



Equality and Diversity Policy

Reviewer: Mary Plint

Approver: Kit Perona-Wright

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Next Review: March 2026

'Cheltenham College' refers to Cheltenham College Senior School *and* Cheltenham College Preparatory School (including Cheltenham College Pre-Prep and Nursery School)

'College' refers to Cheltenham College Senior School

'Cheltenham Prep' refers to Cheltenham College Preparatory School

'Nursery and Pre-Prep' refers to Cheltenham College Nursery School and Pre-Prep

1. Introduction

1.1 In referring to 'Cheltenham College', this policy encompasses Cheltenham College Senior School and Cheltenham College Preparatory School, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

1.2 Promoting equal opportunities is fundamental to the aims and ethos of Cheltenham College; diversity enriches the community and is vital in preparing pupils for today's world. Cheltenham College aims to provide a diverse, inclusive, comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where each individual feels valued and can flourish. Equality of opportunity should underpin and be evident in all parts of school life; the curriculum, the co-curricular programmes and the social ethos.

1.3 Cheltenham College is committed to equal opportunity in relation to protected characteristics as set out in the UK Equality Act (2010): age, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and disability (the latter within the context of the Admissions Policy), although age and marriage and civil partnership do not apply to children. The school is opposed to all forms of discrimination and believes that equality, diversity and inclusion are vital throughout all phases of development.

1.4 Bursaries are an integral part of our approach to equal opportunities and are available in order to enable as many as possible who meet the admission criteria to attend Cheltenham College. The Bursary Policy can be found on the school website.

1.5 We undertake to work with the school community, with parents and with other relevant agencies to ensure that any form of discriminatory behaviour is treated seriously and action is taken to prevent any repetition.

2. Code of Conduct

All academic and pastoral staff play an active role in implementing Cheltenham College's policy on equal opportunities.

Use is made of tutorials, assemblies, Floreat, Thrive, TPE, Drama, English and other lessons and of the extra-curricular programme to:

- Promote tolerance of others and respect for each other's position within the Cheltenham College community

- Promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and raise awareness of related issues
- Foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures
- Understand why and how to deal with offensive language and behaviour
- Understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner

Harassment in all its forms is unacceptable; Cheltenham College's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies contain clear procedures for dealing with discrimination.

A successful equal opportunities policy requires strong and positive support from parents and guardians, and full acceptance of Cheltenham College's ethos of tolerance and respect.

3. Disabilities, SEN, learning difficulties

Cheltenham College is academically selective and, as such, is usually able to meet the needs of pupils with mild specific learning difficulties or special educational needs. Cheltenham College is committed to a policy of inclusion; the teaching, learning, achievement, attitude and wellbeing of all children matters, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. The culture, practice, management and deployment of Cheltenham College's resources is designed to ensure all children's needs are met. The needs of children who experience difficulties with learning are recognized and met through the curriculum. There is usually an additional charge for extra learning support lessons. Both the Prep and Senior Schools have Learning Support Departments.

The Learning Support and Accessibility Plans are available upon request.

4. Culture, ethnicity, race

Cheltenham College values diversity and promotes social and cultural harmony, respect, understanding and tolerance. Pupils should be able to feel proud of their cultural identity, confident that they are accepted and happy to share in the multi-cultural nature of Cheltenham College and the wider society. At the point of final acceptance to Cheltenham College, ethnicity data is requested to aid pastoral staff in caring for and supporting pupils from minority groups. The provision of such data is optional but we hope that parents will feel able to provide this information.

5. English as an additional language

Multilingualism is viewed as advantageous. In order to cope academically and socially, pupils must be fluent English speakers. Most pupils should have been educated in the English medium for at least two years before coming to Cheltenham College. Where further help is needed, tuition in English as an Additional Language (EAL) can be arranged. There is a charge for these additional lessons.

6. International pupils

At College, the Tutor in charge of International Pupils is also responsible for promoting their welfare and positive experience of College.

7. Religion

Although Cheltenham College has Christian roots, it does not select for entry on the basis of religious belief and welcomes pupils and staff of all faiths and none. Those of other faiths are able to practise these. Religious Studies / Theology, Philosophy and Ethics lessons provide opportunities to educate about different religious teachings and explore ethical stances.

