



**Palmerston School**

Beaconsfield Road

Woolton

Liverpool

L25 6EE

# Equal Opportunities

(Nov '13 - In conjunction with Equality Scheme 2013)

<b>Review Cycle</b>	<b>Annual / 2 years / 3 years / Fixed / Set by LA</b>	
<b>Owned By</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>	
<b>Document History / Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Date</b>

## **Introduction.**

Palmerston is committed to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice.

We recognise our duties under the Equalities Act 2010 in relation to the school community, to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, sexual orientation and marital status(protected characteristics ).

It is fundamental to the ethos of Palmerston School that each member is regarded of equal worth and importance, irrespective of any protected characteristic.

Each aspect of Palmerston school has an equal opportunities dimension. This may be expressed explicitly in teaching materials and display, implicitly in classroom practice or as part of the 'hidden curriculum' of social interaction amongst and between staff and pupils.

Palmerston's environment influences the developing attitudes of the children within it and can be a powerful vehicle for the promotion of understanding and practice or equal opportunities.

## **Aims of the Policy.**

- To ensure that all pupils, staff and stakeholders in the school recognise that discrimination (either covert or overt) on the basis of; race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion/belief, age or background is not acceptable.
- To provide an environment in which all children and staff feel safe enough to express and question views, challenging personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur
- To ensure that all staff feel valued, supported and have appropriate advice and encouragement for professional development
- Ensure the principles and practice of equal opportunities applies to all members of the school community.
- To promote a positive self-image and mutual respect amongst all members of the school, celebrating differences.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.
- Ensure that equal opportunities are evident in;
  - The formal curriculum
  - The informal curriculum (extra-curricular activities)
  - The 'hidden' curriculum (the ethos of the school, quality of personal relationships etc.)
- Remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning
- Encourage all stake holders to contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for and appreciation of one another as individuals.
- Ensure that pupils are seen as individuals and each child's education and care is developed in direct relation to their needs and abilities. (This is based on sound knowledge and awareness of an appropriate range of teaching and learning styles, teaching interventions, behavioural methods, medical and diagnostic issues. )
- To underpin the actions indicated in the Equality Scheme.

**a. Admission**

Palmerston follows the LEA and Governing Body Admissions Policies that do not permit gender, race or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

**b. Registration**

Pupil and staff names to be recorded and correctly pronounced. Children will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

**c. Discrimination**

All forms of discrimination by any member of the school community (i.e. pupils, parents, staff and governors) will be treated seriously, as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria. Palmerston notes that treating all people equally is not simply treating everyone the same. Parents should be aware of the school's commitment to Equal opportunities.

**d. Language**

The school views linguistic diversity positively. Children and staff must feel that their natural language is valued, for example in displays and signs. Arrangements are in place for interpreters to attend Annual Reviews and letters to be translated where necessary.

**e. Race Culture and Class.**

Palmerston acknowledges that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socio economic backgrounds. Palmerston notes that we all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help promote a school and society in which harmony prevails.

Palmerston recognises the inequalities of opportunities which exist within society for individuals and groups and are determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise her/his self-esteem, expectations and performances to increase choices in life.

We are happy for pupils and staff to wear forms of dress which are an essential part of their religious and cultural background.

We try to counter stereotyped views: a prime cause of prejudice is ignorance and misunderstanding, often reinforced by media images.

We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form.

**f. Gender**

We recognise that there are gender inequalities in our society, which impose limits, particularly on girl's expectations and behaviour so we examine and audit our curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality. Similarly we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.

We encourage pupils to be aware of the rigid gender stereotypes presented by the media and other influences.

We try to ensure that

- 1) We break down traditional gender stereotypes
- 2) Pupils are encouraged to pursue subjects of their personal choice, uninfluenced by gender stereotypes
- 3) We do not differentiate between sexes in respect of school uniform.
- 4) We remove gender bias from resources
- 5) We promote positive role models

**g. Religion**

We recognise that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds, some have no religious faith and others are committed to various degrees to a variety of religions. Palmerston notes that requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

**h. Age**

We value the diversity in age of staff, parents, carers and all stakeholders in the school. (Also see i. Resources)

**i. Resources**

Palmerstone's aim is to provide for all the children according to their needs, irrespective of all protected characteristics in order to support positive self-image.

