



Pupil Equality Policy

(This policy applies to all pupils including those in the EYFS)

Adopted	February 2015
Revised	December 2015
Reviewed	March 2016
	October 2016
	March 2017
	March 2018
	March 2019
	March 2020
Next review	March 2021
Owner	Principal Deputy Head

DATE OF REVIEW	AUTHOR	PAGE / PARA	SYNOPSIS OF AMENDMENT
Oct 16	PDH	Para 10	Amended to make specific reference to the needs of pupils with SEND in behavioural and disciplinary procedures
Mar 18	PDH	Throughout	Minor changes to formatting and grammar etc
Mar 20	PDH	Page 4	Inclusion of <i>gender identity</i> in the list of characteristics offering particular protection from discrimination

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1. Introduction

Mount Kelly (the School) is an independent mainstream boarding and day school for girls and boys aged from 3 to 18 years. The School is a registered charity with a Christian ethos and welcomes staff, workers, volunteers, pupils, parents, applicants and governors from all different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. The term School Community includes staff, governors, pupils, parents, visitors and volunteers.

The School recognises the benefits of having a diverse School Community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. Pupils will be taught to value and respect others. The School is committed to being an equal opportunities education provider and is committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the School Community. In the provision of equal opportunities, the School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief (including where an individual does not subscribe to a particular religion or belief)
- gender
- sexual orientation
- gender identity

The School also opposes all bullying and unlawful discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need (SEN) or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

The School aims to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principles of equality. The School will tackle inappropriate attitudes and practices through staff leading by example, through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, through the supportive School culture and through the School's policies, and through the embedding of SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural education) within the curriculum.

Related policies: This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Admissions Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

- Accessibility Plan
- Special Educational Needs Policy.

2. Policy statement

Scope: This policy applies to all pupils within the current and prospective School Community.

Policy aims: Through the operation of this policy we aim to:

- communicate the commitment of the School to the promotion of equal opportunities
- promote equal treatment within the School for all members of the School Community
- create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination
- foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone can feel valued within the School
- remove or help to overcome barriers for pupils where they already exist
- ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against any person on any ground listed above
- make it clear that, and ensure, that all discriminatory words, behaviour and images are treated as unacceptable
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments' duty).

3. Admission

- **Applicants:** The School accepts applications from, and admits pupils irrespective of their Protected Characteristics and will not discriminate on these grounds in the terms on which a place is offered, subject to section 0, below. The School will treat every application in a fair, open-minded way.
- **Selection:** Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the pupil's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of excluding pupils with a disability or special educational needs, subject to section 0 below.
- **Admissions Policy:** The School's Admissions Policy reflects the School's approach towards equal opportunities and is consistent with this policy.

4. Education and associated services

- **Equal access:** The School will afford all pupils equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare.
- **Positive action:** The School may afford pupils of a particular racial group, or pupils with a disability or special educational needs, access to additional education or training to meet the special needs of the pupils in that group, for example, special language training for groups whose first language is not English.
- **Exclusions:** The School will not discriminate against any pupil by excluding him or her from the School, or by subjecting him or her to any other detriment, on the grounds of his or her gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, or special educational needs.
- **Teaching and School materials:** Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of bias (for example, gender or racial), so that this can be eliminated in both the School's teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.
- **Pupil interaction:** All pupils are encouraged to work and play freely with, and have respect for, all other pupils, irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and ethos of the School, and pupils will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.
- **Bullying:** The School will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason. The School's Anti-bullying Policy contains more details about the School's anti-bullying practices.

5. School uniform

- The same School Uniform applies equally to all pupils, irrespective of their gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief or special educational needs, subject to considerations of safety and welfare. However, the School will consider reasonable requests to alter the School uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled children.

- **Symbols of faith:** Certain items of jewellery, such as the Kara bangle, and certain items of headwear, such as the turban and headscarves may be worn by pupils when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious or racial beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the School's existing School Uniform principles (in regards to, for example, the school colours). Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn under this section, the issue must be referred by the pupil or his or her parents to the Head Master, whose decision will be final, subject to the Complaints procedure.
- **Disabled pupils:** Reasonable adjustments may be required to the School Uniform for disabled pupils who require them. The pupil or his or her parents should refer the matter to the Head Master to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the pupil.

