

Why do we need an Equal Opportunities Policy?

At Madresfield C.E. Primary School, we believe that every effort possible must be made to ensure that all individuals within this school are valued and have the opportunity to develop to their full potential within a context of mutual respect, justice and fairness.

We need to ensure that all individuals within the School are entitled to learn, teach or work in a non-threatening and supportive environment in which self-esteem is enhanced.

We need to ensure that all staff take responsibility for these issues in all aspects of school life.

Aims and Objectives

- We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil, on the grounds of their sex, race, colour, religion, nationality, ethnic or national origins either directly or indirectly.
- We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- We ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.
- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- We celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.
- We ensure that every individual within the school has the same chance to achieve their full potential.
- We will inform and educate staff, parents and children and remind ourselves of the issues.

Strategies employed to ensure equal opportunities.

- Make clear statements on the unacceptability of: name calling, bullying, abuse (verbal, physical) etc.
- Use activities of a non-stereotypical nature (home corner/role play, apparatus).
- Give all children equal opportunity to voice opinion in class discussion times.
- Give opportunity for individuals to discuss how they are feeling.
- Encourage the sharing of experiences (cultural and other).
- Role play experiences include addressing age, disability, race and gender.
- Provide a differentiated curriculum - by developing classroom approaches which allow individual differences but which do not make distinctions which have negative effects on children learning.
- Encourage children to think about the exclusion of others and the effect it has.
- Ensure that all pupils have equal access to all resources e.g. constructional materials - Pupils may need specific encouragement/direction in the use of resources.
- Involve all pupils in 'rule making' both for the classroom and the school.
- Use assembly times to reinforce equal opportunity issues.
- Use of books, stories to reinforce positive attitudes.
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Anti-racism

It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident.

We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. So, for example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find in school. We promote an understanding of different cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, the history curriculum gives due emphasis to ancient African traditions and cultures in the work that the children do on the Ancient Egyptians. In the religious education curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children study the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

Should anyone at our school be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

The role of Governors

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy and s/he is supported by the governing body in so doing.

It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.

The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

The role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In geography topics the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

All our teachers challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents and draw them to the attention of the Headteacher. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

Monitor and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities policy. The governing body does this by:

- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- requiring the Headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils;
- monitoring the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

Definition

An equal opportunities dimension aims to develop and maximize the intellectual and social potential of both boys and girls.

Aims

- To remove all barriers, overt and covert.
- To eliminate gender stereotyping.
- To recognize the individual's worth and potential/
- To encourage positive attitudes and relationships within establishments.
- To encourage confidence in all children.

Objectives

Children should be:

- Encouraged to take part in all areas of the curriculum regardless of gender;
- Encouraged to develop an awareness of themselves in relation to others;
- Given opportunities to address equal opportunities issues both formally and informally.
- Helped to understand the meaning of discrimination;
- Alerted to the possibility of gender bias in existing resources and published material.

Teachers should:

- Challenge stereotyped attitudes amongst pupils and colleagues'
- Be aware of their own potential as a role model and focus of attention for the pupils;
- Be aware of the quality and frequency of interaction with girls and boys'
- Be watchful for equal use of resources between boys and girls;
- Look carefully at the gender balance when groups, classes or sets are organised.

The school should:

- Avoid the use of gender for administrative purposes, e.g. the register, lining up;
- Ensure that all school publications do not display gender bias;
- Ensure that displays around the school are non-stereotyped;
- Ensure that new resources are chosen with care';
- Ensure that careers advice and resources do not reflect stereotyped choices'
- Implement an equal opportunities review;
- Seek to develop the full potential of all the staff, irrespective of gender.

Implementation

An equal opportunities dimension should permeate every aspect of the curriculum
Good equal opportunities practice should be the concern of all individuals
Practice should be monitored and reviewed regularly.