

HALESBURY SPECIAL SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Aim and Values

Equality of opportunity at Halesbury is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

It is based on the core values of the school, The Aims of the School.

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

The School's Commitment to Race Equality

These are embodied in the Aims of the School, and pupils are expected to leave Halesbury:

- Respecting and valuing differences between people
- Prepared for life in a diverse society

Leadership, Management and Governance

- The governing body maintains an overview of implementation of the policy and race equality is a regular item at governors' meetings.
- All school policies reflect a commitment to Equal Opportunities, including race equality.
- The governing body and school management set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality.
- The school promotes a proactive approach to valuing and respecting diversity.
- All staff contribute to the formulation, development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and, where appropriate, takes steps to enable a contribution of parents.
- Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content.
- Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for minority ethnic and Traveller pupils) are appropriately targeted and monitored.

Policy, Planning and Review

Policy evaluation and auditing tools, such as *Learning for All*, will be used to identify specific targets for action.

Monitoring data (including ethnicity) will be used to monitor the attainment and progress of pupils, and targets set to remove any identified gaps.

Monitoring data (including ethnicity) on admissions, attendance, exclusions, sanctions and rewards will be used to inform planning and decision-making.

All policies, functions and strategies will be regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in: a) eliminating racial discrimination, b) promoting racial equality and c) promoting good race relations.

Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and the Local Authority. Members of the school community will also be kept informed, ensuring that no individual can be identified.

Admissions and Attendance

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet, etc., is included in all admissions' forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance, and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

There are strategies to reintegrate long-term truants and excluded pupils, which address the needs of all pupils.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance, which also includes staff.

Attainment, Progress and Assessment

Staff have high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to reach higher standards.

The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

The monitoring and analysing of pupil performance by gender, ethnicity and background enables the identification of groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

All pupils achieve the highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures, where possible, that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias.

Self assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do and, therefore, to benefit from assessment.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress.

School Ethos: Equal Opportunities

The school opposes all forms of racism, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

All staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently, and are in line with relevant Local Authority policies and guidance, such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.

All staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.

Exclusions and attendance are monitored and action is taken in order to reduce gaps between different groups of pupils.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

Personal Development and Pastoral Care

The pastoral support system takes account of religious and ethnic differences, and the experiences and needs of refugee and asylum-seeker children.

The school provides appropriate support for EAL pupils and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

The school takes account of and meets the needs of Traveller pupils.

All pupils are provided with appropriate career advice and guidance.

Work experience providers are asked to demonstrate their commitment to Equal Opportunities. Placements are monitored.

Support is given to victims and perpetrators of harassment and unacceptable behaviour. External agencies are used, where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

All pupils have access to the curriculum.

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued.

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles, with the teacher taking positive steps to include all groups or individuals

Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review.

Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils.

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls
- pupils learning English as an additional language
- pupils from minority ethnic groups
- pupils who are gifted and talented
- pupils with specific educational needs
- pupils who are looked after by the local authority
- pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra-curricular activities and special events, e.g. school productions, cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

Staffing: Recruitment and Professional Development

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and Local Authority guidelines.

Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme.

The skills of all staff, including support staff and part-time staff, are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Staff handbooks and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

Ethnic Monitoring of Employees

Routinely monitoring job applications and staff by grade and by ethnic groups, and providing the data to the Local Authority.

Partnership with Parents and the Community

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

Information and meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to address specific incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference.

The school takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under-represented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information material for parents is easily accessible in user-friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English, upon request. Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups. The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

Monitoring and Review

All members of staff and the governing body have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated by the member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities, who is the Head Teacher.

Member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities:

Responsibilities for Equal Opportunities Policy

Governing Body

Ensuring that the school complies with Race Relations legislation.

Ensuring that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

Head Teacher

Implementing the policy and its related procedures and strategies.

Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support.

Taking appropriate action in any cases of racial discrimination.

All Staff

Dealing with racist incidents, and knowing how to identify and challenge racial bias and stereotyping.

Promoting racial equality and good race relations, and not discriminating on racial grounds.

Keeping up-to-date with race relations legislation by attending training and information opportunities.

Making visitors and contractors aware of, and ensure they comply with, the school's Race Equality Policy.

People with Specific Responsibilities

The Head Teacher is responsible for co-ordinating racial equality work.

The Head Teacher is responsible for dealing with reported incidents of racism or racial harassment.

Breaches of the Policy

Pupils who demonstrate negative discriminatory behaviours will be responded to on an individual basis according to the severity of the incident and the pupils' personal circumstances. As a minimum response the incident will be recorded on the pupil's file and the parents contacted to discuss the issue.

Any staff not following the guidelines will be dealt with under normal disciplinary procedures.

This policy document has been produced in the light of current national guidance and legislation. This includes:

Sex Discrimination Act 1975
Race Relations Amendment Act 2001
Disability Discrimination Act 2001
Human Rights Act 2000
Evaluating Educational Inclusion - OFSTED 2000
Codes of Practice from Equality Commissions - Commission for Race Equality, Disability Rights Commission, Equal Opportunities Commission

This Policy was accepted by the Governing Body at the meeting held in the Autumn Term, 2002