



Equal Opportunities Policy

19 October 2026

About This Document

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History

Version	Date	Name	Description
0.1	Sep - 2018	René Esterhuizen, Clerk to Trustees	First release. DRAFT
1.0	Sep - 2018	School Governors	Approved and adopted.
1.1	16 Aug - 2021	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.2	15 Sep - 2022	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.3	23 Jun - 2023	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.4	8 May - 2024	School Governors	Reviewed and approved.
1.5	10 June - 2025	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	Reviewed, no changes.
1.6	8 July - 2026	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	Reviewed, no changes.
1.7	19 Oct - 2026	René Esterhuizen, Headteacher	Reviewed, changes made to come in-line with new KCSIE guidelines.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Vine Christian School is committed to providing equality of opportunity and to maintaining a school community in which pupils, staff, parents, visitors and applicants are treated with dignity and respect. The school will not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or victimise any person and will take reasonable steps to remove barriers to participation and achievement.
- 1.2. This policy has regard to the Equality Act 2010, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the Department for Education's current Equality Act advice for school and the Independent School Standards guidance. The nine protected characteristics listed in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The scope of legal protection varies according to context, including education and employment.
- 1.3. The Vine Christian School will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and other applicable equality legislation. This includes the duties relating to pupils, prospective pupils, employees and job applicants, together with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people where required by law.
- 1.4. As a Christian independent school, The Vine Christian School understands equality within the context of its Christian ethos and belief that every person should be treated with dignity, compassion and respect. The school may teach and uphold its Christian beliefs and values while ensuring that pupils understand the law and are taught to respect people whose beliefs, characteristics or lawful choices differ from those of the school.
- 1.5. Unlawful discrimination may include direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, discrimination arising from disability, failure to make reasonable adjustments, harassment and victimisation. Any allegation or concern will be taken seriously and addressed under the appropriate school procedure.
- 1.6. All members of the school community share responsibility for promoting respectful conduct and for acting consistently with this policy. The Governors and Trustees and Headteacher have particular responsibility for ensuring that the school's policies and practice meet applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

2. Pupils and Education

- 2.1. The school aims to provide pupils with fair access to education, school activities, opportunities, benefits, facilities and services. Admissions, exclusions, discipline and other decisions affecting pupils will be made lawfully and fairly, subject to any lawful exceptions that apply to the school.
- 2.2. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils where required by law, including adjustments to policies, practices and arrangements and the provision of auxiliary aids or services where appropriate. The school will consider pupils' individual needs and, where relevant, work with parents and appropriate professionals.
- 2.3. The curriculum, teaching, resources and wider school life will encourage respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics. Curriculum documentation will reflect this requirement in an age-appropriate way. Teaching may explain the school's Christian beliefs,

including its beliefs about marriage, relationships and human identity, provided that pupils are also taught to respect the legal rights and dignity of others.

- 2.4. The school will seek to identify and address stereotypes, bias or assumptions in teaching, resources and school practice where these could result in unfair treatment or undermine respect for others.
- 2.5. Bullying, prejudice-based behaviour, discriminatory language, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated. Incidents will be addressed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and, where relevant, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
 - i. Pupils will have appropriate opportunities to participate in the curriculum, enrichment activities, leadership and responsibility, taking account of age, aptitude, need, safety and any reasonable adjustments required.
 - ii. Teaching and learning materials will be selected and used thoughtfully. Where materials address differing beliefs, cultures, families, relationships or protected characteristics, staff will present content accurately, sensitively and in accordance with the school's legal duties and Christian ethos.
 - iii. Staff time, attention, expectations, rewards, sanctions and access to resources will be allocated fairly. Differences in provision may be made where they are lawful, objectively justified or required to meet individual needs.
 - iv. In a mixed school, pupils will not be separated by sex in a way that amounts to unlawful discrimination. Single-sex grouping may be used where lawful and educationally appropriate, for example for particular teaching, pastoral or safeguarding reasons, provided that pupils are not placed at an unlawful disadvantage.
 - v. School uniform, dress and appearance requirements will be applied consistently and fairly. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where required because of disability, religion or belief, or other relevant circumstances.
- 2.6. Behaviour and discipline procedures will be applied fairly and proportionately. The school will consider whether disability, SEND, communication needs, safeguarding circumstances or other relevant factors may have contributed to behaviour before deciding an appropriate response.
- 2.7. Any safeguarding concerns arising in connection with discrimination, harassment, bullying or prejudice-based behaviour, including racism, faith-based prejudice or other discriminatory behaviour, will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
 - i. Pupils and parents are encouraged to raise concerns about discrimination or unequal treatment promptly. Concerns will be considered through the most appropriate route, which may include the school's complaints, behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding or SEND procedures.
 - ii. The school will keep appropriate records of significant equality-related concerns, actions and outcomes and will review patterns where this may help identify barriers, repeated concerns or areas requiring improvement.
 - iii. The school seeks to create a culture in which pupils learn to value others, express disagreement respectfully and understand that holding a particular belief does not justify treating another person with less dignity, respect or legal protection.

3. Staff And Employment

- 3.1. The school is committed to fair and lawful employment practices. Recruitment, selection, training, promotion, pay, performance management, discipline, grievance and dismissal will be handled in accordance with applicable employment and equality law.
- 3.2. As a Christian school, the school may lawfully take religion or belief into account in relation to a particular post only where a statutory exception or lawful occupational requirement applies. Any such requirement will be considered carefully and applied only where legally permitted, necessary and proportionate.
- 3.3. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and job applicants where required by law. Staff will have appropriate access to training and development, and allegations of discrimination, harassment or victimisation involving staff will be addressed under the relevant staff procedure.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. Responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively and that school policies and practices comply with applicable equality duties rests with the Governors and Trustees.
- 4.2. The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation, ensuring that staff understand their responsibilities, responding to concerns and identifying any need for action, training or policy revision.
- 4.3. All staff are responsible for modelling respectful behaviour, applying school policies fairly, challenging discriminatory conduct and reporting safeguarding or equality concerns through the appropriate procedures.

5. Monitoring and Review

- 5.1. The school will review this policy regularly and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance or school circumstances change. Monitoring may include consideration of significant incidents and complaints, exclusions and serious sanctions, access to opportunities, reasonable adjustments and any patterns suggesting that a group or individual may be experiencing disadvantage.

6. Related Policies

- 6.1. This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding And Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Admissions Policy, SEND/Additional Needs Policy, Complaints Policy, Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct, Recruitment Policy, and Relationships Education/RSE and PSHE policies, as applicable.