



The Schools at Somerhill

Equal Opportunities Policy

Written: September 2000

**Revised: September 2003, September 2005, October 2008, December 2009,
October 2010**

Next Revision: Michaelmas 2012

Aims: Equality of opportunity is central to the ethos of The Schools at Somerhill and applies to all pupils and staff in the schools, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, ability (including giftedness), disability (within the physical limitations of the building), race, ethnicity, religion and social circumstances. The Schools at Somerhill acknowledge and welcome their duties under the Equality Act 2010.

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

The schools aim to:

- be free from discrimination and stereotyping
- provide planned equality of access to a broad and balanced curriculum,
- ensure that this access is not merely formal but is functional, so that all may achieve good standards and develop their talents to the full
- recognise and celebrate diversity
- develop knowledge, understanding and skills that are needed in order to participate in a multi-ethnic society in the wider context of an interdependent world.
- promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
- help pupils to understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour.

We welcome applications from potential pupils 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. To this end, a pupil is admitted to the schools on the basis that the Head considers that he/she has the potential to benefit from the education offered. **Refer to The Schools at Somerhill Admissions Policy.** Bursaries are offered in order to make it possible for as many as possible who meet the school's admission criteria to attend the school. (Details of our provision for bursaries can be found on our web site or obtained from the Bursar's office).

All pupils have right of access to all areas of the school environment conducive to their educational and social attainment. **Refer to The Schools at Somerhill Accessibility Policy and Plan, and Curriculum Policy.**

Monitoring of this policy in term of its operation is ultimately the responsibility of the Head and Senior Management Team, but every member of staff is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the policy in terms of promoting good practice.

Special Note

The Schools at Somerhill is set up as a coeducational pre prep, which feeds into single sex prep schools; Yardley Court for boys (Year 3-8) and Derwent Lodge for girls (Year 3-6). In this context, girls and boys in the prep schools are taught separately. However, children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in a full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

- Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles
- Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and support staff of both sexes wherever possible. All teaching and support staff posts are non-gender specific. Both men and women are encouraged to work with all age groups and each Key Stage where appropriate.