

St Andrew's CE Aided Primary School, Hove
'Learning together, praying together'

POLICY FOR EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

'Recognizing its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at Parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.'

(Ethos statement adopted by the Governing Body)

1. Introduction

At St Andrew's CE Aided Primary School our Christian ethos supports the aim that every member of the school community feels included and valued whatever gender, disability, race, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, family, marital status, having dependents, age, sexual orientation, social class, trade union activity, political belief, or HIV/AIDS status. We believe all pupils in the school are entitled to learning experiences that will enable them to achieve their potential and enrich their lives. The school is committed to providing a high quality-learning environment and has high expectations of all staff and pupils. We value diversity in the school and treat every member of our school community as an individual. We support the development of self-respect and self-esteem in all pupils, staff and the wider community we serve.

We recognize discrimination can take many forms e.g. written, verbal, emotional or physical abuse or any form of bullying or racial or sexual harassment.

At St Andrew's we fully endorse Brighton and Hove City Council's Equality of Opportunity Policy, and the Children, Families and Schools Department's Equality of Opportunity Statement (Copies are in the Brighton and Hove Schools' Personnel Handbook.). In order to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in all aspects of the life of the school we have developed and agreed a school policy.

This equal opportunities policy applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents, carers and visitors and the statement shall be all pervasive throughout the school and will inform our approach to the development of all other policy statements.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- equality of opportunity permeates the whole school life and is regularly reviewed.
- the principles expressed in this policy are reflected in all other school policies and are underpinned by the ethos of the school.
- all pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum.
- the governing body as employer does not practise unlawful direct or indirect discrimination.
- we promote a culture where stereotyping is unacceptable and teaching materials do not reinforce stereotypes.

3. To actively promote equal opportunity throughout the school we will:

- celebrate diversity, acknowledging that children and adults may be different, but all have similar needs
- encourage all children to fulfil their potential whatever their status and ability
- ensure that the whole school community understands that all forms of discrimination are unacceptable in this school
- strive to remove all prejudice, preconceptions and stereotypes and covert discrimination
- provide appropriate quality of care and attention to all
- prepare children for life in a multi cultural and multi faith society
- enable children to learn more about themselves and others from a wide selection of cultures and so learn tolerance and acceptance
- meet the needs of children who are learning English as an additional language
- acknowledge and respect different religious beliefs represented in the school
- nurture and develop children's self esteem.

4. Working within the Law and Policy Guidelines

We will work within the law and recognized good practice and within the policy and guidelines of the DfES and LEA.

5. Promotion for Equality of Opportunity

5.1 Children and their relationships with others

We believe that the children in the school should be taught to respect all members of the school community irrespective of any member of the community's gender, disability, race, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, family, marital status, having dependents, age, sexual orientation, social class, trade union activity, political belief, or HIV/AIDS status.

In order to realise this aim our teaching will:

- be based on valuing ourselves and each other and respecting ourselves and each other
- develop self-esteem
- emphasize self-discipline
- actively develop communication skills
- develop a knowledge of rules and boundaries in the school and in the wider community
- provide appropriate models of adult behaviour
- challenge stereotypes.

We believe that while stressing the positive and pro-active nature of our commitment to teaching children to respect all members of the school community, it may, at times, be necessary to take disciplinary action against a child if she/he fails to demonstrate appropriate respect for a member of the school community. If such action is necessary then the action taken will follow the procedures stated in the school Behaviour Policy.

5.2 Professional relationship between staff

We believe that good professional relationships between the whole staff team are based upon mutual respect.

We believe the principle of equal opportunity stated in this policy should inform all matters relating to the staff including:

- recruitment practice
- salary review

- entitlement and access to professional and personal development (with consideration of the school's current improvement plan priorities and financial situation)
- management of staff including Threshold Assessment and Performance Management
- our conduct in all meetings
- our daily professional contact with each other
- our conduct towards, pupils, parents, outside agencies, and any other members of the community who come into contact with the school.

If a member of staff feels that another member of staff has broken the principle of equal opportunity, as stated above, then she/he should inform the headteacher immediately. The headteacher will take prompt action to remedy the concern that has arisen

If a member of staff is the victim of harassment then he/she should inform the headteacher, the chair of governors or the Staff Welfare Service (01273) 481738. In cases of harassment the headteacher or chair of governors will follow the policy and guidance stated in the Brighton and Hove Schools' personnel Handbook. Racial Harassment will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Racial Equality Policy.

Any action taken by the headteacher, in the implementation of this policy, will not prejudice any staff member's right to access any statutory grievance procedure forming part of that staff member's conditions of service.

If the headteacher's action involves implementation of disciplinary procedures then the headteacher will follow the statutory disciplinary procedure forming part of the conditions of service of staff.

The staff and governors respect the staff's right to trade union representation in matters concerning harassment, grievance or disciplinary procedure.

5.3 Curriculum

We recognise that the curriculum is a key factor in the development of children's knowledge and attitudes. We plan each area of the curriculum to incorporate the principles of equality, there by ensuring that all children have equal access to the curriculum offered by the school.

The teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that the content of subjects taught is relevant and interesting for all children. We aim to provide a curriculum that provides opportunities for children to explore different values and lifestyles, encouraging empathy and understanding. Where possible all subjects taught are presented from perspectives that include examples from other cultures and contexts.

We encourage pupils to question, investigate, explore different approaches to life, to value working together and develop respect for other people and different opinions.

In our curriculum planning we take into account the different needs of pupils and aim to meet them by carefully differentiated tasks and activities. These will include the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our pupils and any disabilities or impairments that may affect the curriculum planning and selection of resources.

5.4 Resources.

Our learning environment in school plays an important role in conveying messages. Teachers aim to ensure that displays reflect among other things the multi-cultural and multi-lingual nature of society.

Our resources are selected and reviewed to ensure they reflect the ethos and aims of the school. Through our resources we aim to recognize linguistic and cultural diversity.

We strive to have reference materials that are factually up to date, accurate and portray a balanced perspective and are accessible to all children regardless of ability.

5.5 Admissions

The Admissions policy will be applied consistently and fairly.

5.6 Parental, community and church involvement

Links with parents and carers are maintained in a variety of ways both formally and informally. They are encouraged to participate in the education of their children both at home and in school. We organise events to keep parents and carers involved and informed of current educational practice. Consultation with parents and carers takes place at least twice a year to discuss children's progress. Parents and carers are always welcomed in school to attend or take part in assemblies, classroom activities or other events and to discuss any aspect of school life with members of staff.

St Andrew's Church, other local churches and organisations and communities play a significant role in the life of the school, offering links to the wider social context.

6. Responsibilities

All members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors, parents, carers and visitors have the responsibility of implementing this policy. Therefore all school procedures should reflect this.

It is the responsibility of the governing body and senior management team to raise awareness of the policy and to monitor and evaluate its implementation.

7. Dealing with Discrimination

All forms of discrimination by any person will be treated seriously. A record will be kept of such incidents. It will be made clear to all offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable regardless of whether these are governors, staff, parents, pupils or visitors.

The headteacher is to be informed of any persistent or pernicious forms of discrimination.

The LEA has a system for the reporting on a termly basis of any incidents of racial harassment, which is reflected in the school's Race Equality Policy.

8. Monitoring and Review

The governing body and senior management team will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy annually.

Agreed by the Governing Body: 4 July 2002

Review Date: July 2004