



**BEDSTONE**  
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# Equality and Diversity Policy

at

## Bedstone College

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## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

This policy applies to all members of our college community, including boarders and those in our EYFS setting.

### **1. CONTEXT**

The legal framework for this policy is:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended in 2000)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended in 2005)
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2006
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Duty to Promote Community Cohesion, Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010

The policy addresses the following relevant criteria:

This Policy addresses the following relevant criteria:

- The Bedstone College Boarding Handbook (p28-32)
- NMS: Standard 16, Commentary para B503
- ISI Regulatory Requirements: Part 2, Para 5 (a) (v and vi)
- ISI Regulatory Requirements: Commentary para 171-179

Bedstone College is an independent co-educational boarding school situated in south Shropshire for children aged four years to eighteen years. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds with some 44/186 from other ethnic origins (of which 36 who do not speak English as their first language), and currently two students hold a Statement of Special Educational Needs, SEN (or an Education Health and Care Plan, EHC Plan).

Bedstone College takes great pride in meeting the individual needs of all students and enjoys a good reputation for attainment at each Key Stage and for enriching personal development by the end of each of the key phases of their education.

### **2. AIMS AND VALUES**

Bedstone College is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students to maximize their potential regardless of their sex, race, nationality, ethnic or racial origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, for being a transsexual person, marital status, for being married or in a civil partnership, for being pregnant or having just become a parent. We will also ensure that all students have access to all parts of the curriculum regardless of their sporting ability or if they are receipt of learning or other external support, (SEN).

We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community.

At Bedstone College we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of college life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

**We will achieve these aims by:**

- Providing a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and achieve all five outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' (be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being):
- Providing a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;
- Preparing children for life in a diverse society in which children are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- Including and valuing the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- Providing positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age;
- Planning systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;
- Actively challenging discrimination and disadvantage;
  
- Making inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities by:
- *Having regard for:*
- *Boys and girls*
- *Students learning English as an additional language;*
- *Students from minority ethnic groups;*
- *Students who are gifted and talented;*
- *Students with special educational needs and students who are at risk, disaffection and exclusion.*

**We will:**

- Involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation and assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- Publish and share our policies and assessments with the whole community;
- Use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to students' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- Ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity; have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others;
- take account of parental preference related to religion and culture;
- take steps to ensure that the college's admissions process is fair and equitable to all students;
- Encourage all parents/carers to participate at all levels in the full life of the college.
  
- Not ask questions about health or disability before a job offer or an offer of a place at the College is tabled:

*Exceptions may apply with respect to a prospective member of staff:*

- (a) To establish whether the applicant can take part in an assessment to determine their suitability for the job.*
- (b) To determine whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable a disabled person to participate in an assessment during the recruitment process.*
- (c) To find out whether a job applicant would be able to undertake a function that is intrinsic to the job.*
- (d) To monitor diversity among job applicants.*

*Exceptions may be made in the case of young people where the College may need to ascertain if there are any issues that will require additional educational support in order that this support may be arranged on arrival at the College.*

### **Special Considerations**

#### Religion:

The College is a 'Faith' School. It follows the teachings of the Church of England. The College holds three assemblies and one service each week. All students are required to attend assemblies. Students, through a direct request from their parents, may be excused from the College service on Sunday (disapplication). During this time, they will be supervised by a member of staff in an appropriate room.

No student who has 'disapplied' is required to sing a hymn or to bow their heads when a prayer is said in assembly.

Assembly topics often include references to world religions and may highlight important figures in world religion.

All students are welcome to pray at the college in their own way.

#### Diet:

The College catering department is alerted to all students who have dietary needs. All food is labeled accordingly. For example, if medical, "contains nuts".

On special occasions, those students with dietary needs are provided with an appropriate individual portion to meet their medical needs.

#### Language:

Bedstone College welcomes students from a number of nations. Many of these students do not have English as their first language. Special provision is made for them. (Refer to the policy on English as an Additional Language).

### Culture:

Bedstone is proud of its cultural diversity. This aspect is celebrated on a regular basis through talks in assembly and at other school events. The catering department prepares a variety of meals from around the world in recognition of cultural mix at the College. The music, religious education, history, geography and English curricula allow students to experience aspects of different cultures and to share the experiences of their own cultures. Students are encouraged to explore other cultures for themselves outside lesson time.

Students in receipt of EAL provision are not isolated from other students but attend many mainstream lessons.

### External Examination Arrangements (Disabilities/EAL/Additional Educational Needs):

All students have the right to be able to access external examinations and Bedstone College is committed to this aim, whether the disability is permanent or temporary.

Exam rooms have ramped access (Rees Hall) and a temporary ramp can be positioned when needed if other rooms are needed, (for example language orals/Science Practicals/Students who need readers and/or scribes).

