

# **HIGHNAM C. OF E. PRIMARY ACADEMY**



## **Policy for Equality of Opportunity**

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## **POLICY FOR EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

### **1. General Introduction**

This policy statement outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of Highnam Academy to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Teaching staff
- Non-teaching staff
- Parents
- Governors
- Visitors to the school
- Students on placement.

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life, and is the responsibility of every member of the school community.

This policy statement reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of discussion within a working party made up of representatives of teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, governors and pupil representatives.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community.

### **Promoting equality within school:**

Highnam Primary Academy recognises that all individuals have fundamental human rights and therefore adopts a rights-based approach to equality. We shall develop practices that promote the right for everyone to participate in all aspects of life within school by promoting initiatives that remove barriers to participation and by actively promoting equality and social inclusion. We recognise that prejudice and inequality of opportunity exist within life and we commit ourselves to challenging and redressing these injustices by applying the following principles within school.

Aspects of this policy are also reflected in the following policies of Highnam Academy:

- Admissions
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Health and Safety
- RE

**Aims:**

- To act positively and have due regard to the need to challenge and eliminate unlawful discrimination within school and the community
- To provide a positive and caring environment within the whole school, reflecting the ethos and the overall aims based on Christian values
- To promote equality of opportunity in the admission of children to the school
- To admit children regardless of gender, race, religion, social group, disability or special needs while ensuring a high standard of educational support for all children on the school roll
- To promote values and attitudes that relate to equal opportunities

**Principles:**

We recognise the need to encourage children to develop:

**Respect for self:**

- A positive self-image
- A confident sense of their own identity
- A willingness to express their own thoughts, feelings and ideas
- Recognition of their own achievements
- Knowledge of the achievements of their own gender/culture/social group

**Respect for others:**

- A respect for the equal rights of others
- A sympathetic understanding of others ideas, feelings and points of view
- An appreciation of the achievements of other individuals regardless of social or ethnic group
- A recognition of the damaging effects on rejected individuals and groups of prejudice and discrimination
- An understanding of the dangers of stereotyping individuals and groups

**Practice:****A) Curriculum and Learning**

The school ensures that each child has equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Children with special needs are occasionally withdrawn from class at appropriate times and careful attention is paid to the balance between individually-supported work and integrated work with the remainder of the class.

We strive to ensure that there is no gender bias in the school day.

For core curriculum subjects pupils are often seated according to ability; mixed gender groupings in the classroom are the normal practice and opportunities for collaboration between girls and boys are encouraged.

There is no gender discrimination in the allocation of equipment and tools for technology and other practical sessions. Boys and girls alike participate in sewing, cookery and PE lessons.

Play times are organised to ensure that, for example boys are not allowed to monopolise areas of the playground for exclusive games of football. Comments based on sex-stereotyping (e.g. "Boys are brave and don't cry" or "Nice girls don't play rough games") are discouraged.

Pupils of both sexes participate equally in all sporting activities, including football, netball, rounders, touch rugby and quick cricket. All extra-curricular clubs and activities are open to both sexes, and where both boys and girls have elected to participate in such clubs, mixed gender teams may and have represented the school.

Whilst there are a few people in the local community from minority ethnic, cultural or religious groups, we are sensitive to the different needs of pupils from such a background, for example in opting out of our Anglican acts of worship. Our RE Policy reflects our desire to teach a positive understanding of other religions and more generally we are proactive in promoting the multi-cultural dimensions of education through stories, other texts, music, art and other activities and resources.

We promote positive attitudes towards disability and pupils are encouraged to be understanding of and supportive towards those with such difficulties. We are keen to work closely and flexibly with other professionals when the need arises such as Speech Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, to help disabled pupils overcome or minimise the problems caused by their incapacity.

## **B) Behaviour**

When incidents take place that, whilst not necessarily being sexist, racist or otherwise based on overt discrimination, include an element of bullying, name-calling, insult or rejection, these are dealt with appropriately by staff under the provisions of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy. In all such cases, it is made clear that it is the behaviour rather than the child that is unacceptable.

## **C) Staff, governors, parents and other visitors**

The School's personnel practices, including recruitment, retention and remuneration are carried out in accordance with the LA's Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy.

We operate an open school policy and all governors, parents and other members of the community are encouraged to become involved in school activities. The school building has

been modernised to allow wheel chair access to disabled people, and toilet facilities suitable for a wheel chair have also been installed, and through our Health and Safety Policy we endeavour to minimise hazards for the less able bodied by keeping routes through the building clear of obstructions.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Definitions:**

**Institutional racism:** The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic groups.

**A racist incident:** Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

**Victimisation:** is where a person is treated less favourably than another because she/he has brought proceedings, given evidence, or raised a complaint by the Disability Discrimination, Race Relations or Sex Discrimination Acts.

**Harassment:** is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

**Direct discrimination:** consists of treating a person less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race (etc), than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.

**Indirect discrimination:** consists of applying a provision, criterion or practice, which although applied equally to both sexes or all racial groups (etc) has the effect of excluding, penalising or treating less favourably a particular group, causing a detriment to those unable to comply and which cannot be justified.

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Next Review: September 2021