



## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### **School Aims**

*"Building a life-long love of learning in a safe and happy school"*

### **Specific aims of this policy**

The school is committed to:

- Promoting understanding of the principles of equality and justice.
- According high priority to the promotion of equal opportunities as a central concern of the school.
- Appreciating the value of difference.

We define our commitment thus:

1. It is unacceptable in this school that anyone should receive less favourable or unfair treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, income, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The Equality Act 2010 has defined these as 'protected characteristics' and this protection also extends to those discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic.
2. Ensuring equality of opportunity is a shared responsibility, and every child and member of staff must be aware of the importance of, and expected to contribute personally towards cultivating a happy and caring environment we respect and appreciate each other as individuals.
3. The primary objective of this school will be to educate, develop and prepare all pupils for life.
4. This equal opportunities policy will be practised by all staff.
5. The school acknowledges the increasing complexity of our society and wishes to prepare pupils to be active and positive citizens.
6. The school will emphasise common elements and values of our school culture and the multiple cultures represented within it rather than dwelling upon areas of conflict.

## **Philosophy**

All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. Our school must ensure that it provides genuine equality of access, opportunity and treatment for all. Such equality is not merely a matter of offering opportunities; rather it is a matter of taking positive action to ensure that opportunities are taken up and used.

The assumptions and beliefs which influence attitudes, curriculum content and organisational practice, will affect the children and adults in the school, governors, parents and the LA.

We must all be active in pursuing and recognising entitlement for all.

Children soon become aware of the ways in which people may be grouped for example in terms of class, gender, race, age and ability. They should learn to question, and be encouraged to question, the stereotypes produced by social groupings.

Children need to explore the ways in which cultural diversity can be celebrated and inequality and prejudice overcome.

## **Pupils**

All pupils have:

- Equality of access to the whole curriculum.
- Equality of opportunity that permeates the whole curriculum.
- Access to teaching materials that do not reinforce stereotypes.
- Knowledge that harassment in the form of remarks, jokes, gestures, abuse and physical attacks or any other form is not tolerated and should be reported to staff.

## **Parents**

- Parents are made aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities initially through discussion at our induction meetings for new parents and also through the school's prospectus.
- Effective home/school community links are developed.

## **Staff and Governors**

- The school values diversity among the staff.
- In all staff appointments, the best candidate is appointed based upon the job description and selection criteria.
- All staff, teaching and non-teaching, and governors should be aware of the possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

- Staff must be aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each pupil. The curriculum must be balanced, objective, sensitive and must not highlight sexual or cultural diversity in any negative way.

### **Language**

- The School has a positive view of linguistic diversity and staff should be aware of, and value the language and dialect spoken by pupils and their families. This valuing includes encouraging children who speak languages other than English to be confident and relaxed about using their home languages in school.
- Staff should be conscious of any prejudicial connotations in the language that they themselves use.
- Pupils and staff must feel valued in school.

### **Resources**

- In the furtherance of the school's aims to provide for all pupils according to their needs, the staff should ensure that the resources used in the curriculum areas contain positive images that support the school aims.
- Variety should be evident in the morals, stories and information offered to children.
- Pupils should have access to accurate information about similarities and differences between cultural groups.

### **Equal opportunities in the classroom**

Teaching staff:

- Ensure issues about equality of opportunity raised in the classroom are dealt with sensitively and appropriately.
- Take account of opportunity in planning and teaching.
- Manage and organise the classroom, resources, furniture and equipment (e.g. use of computer, science equipment, technology tools, books) so that there is equality of access for pupils.
- Are aware of the use of teacher time:
  - Pupils' demands on teacher time;
  - Equality of teacher time for each child;
  - Issues of balance between the needs of the individual and the needs of the group.
- Aim to meet every individual pupil's needs.
- Should be aware of the language and dialects of their pupils, regard bilingualism/multilingualism as an advantage.
- Enable pupils to feel confident to speak, hear and read their home language or dialect in school and seek appropriate translation and interpretation services as appropriate.

## **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR STAFF**

The school pursues a policy of equal opportunities in the workplace.

### **PROCEDURES**

Advertising will encourage application from suitable candidates.

The placing of advertisements for vacancies, including the wording to be used and where the post should be advertised, takes account of our desire to promote equality of opportunity.

### **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Each applicant is assessed for shortlisting according to his or her relevant qualifications, relevant experience, professional competence, and quality of letter of application.

The procedures for making appointments are as laid down in terms of reference of the Governing Board's Resources and Wellbeing Committee.

Application forms include Milton Keynes Council's Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. Applicants are asked to complete this and the information is then returned, in strict confidence, to Milton Keynes Council for statistical purposes only.

### **INTERVIEWS**

Interviewing panels will only ask questions relevant to the post and designed to fit the job descriptions and selection criteria.

At the beginning of each interviewing procedure the Chair of the interviewing panel will remind the panel that inappropriate questions must not be asked.

### **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

This policy and its implementation will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher. It will be reviewed by the Governing Board every three years or sooner where new legislation regarding Equal Opportunities arises.

**Review Agreed by Staff and the Governing Board: February 2020**