6. Religious belief

- **Religion:** The School's religious ethos, services and school timetable are set in accordance with the Christian tradition, but the School respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith.

7. Disability and special educational needs

- **Our approach:** We are an inclusive School which welcomes members of the School Community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people and those with special educational needs in all the activities of the School and we will not treat a member of the School Community less favourably on these grounds without justification. We will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's curriculum, ethos, culture, policies, procedures and premises are made accessible to everyone. Our Disability Policy and Policy on Special Educational Needs are consistent with this policy.
- **Definitions:** Children have **Special Educational Needs** if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a "*substantial and long term adverse effect*" on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010).

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- **Reasonable adjustments:** The School has an on-going duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs in respect of the education and associated services provided to ensure that such pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other pupils. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of School life, for example:
 - the curriculum
 - classroom organisation and timetabling
 - access to school facilities
 - clubs and visits
 - school sports and
 - school policies
 - discipline and behaviour

Reasonable adjustments may typically include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam
- providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.
- taking into consideration the needs of pupils on the SEND register when considering disciplinary sanctions.

The School is not legally required to make adjustments which include physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, or a new library.

In making 'reasonable adjustments' the School is required to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. The School will carefully consider any proposals made by parents and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services.

Informing the School: In accordance with the School's terms and conditions, parents of pupils must notify the Head Master in writing if they are aware or suspect that the pupil (or prospective pupil) has a disability or if they (either parent), the pupil (or prospective pupil), or immediate family have at any time had, or has a learning difficulty. The registration form enables prospective parents to give details of their child's disability when applying for a place at the School. Parents must provide copies of all written reports and other relevant information upon request. Providing the School with such information will enable the School to support the pupil as much as possible. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis where it is necessary for members of staff to be informed of any particular vulnerability of a pupil. The School will have due regard to any request by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

Admission of children with special educational needs and / or a disability: Applications for a place at the School will be considered on the basis that reasonable adjustments (see definition above) have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's special educational needs and / or disability. The School will not offer a place if, after reasonable adjustments have been made, the School will not be able to provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs. The School shall inform the parents of their decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or give reasons why an offer of a place has not been made.

Existing pupils: Where the School becomes aware of a disability or special educational need of an existing pupil, the School will do all that is reasonable to assist the pupil whilst at the School, which may include making reasonable adjustments. If in the professional judgement of the Head Master, and after consultation with the parents and the pupil (where appropriate), the School cannot provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs after all reasonable adjustments have been made, parents will be asked to withdraw the pupil, without being charged fees in lieu of notice and with the acceptance deposit returned. The School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide their child with the necessary environment and level of teaching and support.

Access: The School will monitor the physical features of its premises to consider whether disabled users of the premises are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible and proportionate, the School will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The School has an Accessibility Plan, which is kept under review and revised as necessary.

SENCo: The School has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

8. Pupils with statements of special educational needs

The School's Policy on Special Educational Needs includes details about the welfare and educational provision for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs.

9. Pupils with English as an additional language

Pupils with English as an Additional Language (**EAL**) will receive additional learning support if necessary. The School will consult with the pupil and the parents as appropriate. The School has appropriate welfare support for all such pupils through the supportive House culture.

10. Provision for pupils with particular religious, dietary, language or cultural needs

The School will make individual provision for such pupils where necessary and in accordance with this policy.

11. Responsibilities

All members of the School Community are expected to comply with this policy and therefore to treat others with dignity at all times.

Overall responsibility: The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Board of Governors has delegated to the Bursar day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

12. Monitoring and review

Monitoring: To ensure that this policy is operating effectively with respect to admission and selection, the School monitors applicants' gender, race, disability and religion or belief confidentially as part of the Admissions procedure. We also maintain records of this data in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy.

Review: The Deputy Head (Pastoral) is responsible for reviewing whether the aims of this Policy are carried out throughout all areas of the School and taking appropriate action where necessary. This policy is reviewed by the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and recommendations for any amendments are reported to the Governing Body.

13. Reporting and recording incidents of discrimination

Questions about this policy: If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Complaints: If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed in paragraph 0 above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the School's formal Complaints Procedure. For a copy of the School's Complaints Policy, please see the web site. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the complaints procedure.

Reports: If you would like to report a breach of this policy that does not constitute a complaint, please contact the Deputy Head.

Enforcement: We will treat seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

Record: All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Head.

