

Policy for Equal Opportunities



Culverstone Green is committed to the general principle of equal opportunities for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, language, disability or social background, and to the support of initiatives designed to further this principle.

Purpose

At Culverstone Green, the staff and governors aim to ensure that every pupil and staff member is given an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential. In addition, each individual is entitled to learn, teach or work in a supportive environment and to benefit from the diversity of our school community.

In order to meet these aims, we are committed to:

- Equal access to education for everyone
- Being responsive to needs
- Educating and informing children, staff and parents about equal opportunities
- Avoiding prejudice
- Promoting mutual respect
- Working to an agreed code of conduct

Objectives

We aim to:

- promote a positive self-image in all children and respect their individuality, providing for all pupils according to their individual needs
- ensure that equality of opportunity is embedded within the whole school curriculum and the ethos of the school
- deliver a curriculum that contains positive, non-stereotypical images in order to overcome preconceived ideas of gender, ethnic origin, culture or religion
- acknowledge the diversity of British society to help prepare children for their part in that society
- develop a positive attitude to equal opportunities by all staff, parents, helpers, governors and children and all who participate in the life of our school

The Law

Unlawful discrimination occurs when one person receives less favourable treatment because of their race, religion, gender, language, disability or family background. The law is extensive and complex in these areas. Accordingly, the schools equal opportunities coordinator will provide general guidance on matters which require clarification whilst ensuring professional guidance is sought when specific reference is needed to the:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Equal Pay Amendment 1984
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Relevant EU legislation, plus any subsequent government legislation.

The Equality Act 2006 places duties on all public authorities to have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief

- Promote quality of opportunity between women and men

What does the duty mean for gender equality?

The Equality Act 2006 introduced a 'Gender Duty' and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex and promotes equality of opportunity between men and women (boys and girls). This will lead to a more inclusive society targeted to meet the specific needs of men and women.

Specific Duty

Schools and other public bodies have specific duties under the Equality Act 2006. The duty refers to producing a Gender Equality Scheme, which will consist of a written report and an action plan, showing over what period of time the school will implement changes that promote and enable equality

To comply with the legislation, schools will be required to conduct a gender impact assessment and publish findings. A gender impact assessment refers to a review of all current policies and practices in order to formally consider the impact of these for both sexes.

In producing and publishing the Gender Equality Scheme, schools must:

1. Show how the scheme will meet its general and specific duties and set out its gender equality objectives.
2. Involve people, with an interest in school activities, in producing and developing the scheme and setting gender equality objectives.
3. Identify how they will gather and use information to inform actions and track progress related to gender equality in pupil attainment.
4. Consider how they will assess the impact of existing and new policies, practices and procedures on gender equality.

Staff

Our school values diversity amongst the staff. In all appointments the most suitable candidate will be appointed on professional criteria and recruitment carried out in a manner consistent with equal opportunities practice. Care will be taken when placing job advertisements that no discrete group is excluded.

Identification

Staff at Culverstone Green will observe children at play and in classrooms for unacceptable behaviour. Suitable counselling will be given at the time, but repeated abuse will be recorded for discussion with the Head teacher, parents and governing body. Staff will also be encouraged to adopt the same approach with their colleagues and parents, with a view of setting an example for the children to follow.

This document will be circulated for staff and governors and training made available to those who request it, where possible. An 'open door' policy will continue to operate at Culverstone Green in order to ensure that parents may discuss their concerns with the Head Teacher and staff. Equally, early advice should be given of any factors that may affect a child's performance and/or behaviour at school. Consultations may be sought with professional bodies and parents in appropriate circumstances.

Positive Action

Not to be confused with positive discrimination, positive action will be fostered in line with best current practice:

- Staff will continue to use examples in their teaching to demonstrate the benefits of a mixed society and the contributions made to our society by individuals of all genders, races, age groups etc.
- Performance appraisals of teaching staff will include steps taken to promote positive action for equal opportunities
- Teamwork is encouraged in all aspects of school life to show the advantages of pooling experience, knowledge and different points of view
- Job vacancies will be widely advertised to promote a variety of candidates

Daily Procedures

- Children, parents and staff will be given equal treatment, equal opportunity to voice their opinion and equal access to resources
- Teaching material is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure compliance with this policy
- Positive action will continue to be rewarded and made known to the wider school community
- Assembly times will reinforce good behaviour in the area of equal opportunities
- Staff meetings will include equal opportunities issues and its inclusion in curriculum activity
- The school council will allow children to have an active input on matters concerning day to day issues.

Involving Parents

As with all school policies, there is a critical role to be played by parents, including the reinforcement of good behaviour in our community. Parents will continue to be informed of their child's behaviour, good and bad, including any aspects of attitudes towards others which gives rise to concern. All forms of discrimination by any child within the school is treated seriously and records are kept of any such incidents. It is always stressed that such behaviour is unacceptable. Incidents are reported to the Head teacher and a decision will be made as to involvement of the parents of the children concerned. In the event that formal disciplinary proceedings are contemplated, the governing body will be consulted and a plan of action agreed. Continued unacceptable behaviour could result in exclusion procedures.

This policy will be revisited on a regular basis in order to keep abreast of current legislative requirements.