



Equal Opportunities Policy

Highfield Community School is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, language, disability or family background, and to the active support of initiatives designed to further this principle.

We believe that equal opportunity is at the heart of good educational practice. All pupils are of equal value and deserve equal access to every aspect of school life. They have an equal opportunity to learn and work towards their highest possible levels of achievement. The 'Vision and Values' which we uphold as a school help to emphasise equal opportunities for all staff and pupils at all times. All personnel are responsible for ensuring that we implement this policy.

Equal opportunity means that discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, language, disability or family background is not acceptable.

Aims & Objectives

We aim to ensure that every member of the school community is given an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential – each individual is entitled to work in a supportive environment. In order to achieve this we are committed to:

- equal access and treatment for all
- being responsive to changing needs
- educating and informing children and parents about the issues in this policy
- avoiding prejudice
- promoting a positive self-image and mutual respect, regardless of differences
- providing for all, according to their needs
- ensuring that equality of opportunity permeates the whole curriculum and ethos of the school
- using resources and examples which provide a positive image of all groups
- acknowledging the richness and diversity of British society and to prepare children for their part in this
- working to an agreed code of conduct which can be modified, monitored and evaluated according to current best practice in equal opportunities
- developing a positive attitude to equal opportunity by all staff, children, parents, governors and all who participate in the life of the school

We recognise that discrimination can be overt or covert. Covert discrimination relates to the assumptions, beliefs and values acquired over a long period of time which affects instinctive responses.

Gender

We take practical steps to ensure that we adhere to the terms of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. Our organisational structure, discipline policy and curriculum are applied to all, regardless of gender. Classes are formed on a chronological basis and class groupings are flexible. Grouping into sets of girls or boys only is discouraged, except where doing so provided equal access for all – e.g. in Science it is suggested that boys can dominate girls during investigations and so separating them would prevent this.

We analyse our data by gender in order to ensure that we identify any issues of that nature, which need addressing. When asking children to carry out tasks or represent the school, boys and girls are used equally.

All extra – curricular activities are open to both sexes.

Race, Faiths, Languages and Family Background

We have, represented in our school population, some different nationalities, faiths and family backgrounds and organisations.

Racial discrimination is unlawful and we aim to help our pupils to develop concepts, skills, attitudes and ways of behaving which will promote good relationships and prevent ignorance and prejudice.

Children sometimes experiment with racist expressions which they have heard through the mass media or from the community and do not understand how hurtful and harmful they can be. We aim to treat such incidences sensitively and firmly because all have the right to be protected from insults, abuse and bullying.

The Racist Incident Policy details the action to be taken in the event of such an incident. Monitoring will allow us to identify trends which need addressing.

Children and other adults are encouraged to contribute to school life from the richness of their heritage and religion. They share experiences and learn from one another through enquiry, investigative and collaborative work. Children with English as their second language often need learning support. We make use of the Language Support Service for advice and direct teaching when appropriate.

Capability

The National Curriculum requires a breadth, balance, relevance and differentiation which will enable each pupil to participate at an appropriate level.

The match of individual pupils to a modified curriculum is relevant to the exceptionally gifted child as much as to the child experiencing difficulty in learning.

These issues are addressed in the policies for SEND and Gifted and Talented.

Staff

The school values diversity amongst the staff. In all appointments at all levels the most suitable candidate will be appointed on professional criteria and recruitment carried out in a manner consistent with equal opportunity practice.

Identification

Staff will observe children at play and in classrooms for unacceptable behaviour, and will challenge it as and when it presents.

Counselling via teachers, TAs or our Family Support/Learning Mentor will be given at the time but repeated abuse will be recorded for discussion with the Headteacher, parents and Governing Body. All incidents are reported on CPOMS.

Positive action

Positive action will be fostered in line with current best practice.

- Staff will use examples in their teaching to demonstrate the advantages of a mixed society and the contributions of individuals of all genders, races, age groups etc
- Team work is encouraged in all aspects of school life to show the advantages of pooling experience, knowledge and various viewpoints
- Positive action, especially by pupils, will be rewarded
- Assembly times will reinforce good behaviour in the area of equal opportunities and involve peer groups in the approval (or disapproval) process
- Clear and consistent messages will be given regarding the school's values and its expectations of not only pupils but parents and other family members.

Involving parents

Parents will be informed of their child's behaviour, good and bad, together with any aspects of their attitudes towards others which give rise to concern.

Initial liaison regarding discrimination problems is expected to be of an informal nature.

Ongoing concerns will be discussed by the Headteacher and parents

The statutory framework

We need to have regard to the following statutory acts:

- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 – makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex, against pupils and on the grounds of sex and marriage against staff
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Race Relations Act 1976 – makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, directly or indirectly in the field of education on racial grounds. Racial grounds include race, colour, nationality(including citizenship); ethnic or national origins
- Equal Pay Amendment 1984
- The Education Reform Act 1988 – establishes that the curriculum should be balanced and broadly based, promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at schools and of society and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- The Children's Act 1989
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- New National Curriculum September 2014

Highfield Action Plan for Equal Opportunities

Target	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
To narrow the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other children in all year groups	Intervention Track DAP	July 2019	Class teachers Pupil Premium champion SENCO SLT	The gap between DAP and non-DAP will close in all year groups

This policy will be reviewed November 2021