Special arrangements will be made for any candidate who requires assistance when taking examinations; this may include re-positioning of an exam desk, provision of extra support for limbs, large print or adult 'readers' for the visually impaired, extra time (and dictionaries where appropriate) for EAL or students with learning support needs, (who may also receive additional provision of adult readers or scribes), and allowing the exam to be taken separately to others if necessary.

At all times will the additional provision be in place by agreement with the exam boards and all necessary contact will be made with them in accordance with this policy and their guidelines.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Governing Body**

It is the Governing Body's responsibility to:

- Ensure that the college complies with equality legislation;
- Meet requirements to publish equality procedures;
- Establish, monitor and review this policy with appropriate assessments informing future plans;
- Scrutinize the procedures at least annually;
- Follow the college's admissions policy, with fair and equitable treatment of all groups;
- Follow equal opportunities requirements in staff recruitment and professional development;
- Respond appropriately to serious breaches of the policy;

### **The Headmaster**

It is the Headmaster's responsibility to:

- Implement the policy;
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- Actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- Deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with college policies
- Ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the college's equality and diversity policy;
- Keep governors informed of progress on all aspects of equality and diversity

### **All Staff**

The skills of all staff, including non-teaching staff are recognised and valued. All are given status and support and are encouraged to share good practice where appropriate. It is the responsibility of all staff to:-

- Be vigilant and deal effectively with all types of harassment and bullying as laid down by the college's policy on these matters;
- Identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate;
- Promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;
- Keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources such as the Staff Handbook;
- Ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which positive steps are taken to allow all students to participate;
- Respond to student's different learning styles in order to engage all students;
- To encourage all students to question, discuss and collaborate.

### **Breaches of the Policy**

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body as required.

## **4. MONITORING, REVIEWING AND ASSESSING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed through incident records, the pastoral system, through staff meetings and student records. The College's Development Plan forms an essential part of the college's action on equality. It includes targets determined both by teaching staff and the management team for promoting inclusion and equality in the college.

- It ensures all college policies address equality issues and celebrate diversity.
- Students' performance is monitored by formal and informal procedures. Any pattern of underachievement is addressed through revising curriculum plans, being supported by

the pastoral care system, and through teaching and support that addresses the specific needs of the individual.

- The College ensures where possible that assessment is free of bias (e.g. gender, cultural and social).
- Resources, displays and texts are reviewed regularly to ensure appropriateness and inclusivity.
- Self-assessment provides students with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback they are given.
- Staff have high expectations of all students and they continually challenge them to reach higher standards.
- The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

### **Accessibility Plan (September 2016-August 2019)**

#### ETHOS AND AIMS OF Bedstone College

Bedstone College aims to offer the highest quality of teaching and learning and support all students in the pursuit of academic and personal excellence. We have high expectations of all of our students and we strive to ensure that each and every student can take part in the whole school curriculum. We value the diversity of our school community and appreciate the contribution that students with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities can bring to school life.

We have an admissions policy and criteria (available to view on our website) which seeks to remove barriers to entry to our school for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We strive to be a fully inclusive and welcoming school.

Bedstone College recognises its responsibility to plan to:

- (a) increase the extent to which disabled students, (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum
- (b) improve the provision to disabled students of information which is already in writing for students who are not disabled
- (c) improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school

We regularly review and take steps to improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school.

Previous Adaptations made to the school:

- (1) Disabled toilets near reception and near the main school hall
- (2) Ramp access to main school hall/Hopewell House/The Conservatory/Chacksfield House/Music School/Maths Corridor and availability of portable ramps where necessary
- (3) Increased use of digital displays in classrooms

- (4) Use of laptop and other digital devices/support tools for SEN students in classrooms
- (5) Provision of disabled parking near to the main reception
- (6) Secure IEPs for all children with SEN communicated to parents and all teaching staff with regular reviews.
- (7) Access to sports hall/swimming pool areas (incl. changing) all on one level
- (8) Introduction of TA support for specific children with SEN

Our staff regularly review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation by disabled students are removed. We promote the importance of using language that does not offend amongst both our staff and our students and ensure that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials.

## CONTEXT

As at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016, Bedstone College has 2 statemented students. There is 1 Looked After Child (LAC) and 21 who receive lessons in English as Additional Language (EAL). Students with Individual Education Plans, (IEP), are monitored [twice yearly] to assess progress relating to IEP targets. LA reviews for those students on their lists are regularly monitored and review meetings are hosted and chaired by Bedstone staff.

We have 1 student with a medical disability (visual impairment). All our students are fully integrated into school life and participate in the whole curriculum including extra-curricular activities (such as school trips).

We take a fully inclusive approach to our staff recruitment and aim to appoint the best person based on their skill set and qualifications and regardless of any disability he/she might have. We actively implement the school's equality and diversity policy for staff in the day-to-day management of Bedstone College. We have no recorded staff with medical disabilities.

