

Equal Opportunities Policy

Review Period: Annually – Spring Term

Review By: Leadership Group & C&C

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Equal Opportunities Policy

Cross Referencing to Other Policies:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School Policies:

- Behaviour (Rewards & Sanctions) & Anti-bullying
- Assessment
- SEN
- Performance Management
- Curriculum
- Collective Worship
- Cross Curricular Policies
- Health Education Policies
- Educational Visits Policy

Legal Aspects:

This Policy takes into account the following legal documents:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995/2006
- Their respective Codes of Practice
- DfES Circulars 11/96, 12/96 and 3/97
- SEN & disability rights in Education Bills
- SEN Code of Practice

This policy now meets the requirements of the **Equality Act 2010**, namely to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who not share it
- Foster good relations opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who not share it

School Culture & Ethos:

- The school aims are inclusive to reflect and inform the statement *“each student is encouraged to enjoy a first class education, in a safe and positive environment, developing the necessary skills for a successful adult life”* and are embedded in the life of the school community.
- The school promotes positive relationships based on mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- Staff are consistent in their adherence to the policy, serve as positive role models and specifically combat racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination.
- School values promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and consciously prepare students for living in a diverse and inter-dependent society.

- The school makes inappropriate behaviour explicit without subjecting pupils to shame, guilt or loss of dignity.
- All members of the school community have the ability to learn effectively without interference and disruption.
- The induction process for students and staff makes clear the school's behaviour code, including dealing with harassment or bullying of any kind. All incidents and complaints are formally recorded and investigated within a specified time period. These are regularly reported to the governing body and the LA. Incidents and complaints are monitored and the effectiveness of the action taken is evaluated.
- Active steps are taken to protect staff from harassment by pupils or parents and all members of the school community, including parents, are able to obtain appropriate support if they are victims of harassment. This support is co-ordinated by the Student Welfare Advisor.
- Play and leisure areas are accessible to all and provide a positive environment for pupils from all social groupings.
- School visits are accessible to all pupils and staff.
- The dietary and medical needs of all students are taken into account and the school's dress policy also reflects the cultural, religious and disability needs of all.
- Displays celebrate and actively promote diversity.
- The school supports multi-agency policies and strategies to combat discrimination in the local community and works closely with external agencies to deal with incidents both inside and outside the school.
- Collective worship, whilst recognising the statutory requirement to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, also recognises the diversity of faith and belief.

Attainment & Progress:

Through the school's Assessment Policy:

- The schools will ensure that all children are achieving as much as they can.
- The analysis of the attainment of different groups will be used to avoid underachievement e.g. Special Educational Needs, English as Another Language, Looked After Children, Gifted and Talented, gender, ethnic groups
- The school will ensure that assessment methods do not disadvantage pupils because of cultural or linguistic bias.
- The school will ensure that rigorous tracking mechanisms are put into place as students move through the school, including attendance as well as issues of progress and attainment.
- The school will take account of the students' views on barriers to attainment and progress.
- Monitoring processes will be used to establish any stages or areas where pupils are not doing well and the way the information gleaned will be used in school wide planning.
- The school will ensure that the individual guidance and support to be offered to students, takes into account their personal and cultural needs.
- Short-term targets for all students, specifically vulnerable groups and individuals, are monitored.
- School will ensure that a range of approaches to learning are used.

Access to the Curriculum:

Through the school's Curriculum and SEN Policies:

- The school will ensure that curriculum planning takes account of the needs of all students and is informed by the views of students and parents.
- Information will be passed to staff about the language and dialects spoken by students, and their cultural background and experiences will be used when appropriate.
- Student's cultural and religious backgrounds, experiences and needs are taken into account when planning extra-curricular activities. The school is particularly mindful of engaging those students who experience cultural or social isolation and those for whom the home environment would hinder learning.
- The school is committed to partnership with other agencies in order to meet the explicit needs of all pupils.
- The curriculum is appropriately resourced and adapted for all students, taking into account any impairments or learning difficulties they may have, including a commitment to modifying tasks and/or providing aids or alternative equipment. Resources show sensitivity to different groups or cultures and do not reinforce stereotypes.
- A commitment to allocating students to option choices that do not discriminate according to gender, ability, ethnicity, disability or behaviour.
- The composition of groups, sets or streams and disapplications from the national curriculum are monitored and unjust disparities removed e.g. the student's ability in one subject does not restrict access to the full curriculum available to their peers.
- The school will evaluate the extent to which teaching is successful in enabling students with a diverse range of needs to learn.
- The school will ensure that staff and students are aware of cultural differences in non-verbal communication e.g. it is disrespectful in some cultures for a young person to make eye contact with an adult.
- Tensions in the classroom and whole school environment are noticed quickly and positive action taken to ensure mutual respect and trust between pupils from different groups.

