

Coalway Community Infant School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

This Equal Opportunities Policy outlines the commitment of the Coalway Schools to ensuring that equality of opportunity extends to all members of the school community, including pupils, staff, parents/carers, governors and visitors to school.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community as it permeates all aspects of school life. Our policy outlines 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.

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, taking positive steps to prevent any form of discrimination, either direct or indirect, against those with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

The Coalway schools value the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve, by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations of all children - the achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children are important to us.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to act positively and have due regard to the need to challenge and eliminate unlawful discrimination within school and the community.

We aim not to discriminate against anyone, be they staff, pupil or parent, on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/belief, age, attainment or background.

We aim to promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.

We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups of pupils.

We aim to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.

We aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

We value each pupil's worth, celebrating the individuality and cultural diversity of our school community, and showing respect for all minority groups.

We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are often caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.

We aim to provide a positive and caring environment within the school, promoting an 'openness' of atmosphere, which welcomes everyone to the school.

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 etc.

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 and understanding of the effects of prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping of individuals and groups

Racial Equality

In our school we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi-cultural society and prepare them for life in modern Britain

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures (see policies for Racial Equality and for Behaviour).

We endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the themes studied by the children and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school.

Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups.

Disability Non-discrimination

Some children in our school may have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged compared with non-disabled children.

We promote positive attitudes towards disability and pupils are encouraged to be understanding of and supportive towards those with disabilities.

The school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children and adults full access to the school premises and to all areas of learning.

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time or alternative/adapted equipment to complete certain activities, ensure access or modify teaching materials. N.B.

Further information regarding provision for pupils with Disabilities can be found in the School's Local Offer on the school website.

Gender Equality

We recognise that nationally, there is a discrepancy in the achievement of boys and girls. We are committed to ensuring that all individuals and groups of pupils make the best possible progress in our school, regardless of their gender.

We have put in place a number of measures to raise the achievement of both genders, including:

- ensuring that the starting points for writing activities capture the interests and imagination of boys and girls alike;
- removing gender bias from our resources and ensuring, for example, that fiction books capture both genders' interest;
- employing a variety of activities and include a kinaesthetic element;
- making sure that our school environment promotes positive male and female role models, in relation to learning and achievement;
- minimising stereotyping;
- providing challenge, competition and short-term goals;
- valuing and celebrating academic achievement in ways which will motivate all children;
 - using praise and celebration of achievements in those areas where traditionally one gender may achieve less well than the other.

If our analysis of pupils' attainment data indicates areas where one gender achieves less well than the other, we will take measures to address this discrepancy.

The Role of the Class Teacher

Class teachers ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

Mixed groupings in the classroom are normal practice and opportunities for collaboration between pupils of all 'protected' groups are encouraged.

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups, or of boys and girls. All staff ensure that the language they use does not reinforce stereotypes or prejudice.

We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of themes to study and in how we approach sensitive issues. So, for example, curricular themes include examples of the significant contributions made by a diverse range of people. Or alternatively in geography, the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents in the school log book and draw them to the immediate attention of the Head Teacher.

The Role of the Head Teacher

It is the Head Teacher's role to:

- ensure that the school's policy on Equal Opportunities is implemented effectively;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations;
- ensure that all appointments' panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against;
- promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum for pupils, and in providing opportunities for professional development for staff;
- promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in school assemblies, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school;
- manage all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness and in line with this policy.

The Role of Governors

In this policy statement, the Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated both fairly and equally.

The Governing Body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people from the 'protected groups' as defined by The Equality Act 2010 (see Introductory section above) are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The Governors welcome all pupil applications to join the school, whatever background or minority group a child may come from.

The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities – for further information please refer to the school's Accessibility policy.

The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their gender, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion has a bearing on school uniform then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The Governors will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority/protected groups, comparing it with the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process so that no one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents/carers, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's Behaviour Policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority/protected groups are not unfairly treated.

Review

This policy was written in conjunction with Coalway Junior School. It will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier as necessary or dictated by changes to legislation.

Date of policy: October 2017

Review Date: October 2019

N.B. Reference should also be made to the school's Disability, Gifted and Talented Children, Racial Equality, Special Educational Needs (SEN) policies and the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Offer.