



Equality Policy

January 2023

Legal Framework

Stow Heath Primary school welcomes our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Aims of the policy

- To achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning for all, irrespective of ethnicity, religious belief, age, gender ability, disability and sexual identity or social background.
- To encourage respect for and understanding of the beliefs, doctrines and personal circumstances of individuals.
- To involve, as far as possible, representatives from diverse groups within our catchment in school life.
- To consider when defining school policy and procedure, the implications for different groups within our catchment.
- To seek to promote the welfare in school of individuals who have specific physical, emotional, learning and religious needs.
- To deal appropriately, effectively and firmly with comments and incidents which are detrimental to the well-being of others.
- To ensure that correct and appropriate procedures are used to recruit a range of highly skilled staff representing the diversity of our catchment and variety of experience.

Rationale

It is recognised that all pupils, parents, employees, governors and visitors have a worthwhile contribution to make to the school and that this contribution should be seen to be valued. The aims of the school reflect a commitment to equality of opportunity for all our pupils. We recognise the importance of enabling all our pupils and their families equal access, as far as possible to the facilities and activities we have to offer. High standards are expected for all and we seek to ensure that our expectations are challenging whatever the level of academic or physical ability, gender and gender identity, sexual identity, race or religion. We encourage the active involvement of all our learners and their families and aim to help them understand their rights as well as representing the rights of others. Page 3 We aim to ensure that prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping are challenged, providing a harmonious working environment in which all feel valued.

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Behaviour policy
- The SEN policy
- The recruitment policy
- The Assessment policy
- The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Definitions

We understand Equal Opportunities to describe an environment where no pupil or adult is prevented from taking a full part in the life of the school as a result of:

- Age
- Gender
- Physical Needs
- Behavioural Needs
- Learning Needs
- Ethnic Background
- Religious Background

- Other Personal Circumstances, e.g. sexual identity

This understanding influences our approach to:

- Constructing and delivering the curriculum
- School Ethos
- Involving parents and the local community
- School procedures
- Admissions
- Employment
- Access to facilities
- EAL provision
- Staff well-being

Constructing and Delivering the Curriculum

All pupils are expected to work towards reaching their potential at what ever level that might be. Classroom organisation and planning has regard for every pupil's individual needs and adaptations will be made where reasonably possible. Consideration will be given to curriculum and administrative policies, budget planning and priorities for the school development plan. To promote academic success, we are committed to supporting the learning of all pupils across the ability range and as such aim to ensure the fair distribution of resources.

Curriculum Planning

At Stow Heath, we acknowledge that all people are different and that pupils will excel in a range of different subjects. Therefore, we strive to maintain our broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to succeed and have their skills and abilities recognised.

All pupils have full access to the full range of our curriculum and are encouraged to gain confidence in all subject areas. As such mixed gender groups are part of the school's working practice except where this is felt to be inappropriate, e.g. for certain parts of the sex education curriculum.

Planning takes into account the need for differentiation to provide full access for pupils with a range of varying needs. This is further supported through the school's 'streaming' organisation.

English as an additional language

Where a pupil joins the school with English as an additional language, every attempt is made to secure advice and support from the local authority wherever it is felt it is needed. As a school, we work hard to ensure that teaching methods and resources are as appropriate as possible to meet the needs of individuals.

Classroom Management

We aim to make classrooms welcoming for all pupils and a variety of resources are made available to meet individual needs. The school has a strong behaviour policy and a positive ethos is developed with the use of rewards and boundaries and clear expectations for classroom and playground behaviour. All children feel valued and are clear about what they need to do next to make the progress expected of them.

Resources

Resources are prepared and selected which are free from gender or cultural stereotype. Regular scrutiny of work and planning help ensure appropriateness and relevance. Where bias is identified, attention will be drawn to this through curriculum team feedback and measures put in place to ensure the situation is resolved.

Assessment

Our assessment policy and procedures ensures that all relevant stakeholders have a good understanding of what our pupils have learned and how we can best support them in the next stage of learning. Pupils are involved in self and peer assessment, promoting a culture of involvement and consultation.

We identify trends within classes and year groups as well as tracking the progress of individuals. We use data to check that all groups, including more vulnerable groups, are achieving their potential. We analyse the performance of boys and girls, children with special needs and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Where issues are identified, they are discussed and measures put in place to improve the situation. This may include the implementation of an intervention programme, liaison with the SENCo etc.

Developing our ethos

Leaders have created a clear and ambitious vision for providing high quality education to all its pupils through its 'Shine like a Star' motto which is underpinned by three core values of 'Love to Learn', 'Ambitious for All' and 'Respectful and Responsible'.

All adults and pupils within the school contribute to our ethos and aims. Key factors in this include:

- The examples set through relationships and actions.
- The organisation of the school and the extent to which it values involvement, co-operation and consultation.
- Curriculum improvement and development, ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum is maintained.
- The development of self esteem through group work, school council, circle time etc.
- A positive behaviour policy where every opportunity is taken to praise and reward and encourage a sense of community and shared responsibility.
- Discussion of issues which challenge prejudice with pupils through the curriculum and collective worship.
- Taking opportunities to celebrate our successes and strengths as individuals and as a school community.
- Ensuring good communication at all levels within the school.