We have conducted an audit of our provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The results of the audit have informed our school accessibility plan for [2016-2019] which is a written action plan with targets. The plan and targets are listed below. All members of the school community have access to this document and it appears on the school website.

We will regularly monitor the success of the plan and it will also be reviewed annually by the governing body and the school's senior management team.



Future Plans:

- (a) Gain re-accreditation of our CReSTeD status

To raise the profile of our learning support department and offer a focus for the specialism we have to support students with learning difficulties. Next assessment by CReSTeD will be in March 2019.

- (b) INSET for all staff on supporting Dyslexic students. Online course and assessment for all teaching staff to be completed by January 2017.
- (c) To continue to review and invest in specialist read/write software to support children with Dyslexia both in and out of the classroom.
- (d) To investigate using recording devices in class to support students with SENs.

**Ongoing: Head of LS continues to trial and implement new hardware and software where appropriate, (see CReSTeD report 2016)**

- (e) Increase access to the physical environment where appropriate to meet the needs of possible future students by conducting a case-by-case assessment on application.

**Ongoing: No students have applied who might need additional work to be done to access the physical environment.**

- (f) Increase access to written materials where appropriate to meet the needs of possible future students by conducting a case-by-case assessment on application.

**Ongoing: One student has applied and a review was undertaken by LS and the medical team to assess the need to access written material.**

- (g) Investigate installation of stair lifts in Hopewell House.
- (h) Investigate access arrangements to all boarding houses; including wheelchair ramps, chair lifts and disabled toilets.
- (i) To build on relationships with LAs regarding the placement of LAC or children on the 'edge' of LAC and provide appropriate support within the school environment.
- (j) To appoint a LAC Governor and LAC Designated Teacher and access the appropriate training.

## REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

### Introduction

Bedstone College is committed to treating its students and applicants fairly. According to the Equality Act 2010, we must take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled students and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with students and applicants who are not disabled.

Bedstone College recognises that every child is unique. This policy does not therefore seek to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement of our policy which sets out the principles underlying our approach to making adjustments for disabled students and the factors the school will take into account when considering requests for adjustments.

### When does the duty arise?

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students and applicants who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 when they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with students and applicants who do not have disabilities. A student or applicant is disabled if (s)he suffers from a physical or mental impairment that has substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. In most cases, disabilities will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more.

### What is the scope of the duty?

Bedstone College seeks to ensure that disabled students and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments:

1. to our policies, criteria and practices (ie the way we do things); and
2. by providing auxiliary aids and services (ie additional support or assistance).

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Examples include:

- pieces of equipment;
- extra staff assistance;
- note-taking;
- induction loops;
- audio-visual fire alarms;
- readers; and
- assistance with guiding.

### What is not covered?

We are not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. Similarly, we do not need to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the school.

### Entry tests

We are allowed by law to apply an entry test and we may do so as part of our admissions process in certain circumstances; for example when testing the level of English Language for international students, or testing students as part of our scholarship selection procedures . If necessary, we make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants sitting the entry test, such as, for example, allowing it to be completed on computer rather than by hand. However, the pass mark for the test is not altered as this would not be a reasonable adjustment.

#### How do I request an adjustment?

Bedstone College prides itself on considering whether there is any adjustment it could make to overcome any substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled applicant or student. However, we do not always think of all possible adjustments and we want to work with parents to think as creatively as possible about this matter.

If your child is disabled and you believe that (s)he is being put at a substantial disadvantage compared with students without disabilities and there is an adjustment that we could make which would overcome this, you may write to the Head of Learning Support setting out in full the adjustment and (if necessary) how the school could put this into practice.

#### The school's response

In some cases, the school will be able to agree to and implement the requested adjustment as soon as possible. In other cases, for example where the adjustment would be logistically difficult or financially costly, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the substantial disadvantage that the student or applicant is suffering and what measures it is reasonable for the school to take. In these cases, the school may seek input from teachers, other experts (such as doctors and/or educational psychologists), you and the child in question.

#### How will the school decide whether an adjustment is reasonable?

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the school will consider the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;
- the effect of the disability on the student;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- whether it will be provided under a statement of special educational needs from the Local Authority;
- the school's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other students (and potential students).

#### Confidentiality

You (or your child if the school believes (s)he has sufficient understanding of the nature of the request) may request that the existence or nature of your child's disability be treated as confidential by the school. We will take any such request into account when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable.

#### Outcome

Once the school has determined whether the relevant adjustment is reasonable, we will write to you, setting out the decision and the reasons.

What can you do if you are not happy with the school's decision?

If you are not happy with the school's decision about the reasonableness of the adjustment, you may lodge a complaint using the school's Complaints Procedure.