

HILDENBOROUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy

‘Be the best you can be, for yourself, for others and for God’

1. INTRODUCTION

This Equal Opportunities Policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for HCEPS.

DFES Guidelines have been taken into consideration in the formulation of this policy.

We believe our school curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of all our pupils and of society and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. (Ref Education Act 2002, Section 78)

Schools have a duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different groups. (Ref Race Relations Amendment Act 2000)

2. RATIONALE

Equality of opportunity is a fundamental aspect of the ethos of the school. HCEPS is committed to the general principle of equal opportunity for all pupils and members of staff irrespective of race, gender, language, disability or family background and to the active support of initiatives designed to further this principle. We aim to create an environment where every pupil and member of staff is given an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential and where contributions are equally valued. Our admission criteria apply to all prospective pupils fairly.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At HCEPS we aim:

- to promote a positive self image in all children and to respect their individuality, providing for all pupils according to their needs.
- to ensure equal access of opportunity to enable all pupils and staff to reach their full potential.
- to promote mutual respect regardless of differences and to avoid prejudice.
- to ensure equality of opportunity permeates the whole curriculum and ethos of the school.
- to ensure the curriculum contains non-stereotypical images in order to overcome preconceived ideas of gender, ethnic origin, disability, culture or religion.
- to provide resources to include books, materials and equipment that are multicultural and non-sexist, providing positive images of all groups.
- to ensure that the organisation of the school is sensitive to the needs of all.

- to acknowledge and celebrate the richness and diversity of our society and to help prepare children for their part in it.
- to develop a positive attitude to equal opportunity by all staff, parents, helpers, governors and children.

At HCEPS we also aim to promote community cohesion and have agreed to work towards meeting the Community Cohesion Standards for Schools which define a cohesive community as being one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The standards are framed by four strategic aims and their related objectives:

I. Close the attainment and achievement gap.

- Assessment arrangements enable staff to plan for each pupil to attain at the highest level possible and do not put any group of pupils at a disadvantage.
- All staff have an equal opportunity for promotion to all levels within the school.
- The school contributes to capacity building within the school community.

II. Develop common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity.

- Curriculum content contributes to an appreciation of cultural diversity, and challenges prejudice, bias and stereotype.
- The mainstream curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn about and become involved in the life of their communities.
- Behaviour and discipline policies and procedures reflect the commitment to developing mutual respect and acceptance of diversity. The use of SEA: upholds this
- All staff and governors have the knowledge and understanding to provide opportunities to develop common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity.

III. Contribute to building good community relations and challenge all types of discrimination and inequality.

- The school works with the Local Education Authority and other providers to train its staff and governors on their responsibilities under relevant legislation.
- All staff and governors have the knowledge and understanding to promote good community relations and challenge discrimination.
- The school takes positive steps to promote good community relations.
- Partnership arrangements are conducted in line with the school's equality policies.

IV. Remove the barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement.

- The criteria and terms of offering a place at school reflect the commitment to a Christian education that complies with legislation on equal opportunities and school admissions.
- The school excludes the minimum number of pupils with no significant differences in exclusion rates between different social or ethnic groups.
- All pupils have access to the full-curriculum.
- The governing body reflects the communities it serves.

4. GUIDELINES

The Law

Unlawful discrimination occurs when one person receives less favourable treatment because of their gender, marital status, race or disability. The law is extensive and complex in these areas. However, ignorance of the law is no defence and other forms of discrimination eg. on the grounds of age, sexuality or religion, should also be avoided.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002 which introduces a duty on the governing bodies of maintained schools to promote community cohesion. This duty came into force on 1st September 2007. Other legislation relating to community cohesion includes:

- Equality Act 2006; and
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Involving parents

At HCEPS we believe that there is a need to reinforce good behaviour in our community and parents will continue to be informed of their child's behaviour, good and bad, together with any aspects of their attitude towards others which gives rise to concern. Records will be maintained and ongoing concerns will be discussed and hopefully resolved.

In the event that formal disciplinary proceedings are contemplated, or if co-operation is not evident, the governing body will be consulted and a plan of action agreed.

Management and organisation

At HCEPS all policies, whether whole school or curriculum subjects, should reflect equality of opportunity and we will:

- monitor academic achievement according to gender.
- ensure that displays around the school reflect a variety of positive images which are free from stereotyping associated with gender, race or disability.
- ensure assemblies include opportunities to promote tolerance and understanding.
- encourage adults from a broad spectrum of society to visit the school, particularly to demonstrate role models which are non traditional for their sex, ethnicity or disability.
- encourage playground use that avoids domination of space by any particular group.

- make clear that sexist and racist abuse is unacceptable. HCEPS has adopted the county policy and procedures for the management of incidents of racism. All such incidents will be reported to the Headteacher.
- ensure that sanctions in the school are the same for boys and girls and applied equally.
- ensure that school publications reflect the commitment to equal opportunities and are free from gender or cultural bias.
- encourage and develop positive links with the local community and try to make all visitors feel welcome.

Practice around the school

At HCEPS Primary School:

- all children should have work displayed at some time during the school year.
- all children should have equal access to extra curricular activities.
- all children should have equal opportunities to help with jobs around the school.
- children should be involved in formulating and reviewing class and school rules.
- teamwork is encouraged in all aspects of school life to show the advantages of pooling experience, knowledge and various points of view.
- positive action, especially by pupils, will continue to be rewarded and made known to the wider school community.

Classroom practice

- ensure equal access to resources.
- resources to be free from cultural or gender bias.
- take steps to build the skills and confidence of children in areas where they may traditionally be lacking in confidence.
- equal opportunity to be given for talking and listening in whole class discussion, group work and paired work.
- teacher time to be divided equitably between boys and girls.
- create an environment in which co-operation is central and where children can work comfortably and with purpose.
- teach children the skills to resolve conflicts.

Curriculum, planning and assessment

- review the curriculum and actively seek opportunities to address the issues of equal opportunities.
- ensure that multicultural issues are not presented in a tokenistic way.
- be aware of, and challenge, bias and stereotypical viewpoints within our teaching and language.
- draw on examples from many cultural traditions and recognise our society as having a diverse cultural background.
- be aware of the balance of male/female roles, disabled/able bodied and roles from a variety of cultural backgrounds, when choosing authors, historical figures, artists, composers etc as a focus for a curriculum area.
- monitor assessment procedures to ensure that they are not distorted by stereotyped attitudes and expectations.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The measurement of equal opportunities in practice requires a variety of criteria to be assessed, of both a quantitative and qualitative nature:-

- the level of complaints by staff, pupils and parents will be monitored.
- the school will maintain clear, factual and up to date records to identify patterns of behaviour which are contrary to our aims.
- Governors' visits will aim to identify any divergence from this policy and areas which may benefit from positive action.
- test results will be monitored to detect signs of underachievement against teachers' expectations etc. Such comparisons will pay regard to equal opportunities factors.

Our aim is to have a zero incidence of, and tolerance for, discriminatory behaviour. The school has a confident, progressive approach to the aims set out in this policy, actively demonstrating the benefits of mixed contributions and teamwork. This policy will be reviewed annually..

Reviewed by Monitoring Pair	May 2015
ADOPTED By Governing Body	
REVIEW DATE	