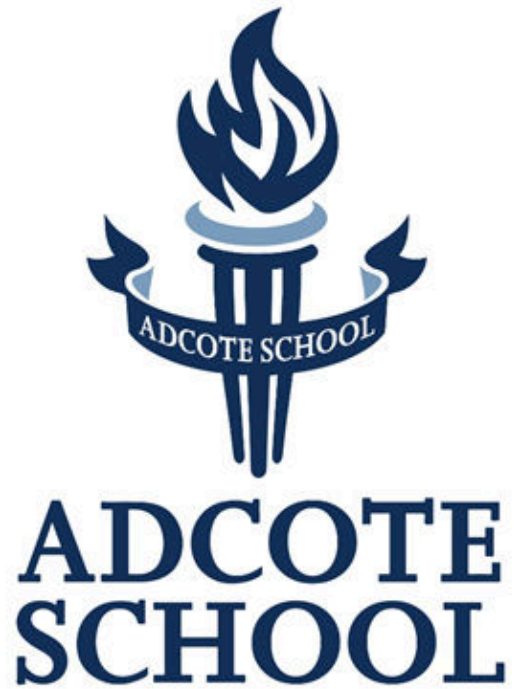




EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (STUDENT)

Promoting equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Adcote School for Girls ("the School").

The School recognises and values the benefits of a diverse school community in which all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and in which the different backgrounds, experiences and contributions of pupils, staff and families are recognised and appreciated.

The School is committed to providing an environment in which all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential, free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and prejudice-related bullying.

The School is committed to complying with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and other applicable legislation.

The nine protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The School recognises that the statutory protections relating to these characteristics differ according to the circumstances and that not all protected characteristics apply to school pupils in the same way under the education provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

As a girls' school, Adcote School for Girls operates within the lawful provisions governing single-sex education. The School is committed to ensuring that its admissions arrangements, educational provision and day-to-day practices comply with the Equality Act 2010.

All members of the school community are expected to demonstrate respect, consideration and tolerance towards others, regardless of their individual characteristics, beliefs or backgrounds.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote equality of opportunity and ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- Prevent and address unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Promote an inclusive school environment in which individual differences are recognised, respected and valued.

- Foster positive relationships between pupils from different backgrounds and encourage mutual understanding and respect.
- Identify and seek to remove barriers to learning, participation and achievement.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and prospective pupils in accordance with the School's legal obligations.
- Ensure that admissions, educational opportunities, extracurricular activities and school services are administered fairly and lawfully.
- Promote awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion through the curriculum, assemblies, PSHE and wider school life.
- Challenge discriminatory attitudes, language, stereotypes and behaviour.
- Ensure that concerns relating to discrimination are taken seriously, investigated appropriately and addressed promptly.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the School's equality policies and practices.
- Comply with applicable legislation, statutory guidance and relevant regulatory requirements.

The School expects all pupils, staff, parents and visitors to support these aims and to contribute to a respectful, safe and inclusive school community.

Admissions

The School is committed to operating a fair, transparent and lawful admissions process in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the School's Admissions Policy.

The School welcomes applications from prospective pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and will not unlawfully discriminate in its admissions arrangements.

As a girls' school, the School operates a single-sex admissions policy in accordance with the applicable provisions and exceptions of the Equality Act 2010.

The School welcomes applications from pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SEND) and is committed to considering each application individually and fairly.

The School will consider its duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, including adjustments to admissions assessments, procedures and arrangements, where required by law.

Parents are encouraged to provide relevant information about any disability, special educational need or other circumstances that may affect a prospective pupil's participation in the admissions process or their educational experience. Such information enables the School to consider appropriate support and reasonable adjustments. A failure to disclose information will not, of itself, justify unlawful discrimination.

Where a prospective pupil has a disability or special educational need, the School will undertake an individual assessment of the applicant's circumstances, including, where appropriate:

- Consultation with parents and the prospective pupil.

- Advice from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and relevant members of staff.
- Consideration of any professional reports or assessments provided.
- Identification of reasonable adjustments, auxiliary aids or services that may be required.
- Consideration of how the pupil may access the curriculum, facilities and wider school life.
- Consideration of relevant safeguarding, health and safety and welfare matters.

