

This policy applies to the whole school, including EYFS.

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S. Wade	Education Director
M.G. Hibbert	Headteacher
D. Barber	Deputy Head
C. Long	SENCO

Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

Aims and objectives

We aim to ensure that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

Equal opportunities underpin the value system of Edenhurst Preparatory School.

- 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 seek to provide all pupils with 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 for some groups.
- 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 all minority groups.
- We teach pupils about being part of a diverse and multi-ethnic society.

Racial equality

In our school, we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial, cultural and ethnic groups.

Pupils

All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that children with an identified additional need will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Gender equality

We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress possible in our school.

We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social class, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to performance.

Our aim is not only to encourage all pupils to oppose discrimination, but also to make sure they have the skills to challenge stereotyping as and when it occurs. This is actively developed through PSHE sessions.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the role of the Headteacher to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and he is supported by the Deputy Head and Bellevue Education International:

- to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- to ensure that this policy is applied during the staff appointment process, so that no one is discriminated against.
- to promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.
- to promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme.
- views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.

The role of the class teacher

Class teachers actively strive to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, staff strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum.

This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body and Senior Management Team to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. Therefore we:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;

- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated

Staff

Principles

Edenhurst Preparatory School is an equal opportunities employer. The School employment policies are designed to produce a framework within which all staff are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Equal Opportunities

The School is committed to the development of positive policies and procedures to promote equal opportunities in employment and education regardless of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or marital status, age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity.

In this way the School can achieve and maintain a workforce and student body with the widest possible range of knowledge, skills and experience and ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice. This commitment will apply in respect of all pupils' applications, employment, including recruitment of new employees training, promotion and redundancy. This principle will also apply in the application of terms and conditions of employment.

To this end, we shall regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion and training and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

If, at any time, employees feel that they have been treated less favourably than others in relation to equal opportunities without reasonable justification, they should raise the matter with the Headteacher.

If they are unable to resolve the matter they should utilise the Bellevue Education International Grievance Procedure. In the event that any member of staff has been the subject of discrimination by another member of staff, a pupil or by a third party in terms of physical or verbal abuse, or harassment, he or she should inform the Head immediately. The perpetrator of any proven instance of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action and may be dismissed.

Recruitment and Selection

Appointment procedures are governed by the School's principles of non-discrimination and are designed to achieve the best match between, on the one hand, the individual's knowledge and skills, experience and character and, on the other hand, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

The capability of the individual to perform in the position will be the major selection criterion but the ability both to work with others and to be trained, coupled with individual potential will be taken into account. All applicants will be dealt with courteously, and as expeditiously as possible.

Carefully selected and validated skills may be tested as part of the selection process and will be administered by a suitably qualified tester. Appointments will be confirmed on receipt of satisfactory references and enhanced DBS check, medical report (where appropriate) and satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

Disability

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures will be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants. (See SENDA Policy)

Before an applicant is considered to have failed to meet the requirements of a job description and person specification because of a reason related to their disability, or to have been less suitable than other applicants, full consideration will be given to whether a reasonable adjustment can be made which will counteract this disadvantage.

The School recognises the importance of taking pro-active measures to remove barriers to disabled people from the working environment. The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or School premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out his or her duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of suitable access, specialist equipment, retraining, flexible hours.

Where during the course of their employment a disabled member of staff recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work arrangements or School premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Bursar. The expertise of the disabled staff member concerning their own disability will be recognised.

Where the School does not have the relevant expertise to resolve the problem, an outside specialist may be consulted. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

Dignity at Work

Members of staff should not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to harassment of another person at work. Harassment of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence and in serious instances may lead to instant dismissal.

Harassment may include bullying, intimidatory behaviour, persistent teasing or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities, or exclusion from normal work place conversation.

Harassment may take the form of unwanted conduct which is of a sexual or racial nature, or other conduct based on someone's race, religion, gender or sexual orientation which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It may also take the form of unwanted conduct towards someone based on their disability, appearance or other personal characteristics which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work.

It is not only unwanted physical contact, assault or propositions; it includes suggestive remarks or gestures, pin-ups, graffiti, offensive comments, jokes and banter. It may be directed towards one individual or a group. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave.

Where a complaint has been made (except for where this has been made maliciously or totally without foundation, see below) the School will seek to ensure that the member of staff who claims harassment does not suffer any detriment or repercussions as a result and the situation will be monitored to ensure that the harassment has stopped.

False or malicious allegations will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Retaliation against a member of staff who complains of harassment can be expected to lead to disciplinary action.

Procedures

If any member of staff considers that they have been the recipient of unwanted conduct amounting to harassment at work, whether from a colleague, pupil, or third party, it is open to them to try to resolve the problem informally with the other person, either face to face or in writing.

If this is not appropriate or has not been successful, the employee must raise a grievance in accordance with the Bellevue Education Group Grievance Procedure. All such grievances will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence as far as is possible while progressing the complaint.

The Curriculum

The curriculum must demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities.

As a school we undertake to:

- Have regard to the outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' held within the Children Act 2004 i.e. being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing.
- Encourage everyone to value the contributions of others regardless of cultural and religious differences.
- Provide opportunities for all members of the school community to understand roles in society free from prejudice based on race, gender and religion.
- Provide the children with the opportunity to experience aspects of different cultures at first hand.
- Promote the needs and rights of others.
- Encourage the development of personal, social and professional relationships.
- Acknowledge individuals' rights and roles in the world of work and the work environment.
- To provide equal educational opportunity regardless of physical ability. Fulfil our legal obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Curriculum will achieve these aims by:

- Using positive images to combat negative stereotypes.
- Being aware of different types of learning and developing and encouraging different teaching methods to take account of these.
- Ensuring that children with special needs have access to the curriculum through the implementation of the special needs policy.
- Screening the reading and audio-visual resources to ensure that positive images of women, people of different races and cultural backgrounds and people with disabilities are promoted.
- Using assemblies as a forum where the children are encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate individual differences.
- Staging events and visits with the aim of promoting equal opportunities using display materials which promote the positive contribution of women to society, racial equality, cultural diversity and awareness of disability.
- Involving pupils, staff and parents in welcoming the cultural and ethnic diversity of our community.

Parents

We shall ensure that parents are informed of the principles and philosophies that lie behind our Equal Opportunities Policy. Parents will be made to feel welcome and all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure physical access to the schools.

In all dealings with parents, the schools will demonstrate and encourage respect. If a parent or carer believes that our practices or procedures are not meeting the aims of this policy or that they or their children have been treated less favourably because of their ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, disability or special educational needs they may make a formal complaint under our complaints procedure. This is a whole school policy, which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.