



BROCKHURST & MARLSTON HOUSE SCHOOLS
Including all of the Pre-Prep Department and Early Years
Foundation Stage



Statement on Gender Separation at Brockhurst and Marlston House Schools: 'The Diamond Model'

Brockhurst and Marlston House Schools (the School) operate a diamond model of education. Pupils are taught together in a co-educational pre-prep. From Yr2/3, pupils are taught in single sex academic classes until Yr6. They are then taught in co-educational classes in Yrs 7 and 8.

Rationale

The School has adopted this system in order to positively help boys and girls to make academic progress. The School's view is supported by published academic research on the differing learning and developmental progress of boys and girls. (see <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/with-boys-and-girls-in-mind> for an example)

How we achieve this:

Boys and girls are taught separately for their academic lessons from Yr2/3 to Yr6. This enables staff to refine the structure their lessons to positively enhanced the differing learning needs of boys and girls. For example, girls can often sustain independent collaborative working for longer than boys who find maintaining their concentration for extended periods more difficult. A boys' class might adopt a strategy with more emphasis on varying practical and written work.

Differentiating boys and girls in this way is helpful to fostering self-esteem in both groups. For example, boys can be dispirited by finding it more difficult to produce neatly presented written work and can compare themselves unfavourably with girls whose presentation is often better. Girls can benefit in developing confidence and interest in practical aspects of STEM subjects by working in single sex class.

The School does not require a rigid adherence to single sex academic separation but leaves it free to class teachers to work collaboratively. Examples might include literacy sessions, drama workshops.

In developing this system, the School has had due regard to Government guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719398/Gender-separation-guidance.pdf

7. Positive action, as a general exception to discrimination under the Act, is set out in section 158 of the Equality Act 2010. Under that section separation of pupils by sex may be justified if the school reasonably thinks that:

b) girls or boys have needs that are different from the needs of the other sex

8. In those circumstances, schools may take action designed to achieve the aim of enabling or encouraging girl or boy pupils to meet the sex-specific needs.

Proportionality of the means of achieving the aim:

The School teaches an identical curriculum to both boys and girls. The aim of the diamond model is to enhance learning and is judged by the School to be proportionate to the desired outcome of the School's Aims and Ethos and in particular:

'Pupils are encouraged to become well rounded individuals with open and enquiring minds who are confident in challenging their understanding.'

<https://www.brockmarl.org.uk/aims-ethos/>

There are no practices that could result in less favourable treatment of a boy or a girl because of his or her sex.

Single Sex Sport:

The School offers equal opportunities for sport for all its pupils subject to the restrictions required by respective sport governing bodies and competition entry restrictions. The School is actively promoting and fostering opportunities for mixed sport. For example, the evening senior and junior sport Academy programme which runs termly for five days a week throughout the year and provides specialist coaching in cricket, rugby, football, netball, tennis and hockey. These are run as mixed sex sessions.

Negligible Separation:

Given the ethos and extensive opportunities for boys and girls to mix, take part in activities, socialise and grow up together, the School considers that the academic separation of the diamond model amounts to negligible separation with respect to the equality of the development opportunities provided to the pupils. Parents often comment that what the School provides is 'the best of both Worlds'.

Pupil Voice:

Pupils are actively encouraged to raise issues of concern to them and to think about ways in which their lives and education at the School might be enhanced. They are provided with a forum to do this through the School Council which reports in to the SLT