



**PRIOR PARK SCHOOLS**  
An Education for Life

# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

A policy for all Prior Park Schools including the Early  
Years Foundation Stage

Whole Trust? Yes	Statutory? Yes	Website? Yes
Reviewed: March 2015	Next review: March 2019	



1. Introduction:

Central to the ethos of the Prior Park Educational Trust (PPET) is the notion that we are members of one community. The life of the schools is firmly embedded within the tradition of Christian belief and practice. Inevitably and naturally, therefore, a policy of equality in opportunity, respect and treatment should be a routine part of our daily lives.

2. Each and every member of the community deserves the full respect and consideration of others. This applies regardless of age, race, colour, disability, appearance, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partner status, ethnic or national origin, cultural background, linguistic background, special educational needs, academic or sporting ability, collectively known as protected characteristics. It is never acceptable to allow prejudice, harassment or discrimination to influence, either covertly or overtly, the relationships between members of our community, in employment or recruitment. PPET aims to promote and value diversity by encouraging and modelling respect for all individuals.

Equality Act 2010 is the leading statutory authority relating to this policy.

3. Effective leadership and management:

Adherence to the principle of equality depends chiefly on an attitude of mind rather than routines or material facilities. Nonetheless, management has a part to play. In particular the schools take steps to:

- a. Recruit pupils from a full range of ethnic and social backgrounds, without regard to protected characteristics. The schools have long and proud histories of providing education to all.
- b. Provide equal opportunities and avoid unlawful discrimination in staff recruitment and employment.
- c. Ensure that the work environment and the provision of education is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- d. Steadily improve the provision of facilities for the physically disabled, whether they are pupils, staff or visitors. All recent construction has taken into account the needs of those who may have physical disabilities. A rolling programme is improving facilities in older buildings, albeit some of the arrangements are at present only available for specific occasions.
- e. Admit pupils regardless of physical abilities, where possible. The presence of those with a disability is rightly taken for granted, and

their participation in the life of the school, without attracting undue attention, is welcome tribute to equality.

- f. Encourage and develop equal opportunity in the promotion of staff to positions of increased responsibility.
- g. Give exposure to the question of equality in all its forms, together with appropriate guidance, in the course of the schools' extensive and successful PDP and PSHE programmes, going one step further to positively acknowledge difference and diversity.
- h. Give full support to community care programmes, as opportunities allow. Working with parents and other agencies is vital in our efforts to ensure a holistic approach to education and care.
- i. Warmly welcome the enrichment given to school life by a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds. Practical steps include appropriate variety in catering.
- j. Encourage and guide the staff and pupils of the schools in considering others both in school and in the wider world beyond.
- k. Time spent in tutorial classes will enable pupils to develop understanding and sensitivity towards differences and diversity. PPET has a strong counter bullying policy as well as a rewards policy for recognising the high standard of behaviour and kindness that is present at all three schools.

4. Support and guidance:

It goes without saying that in the unfortunate circumstances that any individual might feel subject to prejudiced or discriminatory views, they should seek appropriate support.

In the case of a pupil they should seek guidance from a teacher or from handbooks and other literature at each of the schools.

Teachers, support staff and any other adult should draw their line manager's attention to any failure to observe equal opportunities. They should do so whether their concern is personal, or over an action (or attitude) with respect to another adult or a child. At the more senior level the Headmaster, Deputy Head or Foundation Business Director (Deputy Bursar at PPPS) would wish to be aware of any concerns over a lack of equal opportunity. The Chaplain may always be approached by any member of the community on this issue.

5. Equal opportunity and equal treatment are the outward and visible signs of respect for the value of all of God's people. We aim to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities wherever possible and introduce these beliefs to pupils from an early age.

6. PPET has a rigorous code of conduct and expectations of all staff and pupils are clearly stated in various handbooks at each establishment. Inappropriate attitudes will be approached firmly and unanimously and discriminatory language should not be used by staff or pupils.
7. Access to the curriculum is equal in terms of recruitment of students, support during term time and the taking of exams. We are very proud of the educational support that we are able to provide to pupils at all three schools. Dedicated learning support teams led by the following members of staff help each pupil to achieve their potential.

Prior Park College and The Paragon School: Katie Samwell  
Prior Park Preparatory School: Tina Larkins

At Prior Park College, it is expected that all pupils in year 11 sit GCSE examinations in core subjects, including English, Maths and Science.

8. As well as educational support, we also make adjustments where possible for those with a physical disability to ensure that they have the support that they need to have an equal experience of education within the Prior Park Foundation Schools and are a valued member of the community with each pupil able to make a positive contribution in a supportive environment.
9. The individual needs of all pupils will be met as far as possible to enable all faiths, cultures and abilities to add to the canvas of life within the Prior Park Foundation. All pupils will have access to appropriate activities, resources and facilities to further academic, sporting and creative life at the Prior Park Schools.

With a strong emphasis on pastoral care and emotional literacy, children are encouraged to become independent and confident learners, while also being sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

10. Staff responsibilities:  
Every member of staff is required to assist the PPET to meet its commitment to providing equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Staff can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the PPET for any act of unlawful discrimination. Those who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, pupils or other members of the community are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the PPET's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

11. Reviewing, monitoring and evaluating:
- a. Inclusive practices throughout the Prior Park Foundation Schools are forward thinking and outward looking to enable all pupils to learn confidently in a happy and secure environment.
  - b. All pupils should get their fair share of attention, time and resources and be involved in group work as well as individual study.
  - c. Assessment results should be checked for accurate marking and to identify any potential bias in methods of assessment.
  - d. Staff should be prepared to give praise and objective criticism fairly.
  - e. Pupils should also be made aware of the fact that equal opportunities is also their responsibility and that each person contributes to the atmosphere and nature of the community.

Parents, Guardians and Governors should be aware of the Trusts' Equal Opportunities Policy and communicate with the Senior Management Team at each of the Schools/ College if any concerns arise.

Related policies:

Accessibility Plan 2015-18

Disability, Equality, SEN and LDD Policy