Any decision concerning an application will be made on an individual basis, following appropriate consideration of the School's legal obligations, including its duty to make reasonable adjustments.

The School will not refuse admission solely because a prospective pupil has a disability or special educational need. Where concerns arise about the School's ability to provide suitable educational provision, these will be considered carefully, objectively and in accordance with applicable legislation.

The School will maintain appropriate records of its assessment and decision-making process and will communicate admissions decisions in accordance with its Admissions Policy.

Further information is available in the School's Admissions Policy and SEND Policy.

Single-Sex Education and Gender Reassignment

Adcote School for Girls is a single-sex school providing education for girls in accordance with the lawful exceptions and provisions of the Equality Act 2010. The School recognises its responsibility to apply its admissions arrangements consistently, fairly and in accordance with current legislation and applicable statutory guidance.

The School is committed to treating all pupils and prospective pupils with dignity, sensitivity and respect, including those with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Where matters relating to gender reassignment arise, the School will consider the individual circumstances carefully, taking account of its legal obligations, safeguarding responsibilities, the welfare and privacy of pupils and the rights of others.

Decisions relating to admissions, pastoral support, facilities, uniform and participation in school activities will be made in accordance with applicable law and relevant guidance. The School will not tolerate bullying, harassment, victimisation or inappropriate language directed towards any pupil because of gender reassignment or any other protected characteristic.

The School will work sensitively with pupils, parents and relevant professionals, where appropriate, to ensure that individual needs are considered and that the School maintains a safe, respectful and supportive environment for all members of its community.

Educational services

The School affords all pupils access to educational provision including all benefits, services, and facilities, irrespective of any protected characteristic (subject to our reasonable adjustments duty and considerations of safety and welfare). The School will not discriminate against a pupil on the grounds of any protected characteristic by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The School will:

- Treat all members of the School community with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from discrimination
 - Endeavour to meet the needs of all pupils and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics
 - Ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with an Education Health Care Plan receive necessary educational and welfare support
 - Monitor the admission and progress of pupils from different backgrounds
 - Challenge inappropriate and unacceptable discriminatory behaviour by pupils and staff
 - Encourage pupils to work and play freely and have respect for all other pupils irrespective of any protected characteristic
 - Offer all pupils access to all areas of the curriculum and a full range of extra-curricular activities
 - Work with parents and external agencies where appropriate to combat and prevent discrimination in School
 - Ensure that it reviews, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of inclusive policies and practices
- Use the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE to:
- Promote tolerance of and respect for each other, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
 - Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues.
 - Encourage pupils to question and challenge assumptions and stereotypes in order to better understand discriminatory behaviours and bias.

The School recognises that discrimination may be direct, indirect, or arising from disability whether or not it was intentional. Harassment and bullying in all its forms (including cyberbullying) is unacceptable and will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying policy. The School's Anti-Bullying policy makes clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

Religious belief

The School is inclusive and welcomes and respects the rights and freedoms of individuals from other religions and faiths (or with no religion or faith) subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the rights and freedoms of other members of the School community.

The senior leadership team actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

All pupils are required to wear a uniform until Year 12, and a "business dress" code operates for Years 12 and 13. Pupils will be given the choice of approved items of uniform (including sports kit). The Head will consider requests from parents and pupils for variations to the uniform for reasons related to disability, gender reassignment and/or on religious grounds provided they are consistent with the School's policy on health and safety and that such request/s are reasonable in all the circumstances including in light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be worn to School, parents are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Head, in advance.

Reasonable adjustments for pupils with disability

The School is committed to ensuring that disabled pupils and prospective pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with pupils who are not disabled. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the School will make reasonable adjustments where required to avoid such disadvantage. The duty to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory and ongoing. The School will therefore consider potential barriers to access and participation and will not rely solely on pupils or parents identifying difficulties.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Adjustments to policies, procedures and school practices.
- Adaptations to teaching methods, learning resources and classroom arrangements.
- Provision of appropriate auxiliary aids and services.
- Adjustments to admissions assessments and school-based assessments.
- Appropriate arrangements for examinations, subject to the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies.
- Adjustments to participation in educational visits, sporting activities, extracurricular activities and boarding provision, where applicable.
- Alternative methods of communication and accessible learning materials.