14.EYFS-Specific Provision

This Policy applies to the Pre-Prep including EYFS.

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

Equality and Diversity are meant in the widest sense. It incorporates children and young people as well as the rights of parents/carers, students and all staff. It includes individuals with special educational needs and/or a disability, as well as those from minority ethnic groups; Travellers; and any other diverse cultural groups.

It also includes those with English as an additional language and Children in Public Care (Children in Care). Those with specific medical needs; suffering from low self-esteem; or experiencing mental health difficulties are also included.

It also incorporates the rights of the child and equal opportunities, as well as any other groups at risk of exclusion or social exclusion.

The EYFS Statutory Guidance 2014 states

1.6. Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. But throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

1.7. For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS: ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Aims

1. All children have a right of full access to Early Years Education through the Foundation Stage Curriculum.
2. All children have a right to expect to learn in a caring and considerate environment where the staff and the children are all valued for their contribution to school life.
3. The school is committed to the early identification of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and to adopting clear and open procedures which are outlined in this policy.
4. The school is committed to working closely with parents who are fully involved in all decisions that affect their children's education.
5. The school will provide, within available resources, the highest possible quality support and inclusive education for children with SEN.

Purpose

1. To meet the individual needs of children in our setting.
2. To ensure that Equality and Diversity are put into practice.
3. To raise quality and standards.
4. To recognise the rights of the child.
5. To encourage parent/carers to use the provision.
6. To increase awareness.

The role of our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator:

Our setting based SENCO is Clare Prettejohn, supported in the Early Years by Katie MacEacharn who:

- Works with other staff to agree and implement the Equality and Diversity policy
- Co-ordinates the Special Educational Needs provision within our setting
- Offers support for parents
- Supports staff development
- Liaises with other agencies
- Keeps appropriate records
- Assists staff in making observations and assessments

- Assists staff in planning for children with Special Educational Needs
- Contacts our Area SENCO at an early stage for informal advice and support

When a child starts

Parents are asked to complete admission form and permission slips.

A member of staff will welcome and help settle the child in to the school. Through discussion with the parent and the staff it will be decided when it is best for a child to be left on their own.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents are consulted at every level of intervention. Parents have a right to be involved in discussions about their child. Procedures should be explained to parents in order to develop a close working relationship and so parents can be made aware of the targets being set for their child. Parents should be offered advice about how they can work with their child at home if they so wish. The effectiveness of any intervention will depend upon the level of involvement of parents.

Consultation with parents is made informally on a daily basis as well as at Parents Teacher Meetings. Additional consultation is made at either the parents or the schools request at a mutually convenient time.

Meetings for parents of children who need intervention will be organised termly to review and write IEPs.

Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs:

Definition of SEN (From the SEN Code of Practice)

A child has SEN if she or he has a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for her or him.

A child has a learning difficulty if she or he:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Has a disability that either prevents or hinders the child from making use of the facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in pre-school.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which she or he will be taught.

Four broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Physical and or sensory disability

Identification, assessment and provision

The need for early identification is paramount. It is made either by the staff or from information received from previous pre-schools, nursery provision or from other external sources. Parental concern is also taken into consideration. The school follows the Stages set out in the revised Code of Practice (2015). This identifies the stage the child is at, and clarifies who is responsible for the additional provision that is needed to support the child's progress.

Our system of observation and record keeping, which operates in conjunction with parents, enables us to monitor children's needs and progress on an individual basis.

Children with other needs are provided for through individual education plans. There is a high level of adults to children enabling us to provide all children with adult time and attention.

If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met through school without additional support then advice will be sought to from outside agencies.

The SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 (2015) guidance states that there will be a graduated response to identifying and supporting pupils and students with SEN. Children with more complex needs a coordinated assessment process will be set up to implement an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCplan)

The graduated approach follows an Assess, Plan, Do, Review approach and records will be kept on progress and change. Parents will be involved from the start in this process.

Links with support services and other agencies

The school recognises that to provide a fully inclusive and supportive environment there is a need when considering SEN to work closely with the full range of support services and external agencies. Agencies are called upon when support is required for a specific need. The school also works closely with agencies when information is requested to support a child.

