



Equal Opportunities Policy



Approved by Governors on: 8.9.2021

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Headteacher: Amy Findlay

Date for Review: October 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A Findlay', written over a light blue background.

Vision Statement

We aim to create a safe, happy and nurturing environment for all our children!

Mission Statement

The Orchard School strives to provide the best quality teaching and learning with an inclusive and personalised curriculum, where all achievements are celebrated.

Introduction

The Orchard School is committed to ideals of fairness, justice and equality. We are a respectful, nurturing and positive learning community where everyone is valued, and everyone is enabled to achieve their very best. We celebrate and value diversity. We promote and value human rights. Our curriculum reflects, and is enhanced by, the cultural diversity of our pupils and staff. All pupils have the right to succeed regardless of disability, race, gender, culture or religion.

This Equal Opportunities Policy extends to staff, parents and carers as well as pupils.

The policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all students and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

Aims and Objectives

- We aim not to discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil or parent/carer or family, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or background.
- We promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- We value each pupil's worth. We celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and we show respect for everyone.
- The school provides equality of access to a broad relevant curriculum for all our pupils. This means that the pupils have their individual needs met through personalised pathways of learning.
- The school aims to ensure that resources provided are not based on any stereotypes and give a balanced view of gender, culture, religion, race and ability.
- Resources and teaching materials reflect the needs of the pupils ensuring access to the curriculum is not hindered in any way.
- The pupil's voice is promoted. All pupils have communication as a foundation of their learning
- Pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes about themselves and build a positive self image, promoting their own self esteem.
- Pupils are encouraged to value other people and be sensitive to their needs and beliefs, regardless of race, religion, culture, ability or gender.
- All pupils, families and staff are treated, and should treat each other, with dignity and mutual respect.
- Any incidents of discrimination will be immediately challenged, and steps taken to prevent the situation being repeated.
- The whole school community has a shared responsibility to promote equality and to challenge inequality in any form.

- The whole school has a shared responsibility to promote and value the physical and emotional wellbeing of others.
- Staff will be expected to address equal opportunities, treating everyone fairly in every aspect of the curriculum, within assemblies, reflected in the school ethos and organisation and in the school rules and in supporting pupils and families.
- The school will keep all parents and carers informed about all events occurring in school and include families in regular events across the school providing inclusiveness and a sense of community.

Racial Equality

At The Orchard School we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi-cultural society.

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with relevant school procedures.

We endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the pupils and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Disability non-discrimination

Pupils at The Orchard School have complex special educational needs, often including medical, sensory or physical needs. We are committed to meeting the needs of our pupils and steps are taken to ensure that they are not disadvantaged compared with children without special needs. The school is committed to providing an environment that allows all pupils and adults full access to the school premises and to all areas of learning. Teaching is planned individually for pupils to allow them to access learning and resources.

The school ensures that all areas of the school can be accessed (see Accessibility plan)

Gender equality

We are committed to enabling all pupils to make the best progress possible in our school. Our teaching methods promote the achievement of both boys and girls. These may include:

- ensuring that early literacy skills are promoted in all activities.
- ensuring that the starting points for writing activities capture the interests and imagination of boys and girls alike;
- removing gender bias from our resources
- making sure that our school environment promotes positive role models, in relation to learning and achievement;
- minimising stereotyping;
- valuing and celebrating academic achievement in ways which will motivate both girls and boys.
- ensuring that individuals do not dominate certain lessons

- ensuring that all learning activities are relevant to real life situations and problems;
- using praise and celebration of girls' and boys' achievements in those areas where they may traditionally achieve less well than the opposite gender.

Equal opportunities within the curriculum

The teaching methodology within the school provides pupils with opportunities to form their own opinions about themselves and others and includes furthering understanding about people from other cultures and with disabilities which are different to their own. Role-play, stories, art music and creative topic work can be used to introduce these pupils to a range of cultures and reflect a range of disabilities and help them to explore their attitudes to themselves and others.

The curriculum provides a range of opportunities for pupils to learn from each other's life styles and they can share and compare their religious traditions and festivals, many events being celebrated in school across the year.

Curriculum leaders will ensure that content, resourcing and delivery is reflective of the needs of all pupils in the school. Subject leader monitoring will check that this is in place and that teaching and learning is differentiated for all individual needs in line with a personalised curriculum.

Within certain subject areas, staff need to be mindful of the cultural constraints for pupils whilst participating in this area of the curriculum. In particular, the school will be sensitive to issues such as the type of clothing worn by female pupils during P.E. and swimming activities. All pupils, regardless of their disability or special need, should have access to a broad physical curriculum accessing swimming or hydro where possible.

Responsibilities

Governors

- The governing body has the overall responsibility for ensuring equal opportunities in the school and compliance with equality legislation.
- The governing body is committed to equal opportunities for all, and will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.
- The governing body aims to ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their gender, religion or race. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

Head Teacher

It is the Head Teacher's role to:

- ensure that the school's policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively
- ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations;
- ensure that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against;
- promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils, and in providing opportunities for professional development for staff;

- promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life - in school assemblies, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school;
- manage all incidents of unfair treatment – and/or any racist incidents - with due seriousness, and in line with this policy.

Leadership Team

- Heads of Departments will promote equal opportunities within their department.
- Curriculum leaders will ensure equal opportunities within their subject areas, through content, appropriate resourcing and access to events that are inclusive of all.
- The Senior Management team will have an overview of equal opportunities in the school.
- Issues relating to equal opportunities will be dealt with by the Senior Management team who will keep Governors informed.

All staff

Classroom teachers are responsible for ensuring classroom practice and organisation reflects equal opportunities. All staff should:

- Ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. They should not knowingly discriminate against any child.
- When selecting classroom material, provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups, or of boys and girls.
- Ensure that the language they use does not reinforce stereotypes or prejudice.
- Seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues - for example, in geography, the teacher should attempt to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia, and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.
- Challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. Governors will:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school.
- monitor the progress of boys and girls, to compare any gender differences in progress.
- monitor the progress of pupils from vulnerable groups, for instance looked after children.
- monitor the staff appointment process, to ensure that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against.
- require the Head Teacher to report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy.
- investigate thoroughly any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity.

The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually.

Reviewed Sept 2021 HG