Leadership & Management:

- The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and all members of the Leadership Group can demonstrate action to implement the policy. The school's leaders at all levels model good practice in their own behaviours and strive for early intervention.
- The governing body are supported in taking the strategic view, insist on consistency, clear communication and regular reports and ensure that this policy is embedded in whole school planning, performance management and resource allocation, including physical access to the school premises.
- The Headteacher and governors regularly seek the views of all members of the school community. Consultation meetings are arranged at times that are convenient to parents from all cultural groups, translators provided where necessary and policies are reviewed in the light of the concerns that arise from such meetings.
- The governing body actively seeks true representation from the whole community in its membership.

Staffing:

The school will:

- Advertise all job vacancies both internal and externally. All external recruitment adverts should carry the statement "Studley High is committed to equal opportunities".
- Consult with the schools' personnel provider (Judicium) before treating a post as one to which the Genuine Occupational Qualification or other exception applies.

- Ensure that all recruitment literature and practices are based on objective and job related criteria. The selection process should rely on job descriptions, person specifications, structured interview(s) and a fair and open assessment scoring system. The use of any test (practical, skills-based or psychometric in nature) must not indirectly discriminate in their operation.
- **Ensure that all short listing and selection decisions and the reasons for them are recorded and that records are kept for a minimum of 7 months.**
- Provide appropriate training for persons involved in the selection decisions, including specific guidance on how to avoid unfair and unlawful discrimination.
- Ask candidates invited for interview to indicate in advance whether arrangements are needed to accommodate any disability.
- Explain how the school's equal opportunities policy will be issued to all staff within the staff handbook to newly appointed staff and advise volunteers, job applicants, contractors, service providers (including employment agencies) and visitors that a copy of the equal opportunities policy is available in reception.
- Ensure that all staff are trained in the implementation of the policy, that training is regular and on-going, including training in victim support. Through regular Curriculum Area discussions and Staff meetings encourage good practice and the use of effective strategies throughout the school.
- Ensure that the consequences of any failure to observe the policy are covered by the disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Should the situation arise, ensure that the school has a process for selecting employees for redeployment or redundancy that does not unfairly discriminate.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the process by which they may access and be selected for job-related training and personal development opportunities through the Staff Development Policy. Part-time employees have an equal right of access as full-time employees.
- Ensure that this policy cross references with the Performance Management Policy (teaching & support staff) and Pay Policy.

The Wider Community:

- Premises and facilities are equally available to all groups complying with the school's terms and conditions of use.
- The school considers the needs of ethnic and religious groups within the local community when determining the times and dates when its premises will be available for wider community use.
- Users of the premises will be made aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities, and receives guidance for dealing with incidents that are in breach.
- The school premises are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Signs around the school conform to internationally recognised formats and are accessible to all linguistic groups.
- Areas used by the community are reviewed to ensure that any materials or resources displayed contain positive images of all groups and that there is no discrimination in relation to gender, ethnicity and special needs.
- The school encourages community groups to use its facilities for after-school activities and holiday schemes that serve pupils from all ethnic groups and are culturally inclusive.
- The Bursar keeps records to monitor the use of facilities by all community groups and uses the data to ensure equal access.

Admissions, Transition, Attendance, Punctuality & Exclusions:

- All admissions will follow the same procedure (see Admission Policy) regardless of such factors as disability and ethnicity.
- Transition processes are in direct relationship to the student needs and avoid stereotyping.
- Student's attendance will be monitored on a daily weekly and termly basis by the Attendance Officer. Appropriate action will be taken according to the individual circumstances of the child e.g medical needs, religious beliefs and the role of the young carer.
- The school will ensure flexibility when considering punctuality based on the individual circumstances of the student e.g. medical needs, travellers, young carers.
- The procedures for exclusion are communicated clearly to all parents and the school takes proactive step to prevent exclusion.
- The process of excluding a student is fair and equitable to all groups and the staff involved in managing exclusions always adhere to the procedures as stated.
- The school accepts the right of a parent to have an advocate when dealing with matters relating to the proposed exclusion of their child.
- Reintegration packages take account of the student's cultural and educational needs.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- The school is committed to monitoring the policy's effectiveness. This will be carried out by the Headteacher, including an audit of inclusion. Any action required will form part of the discussions to form the School Development Plan.
- This policy, once agreed by staff and governors, will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Through the School Council pupils will be able to comment on equal opportunities issues and contribute to the review process.
- Parent's comments will be sought through the School Profile and Parents in Partnership meetings.
- Racial incidents will be reported to the Headteacher who will keep a written record of incidents. These will be forwarded to the LA.