longer provide for the educational needs of the child, then parents will be given support and advice in seeking an alternative educational establishment for their child.

Mowden Hall School has developed an Accessibility Plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in three specific areas. The Accessibility Plan aims to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- Improve the environment of the School to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of extra-curricular education and associated services;
- Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is otherwise provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

All employees must uphold the Trust's stated approach and comply fully with locally applicable policies.

This policy is drawn up in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and in conjunction with the Children's and Families Act 2014. The School also draws upon the guidance laid out in the May 2014 DfES "The Equality Act 2010 and schools" document and the revised EYFS Framework 2014.

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including boarders and those in EYFS.

### **Mowden Hall School accepts its duties towards disabled pupils.**

In planning accessibility strategies the School may consult with the Governing Body (trustees) and other departments through the School, Health and Social Services, local disabled voluntary organisations and other outside agencies working in conjunction with the School.

### **Key Objective of this Policy**

To reduce barriers to the curriculum and to fully enable participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability by:-

- not treating pupils who are disabled less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- making reasonable adjustments for pupils who are disabled, so they are not put at a substantial disadvantage;
- drawing up plans to reasonably eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and to fully participate in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

## **Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined within the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

**“a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities”.**

This definition is broad in context, and can include children with a range of impairments such as, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, ADD, diabetes or epilepsy, where the effect on the pupil’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities is adverse, substantial and long-term.

Some types of very significant dyslexia or dyspraxia can also be included in this definition. All pupils with cancer or surviving cancer, HIV, CF or multiple sclerosis are also included from the point of diagnosis.

## **Definition of normal day to day activity**

This is impacted if the impairment impacts one or more of the following:

- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Perception of risk of physical danger
- Memory or the ability to concentrate, to learn and to understand

## **Definition of long term**

A long term condition is defined as any that lasts for more than one year.

## **What defines ‘reasonable adjustments’?**

In the Equality Act 2010 as a whole, there are three elements to the reasonable adjustments duty that relate to:

- Provisions, criteria and practices
- Auxiliary aids and services including assistive technologies
- Physical features

In determining what is reasonable the School will have regard to:

- The financial resources available to the school
- The costs of any particular alteration to the premises, staffing arrangements, or special equipment required
- The practicality of making reasonable adjustments

- The extent to which aids and services will be provided via a Statement of Educational Needs (Educational Health and Care Plans), Individual Target Sheet, psychological report, or by provision paid for outside the school's resources
- Health and Safety requirements
- The interests of other pupils
- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting or other standards

At Mowden Hall School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all our pupils and staff and all those who are part of our school community or use our school facilities. This includes those who are disabled.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and can participate fully in school life.

We aim to address the needs of all our children, parents, staff and the wider community. We will work with all outside agencies who can advise staff and support pupils within school.

Disability and Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Many children who have SEN may also be defined as having a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act. It is likely that many of the pupils who have SEN and a statement/EHC Plan or who have SEN support will count as disabled. However, not all children who are defined as disabled will have SEN. For example, those with severe asthma, arthritis or diabetes may not have SEN but may have rights under the DDA. Similarly, not all children with SEN will be defined as having a disability under the DDA. In particular, some children whose emotional and behavioural difficulties have their origins in social or domestic circumstances may fall outside the definition.

Possible overlap of SEN and DDA for children and young people:

Special Educational Needs	Both SEN + Disabled	Disabled
Mild dyslexia Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) - social factors Mild Dyspraxia Minor speech impairment Mild Learning difficulties	Motor impairment (long term) Learning difficulties Hearing impairment /deaf Visual Impairment/blind Incontinence Significant Dyslexia Epilepsy Non-verbal Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHT) Autism EBD - (factors other than social e.g. medical conditions/mental health)	Asthma Diabetes Cancer recovery Mental health Issues Disfigurement Eating disorder Lack of limbs Sickle cell anaemia Gross obesity Very short stature

Mowden Hall School currently provides access to and around the School by having in place the following:

- Partial wheelchair access.
- Wheelchair access to dining room/halls
- Disabled parking spaces limited.
- Disabled toilet facilities.
- Adequate space to meet with parents and carers.
- Space for small group work and individual work for targeted learners.
- Development of a physical environment that is safe and welcoming.
- If necessary, staff provide support for vulnerable children at lunch times/ breaktimes.

The School will take into account the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises.

### **Implementation of the Policy**

The School's SMT, along with the School Nurse and Head of Learning Support will meet once a term, using the following Agenda as a term of reference. The Minutes of the meeting, together with all actions, will be reviewed and prepared.