It is necessary to source some resources specifically to ensure a balance of books and resources that celebrate the achievements of people of all characteristics and backgrounds. Displays will also reflect this diversity. Materials and displays will be monitored annually.

Resources for pupils will be age appropriate, in that they will reflect the interest of the child and the topic of the learning.

**j. Sexual Orientation**

We respect all individuals right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference. Palmerston recognises the diverse forms that families take and are sensitive to this in communication with families and use a range of resources to represent all forms of family and relationships to pupils.

Incidents of homophobia are not acceptable and are responded to directly and recorded.

**k. Relationships**

Relationships between staff, pupils and other stakeholders of the school should be such that any member of the school acting in a manner contrary to the spirit of this policy is made aware of the unacceptable nature of her/his behaviour. This should be done in a supportive manner. When it is uncomfortable or inappropriate to address the issue between staff then management must be made aware of the incident and address it through supervision. In extreme circumstances formal procedures may be taken by the Head teacher.

**l. Pregnancy and Maternity.**

We believe all our staff, parents and carers should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth. See **Pregnancy and Maternity Policy**.

#### **m. Disability**

All pupils attending Palmerston have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. (Further details in Equality Scheme) We are committed to the needs of all children and all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged in comparison to non-disabled people. This includes providing an environment that allows all pupils full access to school premises and teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for all pupils. All reasonable adjustments are made for staff with disabilities.

#### **n. Monitoring appointments, promotions and dismissals**

All staff appointments, promotions and dismissals will be reviewed on a regular basis to identify and eliminate processes, practices or eligibility criteria which may discriminate (directly or indirectly) against any particular group or category of workers.

Job applicants will be asked for anonymous monitoring data on a sheet which can be detached from the application form. Monitoring data will only be used for equality monitoring and not for short-listing.

All information collected will remain strictly confidential. Personnel records will be kept in a format which enables analysis to be made of the numbers of job applicants, appointments and employees in various categories, including age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

These analyses will be provided on an annual basis to the Senior Leadership Team for identification of trends and any remedial action.

By monitoring the various areas above, the School can establish whether current recruitment, promotion, training and general employment practices are reaching and protecting the full range of possible candidates and helping to guard workers against any potential discrimination.

#### **o. The Role of Class Teacher and LSOs LSAs**

It is the class teacher role to;

- i) Recognise the possibility of their own prejudices but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against anyone.
- ii) Provide resources that promote positive images, reflect a mixed society and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups or of males and females.
- iii) Implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in choices of topics of study and how we approach sensitive issues.
- iv) Challenge any incidences of prejudice, record them and draw them to the attention of the Head teacher.
- v) Undertake training in equalities and inform classroom practice.

#### **p. The Role of the Head Teacher**

It is the Head teachers' role to;

- i) Ensure that the schools policy on Equal opportunities is implemented effectively
- ii) Ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities and that it is applied fairly in all situations.
- iii) Ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy

- iv) Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils and in providing opportunities for professional development of staff.
- v) Promote respect for all people in all aspects of school life e.g. school assemblies, displays around school
- vi) Manage all incidents of unfair treatment and/or racist incidents - with due seriousness and in line with both school and Local Authority Policy
- vii) Update information in Equality Scheme

**q. The Role of the Governors.**

It is the Governors role to;

- i) ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.
- ii) evaluate a range of school data. We check that pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving.
- iii) seek to ensure that people from the protected groups as defined in the Equalities Act 2010 are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at Palmerston School. The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or minority group a child or potential staff member may come from.
- iv) take all reasonable steps to ensure the school environment properly accommodates all people with any disabilities.
- v) Require that the head teacher report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy
- vi) Take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers staff of pupils regarding equal opportunity.

**r. Monitoring and Review.**

Equality Scheme is updated annually.

Palmerston monitors the impact/effectiveness of the policies and procedures through the schools self-evaluation procedures. The Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator will also update the relevant governors committee on a 3 yearly basis, except in the case of policy change.

The policy is also subject to **review** by the school council and staff.

The policy must be available to any who request it and is available both at school, on the school website and during staff induction.