The School will consult with parents, pupils where appropriate, the SENCO and relevant professionals when identifying and reviewing reasonable adjustments.

A formal medical diagnosis or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is not necessarily required before the School considers whether reasonable adjustments are appropriate. The reasonableness of any proposed adjustment will be assessed in light of the individual circumstances, taking account of relevant factors such as effectiveness, practicability, health and safety, available resources and the interests of the pupil.

The School will maintain appropriate records of agreed adjustments and review them as necessary, particularly where a pupil's needs or circumstances change. The duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils does not generally require schools to remove or alter

physical features. However, the School recognises its separate accessibility planning obligations under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Further information is available in the School's SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan.

Accessibility

The School is committed to improving accessibility for disabled pupils and prospective pupils and to ensuring that, wherever reasonably practicable, they are able to participate fully in the educational, social and wider life of the School.

The School recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to prepare, implement and keep under review an Accessibility Plan.

The School's Accessibility Plan addresses three key areas:

1. Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
2. Improving the physical environment of the School to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can access education, facilities and services.
3. Improving the provision of information to disabled pupils in accessible formats and within reasonable timescales.

Adcote School for Girls occupies a Grade I listed building. The School recognises that the historic and architectural significance of the building may place restrictions on permanent structural alterations. However, the School acknowledges that its listed-building status does not remove its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Where physical alterations are restricted or impracticable, the School will consider appropriate alternative arrangements, including changes to room allocation, timetabling, teaching arrangements, access routes, equipment and the provision of additional support.

Accessibility needs will be considered individually, taking account of the pupil's circumstances, the nature of any barriers, the practicability of proposed measures, relevant heritage and planning requirements, and the School's legal obligations. The School will work with pupils, parents, relevant professionals and appropriate external agencies to identify and review suitable arrangements. The School will maintain and regularly review its Accessibility Plan, identifying priorities, actions, responsibilities and timescales for improving accessibility.

Further information is available in the School's Accessibility Plan and SEND Policy.

Equality of Opportunity in Boarding

The School is committed to ensuring that its principles of equality, dignity, respect and inclusion extend to all aspects of boarding provision.

Boarding pupils will be treated fairly and respectfully, irrespective of their individual backgrounds or protected characteristics, subject to applicable legal provisions.

The School recognises that boarding pupils may have different cultural, religious, dietary, medical, disability-related or other individual needs.

The School will consider these needs sensitively and make reasonable adjustments where required by law.

Boarding arrangements, including accommodation, facilities, activities, supervision and pastoral support, will be managed in accordance with applicable legislation, safeguarding requirements and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

The School will take appropriate steps to protect the privacy, dignity, safety and welfare of all boarding pupils.

Boarding pupils will have access to appropriate arrangements for reporting concerns, including concerns relating to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

Further information is available in the School's Boarding Policies, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Breaches of this policy

The School takes breaches of this policy seriously and will respond to concerns in a fair, proportionate and appropriate manner.

Where a pupil is found to have engaged in discriminatory behaviour, harassment, victimisation or prejudice-related bullying, the School may take action in accordance with its Behaviour or Rewards and Sanctions Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

In determining an appropriate response, the School will consider the nature and seriousness of the incident, the age and understanding of the pupil, any relevant special educational needs or disabilities, safeguarding considerations and any other relevant circumstances. The School may also implement educational, restorative or pastoral measures where appropriate.

Alleged breaches by staff will be addressed in accordance with the School's applicable employment, disciplinary and safeguarding procedures. Where concerns involve safeguarding matters, the School will follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Any person who believes that a pupil has experienced unlawful discrimination or that this policy has been breached is encouraged to raise the matter promptly through the appropriate reporting procedures. Parents may also raise concerns through the School's formal Complaints Procedure.

The School will seek to ensure that concerns are addressed sensitively, fairly and without retaliation against those who raise them in good faith.