Collective Worship

All pupils have the opportunity to participate in daily collective worship as classes, year groups and as a whole key stage. Pupils are encouraged to consider issues related to equal opportunities and explore questions about meaning and purpose, values and beliefs. This is further developed through the use of the Jigsaw material where appropriate and the teaching of the PSHE curriculum through other subject areas.

Parents and the local community

We aim to involve as many parents and members of the local community in our school as possible. We encourage active involvement through good communication, an open door policy, fundraising/social events, parent consultation meetings etc. Where groups of parents are identified as being less represented within the school, activities are organised to encourage greater participation.

Admissions/Exclusion

As local authority maintained school, our local authority is the admission authority. Our Governing Body acts in accordance with the admission arrangements determined and published by our LA. The criteria used for exclusion must be justifiable on educational grounds and the same criteria used in each case. LA procedures will be followed.

Employment

The school follows the Local Authority guidelines related to the recruitment and selection of staff. When vacancies occur, we:

- Advertise the position sufficiently widely to allow a reasonable number of applicants.
- Ensure candidates are aware of the school selection procedure, criteria and candidate specification.
- Interview, applying the same principles to each candidate.
- Provide feedback to candidates upon request and explain decisions made as soon as possible

Every attempt will be made to enable candidates to demonstrate their abilities and interviewers will ensure that judgements are not made with regards to ethnicity, gender or disability. Selected staff at the school have undertaken 'Safer Recruitment' training and at least one member of any interviewing panel is trained in this way.

Appointment will be made on the basis of merit and suitability for the post. Once in post, an induction programme supports staff during the initial stages of employment and opportunities for staff development are on-going for all members of staff. The performance management process reflects the principles of equal opportunities.

Dealing with concerns and complaints

We take pride in the way our children work together irrespective of differences of religion, ability and social background. However on rare occasions we accept that incidents of racism, sexism and bullying may occur. We aim to tackle these issues by dealing with them seriously, ensuring that all involved realise that the behaviour displayed has been unacceptable in our school. We aim to:

- Maintain an overall school ethos of respect and tolerance of one another.
- Insist upon high expectation in relation to pupils' conduct to one another.
- Provide a range of opportunities for children to work together.
- Set a good example ourselves with positive role-models.
- Record and address all incidents that are reported – incidents of racism and bullying being recorded separately along with any actions taken.
- Provide any trends in incidents to the governing body.
- Take advice from the Local Authority where trends are identified or additional support is required.
- Apply our behaviour policy and appropriate sanctions when it is deemed necessary.
- Work in conjunction with parents to ensure issues are resolved.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that there is an Equal Opportunities policy in place and review its content and efficacy at regular intervals.
- Assess the impact of the policy through the standards attained by different groups within the school. (Curriculum, teaching and learning team)
- Make reasonable adjustments if the premises or employment arrangements limit access to particular community groups or individuals on the basis of disability, ethnicity or gender.
- Receive feedback as part of the Headteacher's report and challenge practice as required.
- Give due regard to its own members and the recruitment of new governors.

The School's Senior Leadership Team will:

- Ensure that any issues related to Equal Opportunities are placed on the School Development Plan.
- Ensure that the Equal Opportunities policy is kept up-to-date.
- Report to Governors on a regular basis.
- Record and deal with incidents of racism, bullying and other cases of inappropriate behaviour.
- Co-ordinate the curriculum in conjunction with subject leaders to ensure equality of opportunity is represented in the core and foundation subjects.
- Provide resources to support the principles of Equal Opportunities.
- Apply Equal Opportunities legislation and guidance in the school's appointment process and general procedures.
- Monitor performance by groups of children through analysis and discussion with other staff.
- Ensure the application of the school's admission policy.
- Continue to monitor and formulate accessibility plans in conjunction with the governing body.

All staff will:

Ensure the implementation of this policy within the classroom and in their own dealings with staff, children and the school community.

- Contribute to discussions about Equal Opportunity issues.
- Refer incidents and concerns to the Senior Leadership Team.
- Set an example to children in terms of their treatment of one another and display of tolerance and understanding towards the beliefs and cultures of others.
- Ensure that policies and procedures are implemented according to the Equal Opportunities policy.
- Be vigilant for incidents of racism, sexism and prejudice and act upon them.
- Encourage children to try new activities challenging stereotypical roles and prejudice.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Key indicators regarding the efficacy of this policy include:

- The achievement of all pupils including those from more vulnerable groups.
- The number of racist incidents recorded.
- The number of referrals of bullying.
- The behaviour and attitude of children to a range of adults around the school building.
- The readiness of children to mix with one another in the school playground and take part in team games.
- The readiness of children to work in groups with one another in class.
- Comments made through Parent and Pupil Questionnaires.

The policy will be monitored and evaluated through school recording systems, SLT meetings and governors meetings. Staff should constantly monitor and evaluate their own practice with regard to Equal Opportunities.

Stow Heath welcomes our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.

This policy has been formulated in line with the nine principles outlined in the Equality Policy.