Agencies presently used by the school:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Educational Psychologist
- Behaviour Support Service
- Health Visitors
- Pre-school Advisory Teacher

Facilities, Staffing and Training:

Facilities:

The school is set in the grounds of the Prep School. It is a self-contained and has its own entrance and doorbell. It has good disabled access into the building. There is a welcoming entrance lobby with information for parents and carers about what is happening in the school. There are toilet and changing facilities. There is a kitchen for staff use and for cooking. There are four rooms used for activities. The nature of the activities in these rooms change in accordance with the planning. There is a fully accessible outside area that is used daily.

Staffing:

The school fully complies with the Ofsted requirements in terms of staffing and generally have a greater ratio of staff to children than the minimum require.

If there is a need for an increase in staff due to issues surrounding inclusion resources will be met initially within the school's budget and then depending on need additional funding may be sought.

Training:

The school provides SEN In-Service training in line with the school development plan and staff appraisal. The SENCO will participate in the training on inclusion provided by the Devon Early Years Partnership as well as other training needed to provide a high quality of provision for the Foundation Stage Unit. The SENCO will attend the training and will keep up-to-date in changes in legislation. All staff attend at least 4 days training a year, 3 on curriculum.

Curriculum, Resources and the Learning Environment:

Curriculum:

We aim to: -

- Ensure total coverage of the Foundation Stage Curriculum
- Ensure that the activities provide many opportunities for play and for children to learn through play.
- Provide stimulating and interesting work.
- Build on knowledge and skills already acquired and making sure that each child is being stretched and able to reach their own potential.
- Produce plans so that pupils can work at their own level and pace through a range of activities.

The Foundation Stage Unit aims to provide a differentiated curriculum, relating learning targets, tasks, resources and learning support to individual children's needs in order to maximise their achievement and progress. We plan using the Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance.

As well as a differentiated curriculum, children with SEN will have an Individual Education Programme (IEP) drawn up.

In the Foundation Stage Unit we feel it is essential that the children with SEN are taught in a fully inclusive classroom and their needs are met within the curriculum being planned. We recognise however the need for additional resources that may mean the child is sometimes taken from the class for extra activities. These may include Speech and Language therapy sessions and work specifically related to IEPs. As far as possible the IEP will help the child be included into the planned curriculum within the session.

Resources:

There are a wide range of high quality resources that reflect not only the immediate community but also give opportunities for the children to explore to the wider world around them.

The learning environment:

The school is divided into areas - the Nursery Rooms, and the Reception Rooms. All activities in these rooms are planned and all rooms are supervised at all times.

The outside area surrounds the unit building and is seen as an extension of the work being implemented inside. The activities are planned and the aim is to use the outside area on a daily basis.

Staffing and pupils:

Promoting equality and diversity is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Mount Kelly School. We welcome applications from candidates with as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches our community and is vital in preparing our pupils for today's world. We concentrate on educating the individual, to provide a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish.

Mount Kelly School is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, body image or social background. We believe that the educational experience can only be enriched if children are exposed to as wide a range of cultural experiences as possible whilst they are developing.

We also welcome applications from pupils with special needs and disabilities, and refer parents to our policies covering Special Education Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties, and Disability Policy.

REQUESTS FOR VARIATION IN THE SCHOOL UNIFORM

Although Mount Kelly has Christian roots, we do not select for entry on the basis of religious belief, and we welcome pupils of all faiths. Parents should be aware that all pupils at Mount Kelly are required to wear a uniform and maintain a smart level of personal presentation including a business-like hairstyle. 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.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the Mount Kelly Pre-Prep policy on Equality and Diversity. Use is made of Assemblies, PSHE, RE, Drama, English and other lessons to:

- Promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the Mount Kelly School community.
- Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
- Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures. Bias should be recognised.
- Understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour.
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner.

Harassment in all its forms unlawful and unacceptable; our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies contain clear procedures for dealing with unlawful discrimination.

A successful Equality and Diversity policy requires strong and positive support from parent and guardians, and full acceptance of the school's ethos of tolerance and respect.

Monitoring this policy / Complaints procedure:

Criteria for Measuring the Success of the Policy

The criteria for measuring the success of the policy should be specific, attainable, realistic and time constrained. They should indicate the extent to which the pre-school has been successful in meeting the needs of its SEN children.

The SEN co-ordinator through process of moderation will help measure the success of the policy.

Arrangements for complaint

These are defined in the policy document that is available for parents and other interested persons to read.