**Attendees** – Headmaster, Deputy Head, Head of Pre-Prep, Director of Studies, School Nurse, Head of Learning Support, EHC carers and Headmaster's PA (minutes)

Standard Agenda:

1. Matters Arising
2. Review the Accessibility Plan
3. Review of potential new students and their needs
4. Review each existing pupil with substantial and long term needs
5. Review existing pupils who may need to be added to the register
6. Any other business

### **Areas of planning responsibilities**

1. Increasing access for disabled pupils to the School curriculum (this includes teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the School such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or school visits).
2. Improving access to the physical environment of schools and physical aids to access education.
3. Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils (this will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the School to its pupils available to disabled pupils). The information should take account of pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable timeframe.

**Increasing access for disabled pupils to the School curriculum.**

Improving teaching and learning lies at the heart of the School's work. Through self-review, staff appraisal and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), we aim to enhance staff knowledge, skills and understanding to promote excellent teaching and learning for all children. We aim to meet every child's needs within mostly mixed ability (with some setting where appropriate), inclusive classes. It is a core value of the School that all children are enabled to participate fully in the broader life of the School. Consequently, all children have always been permitted to attend age relevant after school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and educational visits. The only exception would occur if a child had breached school rules when deprivation of club attendance may be used as a suitable short term sanction and to ensure the safety of others.

**Accessibility Plan 2018/19 - 2020/21**

Improving access to the **physical environment**

Target	Strategies	Time-scale	Responsibility	Success criteria
Replace ramps currently in place at the tennis court to allow easier wheelchair access	Maintenance staff to renew the current ramp and entrance to tennis court to ensure it follows the correct guidelines on elevation. <i>Building regulations recommend a 1:12 slope, which means that every 1" of vertical rise requires at least 1' (12") of ramp length.</i>	As soon as possible	Headmaster	Pupils and visitors who require wheelchair access will be able to use the ramp easily, safely and independently.
Risk Assessment (RA) for Amelie's movement around the whole school	Staff to conduct a specific RA to assess Amelie's needs as she moves up through each of the year groups. RA to cover the whole school grounds	As needed	Head of PP/ Class Teacher	RAs will be provided at the beginning of each year group and revisited regularly and as her needs change
Improve access to the Theatre for wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments	Ramp access to make Theatre easily accessible to people of all mobility levels	2020	Headmaster	Easy access to the Theatre for all visitors and pupils who may have mobility impairments
Improve facilities to the disabled/accessible toilet in Prep School for wheelchair users and people with mobility impairments	Widen access door and remove shelves to provide more space in the room. No miscellaneous storage allowed.	2020	Headmaster	Ease of use for all visitors and pupils who may have mobility impairments

Improving access to the **curriculum**

Target	Strategies	Time-scale	Responsibility	Success criteria
Booklet for staff collating information on individual SEN pupils	Create a collection of useful SEN registered pupil information for Staff to refer to, as they plan their individual lessons	To be reviewed at the beginning of each term	DC to produce/ Staff to use	Staff will use the booklet to inform their planning and delivery of their lessons. Use the suggested recommendations for classroom practice.
Confidence of ALL staff in differentiating their teaching curriculum	Revisit staff training on differentiation/ dyslexia friendly classrooms	On-going	JH/Headmaster	Staff will be confident to consider their lesson objectives for different learners.
Facilitating pupils who wish to use their own Chromebooks/ other devices to assist their learning	Continue to provide touch typing practice sessions to improve keyboard skills; accuracy and words per minute scores, especially for pupils who have this as a recommendation on their EP report	On-going	DC/IH	Pupils will be able to word process their extended pieces of writing in preference to handwriting and in readiness for exam concessions
PE/Games curriculum will be adjusted to accommodate needs of specific pupils	Make accommodations to ensure entitlement. Physical curriculum adjusted so AD Year 1 (UCMD) can take part in physical exercise	On-going	SS-K/CL  KK/Class teacher	Pupils will have access to their physical education curriculum

Improving access to **information sharing and delivery**

Target	Strategies	Time-scale	Responsibility	Success criteria
EAL pupils will be tracked and their progress monitored	Develop the use of an EAL pupil profile booklet. English department to monitor the pupil progress and complete the EAL language descriptors termly to show progress across the year.	Initial collection of staff observations to take 2 weeks at beginning of the term. EAL language descriptors and assessment sheets to be monitored and filled in termly.	DC/BH English department	EAL pupils acquisition of and use of the English language will be tracked and monitored during their time at MHS. A profile of the pupils' progress will be created.
Provide an EAL resource budget	Financial support to enable EAL staff to buy resources to make the school and their adapted curriculum more accessible.	Yearly - beginning of the new school year	Headmaster/ Bursar	EAL pupils will have duo-lingual resources to help them settle and become more familiar with their new environment and their curriculum.

Mowden Hall acknowledges the need to allocate adequate resources to implement the Accessibility Plan.