

St Michael's C of E Primary School, Winterbourne

~ Learn Care Enjoy ~

Equal Opportunities ~ Policy Guidelines

This school aims to be a learning community in which all:

- . achieve their full potential
- . are motivated to work independently and collaboratively
- . take initiative and responsibility
- . show respect and consideration for others and their environment

RATIONALE

If true equality of opportunity is to be achieved, it is essential that all children receive the equal educational opportunities (regardless of gender, age, ethnic background and culture, religion, disability or social class), in order that the uniqueness of each child may be fostered.

PURPOSE

Providing Equal Opportunities means:

- . Ensuring that children and adults are treated as individuals, each of whom has his / her own cultural context;
- . Encouraging children and adults to personally contribute towards a happy and caring environment, and to show respect for, and appreciation of, each other as individuals.
- . Challenging myths, stereotypes, preconceptions and misconceptions
- . Educating, developing and preparing all our children for life in a multicultural society by:
 - extending children's knowledge and understanding of different cultures, languages and faiths;
 - valuing cultural diversity by drawing on pupils' backgrounds and experiences; and
 - offering positive images and role models from all cultures.
- . Stating clearly that discrimination is unacceptable in this school.

BROAD GUIDELINES

The school follows the LA's Admission Policy, which does not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

In managing equality there are certain distinct themes that need to be addressed:

Anti-racism

As a multicultural society, all pupils should be educated towards an understanding of, and a commitment to, a situation where human beings are treated as equals and given equal access to education. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Race Equality Policy.

The multicultural curriculum should:

- . be reflected in all subjects, all topics and at all levels
- . seek to eliminate racism, bias and stereotypes
- . endeavour to give all pupils a positive self-image
- . encourage the development of areas previously omitted from the curriculum
- . see language diversity, bi-lingualism, dialect as strengths on which to build
- . encourage parents to participate in the development of education through active partnership.

Practical Guidelines

Teachers should:

- . carefully select new teaching materials and regularly review existing material to ensure that both fiction and non-fiction reading material does not contain factually incorrect, out of date, offensive or prejudicial wording (or point them out should they occur).
- . ensure that displays and teaching resources reflect the multicultural nature of Britain today.
- . offer to children a variety of stories and tales from around the world. These should celebrate both the similarities and the differences between cultural groups.
- . ensure that children are made aware of the variety of religious and cultural festivals that are celebrated in this country throughout the year.

All staff should:

- . be aware of acceptable terminology for the naming of particular groups.
- . ensure that children's names are accurately recorded and correctly pronounced, and encourage pupils to accept and respect names originating in each person's own culture.
- . be aware that racist symbols, badges and insignias on clothing and elsewhere are forbidden in school.

Racial Harassment:

- . is an agenda item at every Governors' meeting.
- . must be dealt with as soon as it occurs by:
 - reporting it to the Head Teacher who will decide what course of action needs to be taken
 - informing the parents of the harassed individual and the perpetrator
 - recording the incident
 - reporting it to Governors
 - supporting the victim afterwards
 - Reported as racial incident to LA

Gender

It is important to consider gender issues in a wider context than simply sex discrimination.

In considering gender issues, the school should:

- . develop pupils' understanding of the issues of women's and men's equality in everyday life
- . reflect positive views of women and men in non-traditional roles and in positions of power, not only on the walls but in books and other resources
- . help both girls and boys to develop a better self-image through accepting a wider range of choice which equality of opportunity offers
- . avoid any discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation
- . be vigilant of homophobic harassment

Practical Guidelines

- . Although many forms of discrimination and stereotyping of the sexes are quite unintentional for adults working with primary-aged children, and amongst the children themselves, there are many small but significant procedures which can affect the development of a non-discriminatory environment:
 - . There should be careful selection of new teaching materials and regular reviews of existing material to ensure that both fiction and non-fiction reading material does not contain stereotyped images of women or men.
 - . All sport and out of school activities should be equally available to both sexes.
 - . Class registers should list children in chronological order rather than by gender.
 - . Children should not be asked to line up, or sit, according to gender. An exception to this is when older children are waiting to change for PE/Swimming.
 - . The suggested School Dress Code is based on non-discriminatory criteria.
 - . All children should be treated equally when matters of discipline arise.
 - . Staff need to be aware of stereotypes (eg, the neat, compliant girl/the dishevelled, competitive boy) and the need to guard against them.
- . Significant differences in academic achievement should be noted and appropriate action taken.
- . Incidents of sexual harassment amongst children should be reported to the Head Teacher as soon as possible after the event. A decision will then be made as to the most appropriate course of action.
- . Staff who suffer from sexual harassment should follow the school's Complaints' Procedure.