Chapel plays a key role in the life of Cheltenham College. Chapel is the place where the whole community gathers together most weekday mornings. Its role in generating a sense of unity and shared enterprise is

fundamental to College life. Chapel is a place where community matters are communicated and where key achievements are celebrated. Events of national importance are also marked and celebrated within Chapel. It is also the place where the College community comes to mourn and process its grief when a member dies.

The values and stories underpinning Judeo-Christian world-view are sensitively and creatively explored through readings, prayers and Chapel talks. Though the rhythm of the Christian year shapes the focus and worship of Chapel, the key festivals of other faith groups are marked. Recognising that many pupils come from either a post-Christian or non-Christian background, the themes of Chapel talks are drawn from a universal pool of wisdom concerned with living the good life.

Although at College the Chapel programme is created to be as inclusive as possible - while retaining a distinctively Christian sensibility – it is recognised that some pupils who have an active and deep commitment to other faiths may wish to withdraw from Chapel and use their time to practice their own devotions. Such withdrawals take place following conversations involving the parent of the pupil and the Housemaster / Housemistress (HsM) in the first instance. The HsM directs the request to be withdrawn from Chapel to the Dean of Chapel or the Deputy Head Learning and Wellbeing, who liaise with parents and then take the matter to the Head for final approval.

8. Requests for variations in the school uniform and school practice

From Pre-Prep upwards, all pupils at Cheltenham College are required to wear a uniform. The Heads consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform that are consistent with the school's ethos and its policy on health and safety. They may take expert advice, and normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request. Provision is made as necessary for special dietary requirements.

9. Gender

As a co-educational school, it is essential that male and female pupils experience equality of educational opportunity and experience. Being treated equally does not necessarily mean being treated exactly the same and staff members proactively avoid stereotypes and promote equality of opportunity. Gender-based attainment and effort data is analysed. An Inclusion Committee meets regularly to implement improvements to inclusion at Cheltenham College, including co-education. The mission statement of the Inclusion Committee states that: 'Cheltenham College is a community committed to establishing and maintaining practices that foster a culture of inclusion, cohesion and collaboration, in which each individual feels valued, appreciated for who they are, and has a sense of belonging. The Inclusion Committee seeks to embrace diversity and ensure that individuals are able to develop their own identities, and that they experience equality of opportunity. It protects and nurtures minority groups and those with potential vulnerabilities by promoting gender, sexual, ethnic, religious and cultural appreciation and countering stereotyping.'

10. Sexual orientation and gender reassignment

Discussion about relationships and responsibility form part of the Floreat / Thrive! (PSHCE) programme. Pupils are recognised as individuals. Matters relating to sexual orientation or gender reassignment are treated with discretion by any staff member to whom a pupil discloses matters of a sensitive nature. A counsellor is available to pupils and confidentiality is observed. A pupil who may be questioning their sexuality, identity or considering transitioning will be supported in this process, through the support of trained personnel, including staff in the Health Centre and Pupil / Student Support Services where appropriate. Support takes the form of helping a pupil to explore their own sexuality; the school does not promote a particular lifestyle. We recognise that every individual is different and aim to create suitable arrangements in response to individual needs. Where a pupil is questioning their gender, parents are included in decision making unless there are concerns about safeguarding. Cheltenham College is cognisant that gender identity is a contested belief and the rights and beliefs of all are respected. Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying will not be tolerated and individuals who are in breach of our Behaviour Policy will be subject to sanctions.

11. Staff recruitment and selection

Staff are selected on the basis of their professional suitability for the role and their ability to undertake required responsibilities; full details are contained in the Recruitment Policy.

12. Monitoring

Having ethnicity information, where parents provide it, enables the school to provide anonymised ethnicity data for the annual Government census

13. Complaints

Parents are invited to discuss queries and concerns relating to this policy or its implementation with the Deputy Head Learning and Wellbeing at the Senior School or Deputy Head Pastoral at The Prep. A complaints procedure is available on the website.