Disability

In recognizing that the disabled have a right to an enriching education just as all other pupils have, the school should:

- . recognise the different and individual needs of pupils whilst assuming equality of provision
- . make educational opportunities available specific to the needs of the child
- . ensure that the level of expectation is correctly assessed and that experience is built upon
- . ensure that the disabled have the understanding and respect of other children
- . enable the disabled child to become an active participant in society and a responsible contributor to it, capable of developing the maximum independence

Practical Guidelines

- . No disabled child will be excluded from admission to the school on the grounds of their disability.
- . If necessary (as part of a Statement of Educational Need) adaptations and additions should be made to the buildings to accommodate disabled children. These changes are normally funded by the LA, and Governors should be consulted.
- . To assist parents in their choice of placement, the Head Teacher should identify any particular difficulties that may be encountered by a child with a specific disability.
- . All new buildings should incorporate features to assist access for children with disabilities.
- . The appropriateness of the curriculum may need to be considered depending upon the disability of the child.
- . A five year Accessibility Action Plan will be drawn up and reviewed annually.

Social Class

There is a need to acknowledge that there will be children from homes where there is "social disadvantage". This may be due to a variety of circumstances, accidental or cultural. For whatever reason, these children should have the same opportunities to reach their full potential.

The school should:

- . guard against any preconceived expectations of children from any particular background
- . maintain high expectations of children from all backgrounds regardless of social competence or cultural deprivation.

Practical Guidelines

- . There should be no public references made about "free school meals" when school lunch registers are being marked.
- . Payments for all school visits are subject to the Governors' Charging Policy; voluntary contributions are requested (see Charging Policy).
- . The School's Dress Code should help eliminate any obvious differences that could arise if children dressed in "ordinary clothes" and fashionable clothes/accessories became an issue.
- . Pupil premium budgets should be used to improve achievement and widen opportunities otherwise inaccessible to some pupils due to cost

Equal Opportunities for Staff

Selection for recruitment or promotion must be on merit, irrespective of sex, race or disability.

Practical Guidelines

- . The Governors will follow the advice and guidance of the HR consultants provided by the Local Authority in matters of selection and appointment of staff.
- . In all appointments, the candidate considered most appropriate for the position will be appointed, based upon strict professional criteria.
- . Each applicant for a vacant post is invited to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.
- . An equal opportunities recruitment monitoring forms should be periodically monitored by governors who are members of the Personnel and Premises Committee

MONITORING

The governing body is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. It will carry out this responsibility by:

- . comparing the progress of pupils from different groups
- . requiring the head teacher to report to the governing body all instances of racial harassment
- . monitoring the staff appointment process
- . monitoring the exclusion records regularly

CONCLUSION

We see our task as equipping pupils with an awareness of an increasingly diverse society where individuals show respect for, and appreciation of, each other as individuals. We aim to develop an ethos of learning where differences are accepted and valued. This will involve the whole school community - children, staff, parents and governors - and may cause all of us to examine, and possibly change, the way we think and behave. We all need support and encouragement in facing that challenge.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually and should be read in conjunction with:
Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
Equality Scheme including Race Equality, School Accessibility and Gender Equality Plans
Charging Policy
Pupil Premium Plans
Complaints Procedures
Behaviour and discipline guidance
Sex and Relationships Policy

Policy drawn up after consultation with staff and governors November 1992.

Recent reviews:

Curriculum Committee review: April 2002

Governors: May 2002

Curriculum Committee Review: June 2003
Governors: June 2003
Curriculum Committee Review: June 2005
Governors: June 2005
Reviewed and agreed September 2008
Reviewed and agreed April 2010
Reviewed and agreed October 2011
Reviewed and agreed September 2013
Reviewed September 2015