



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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STOKE HIGH SCHOOL - ORMISTON ACADEMY

Equal Opportunities Policy

Principles

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of the Academy to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. This means not simply treating everybody the same but, understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups in our school, celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Students
- Teaching Staff
- Support Staff
- Parents and carers
- Community Governors
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school e.g. pupil services staff, school improvement services staff, school attendance service and staff from other professions
- Visitors to the school
- Students on placements

We believe that equality at the Academy should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of our school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At the Academy, equality is a key principle of our treatment of all people, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

The philosophy of our academy is of valuing the individuality of all our students. We are committed to giving every student every opportunity to achieve their potential. Within this ethos we will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any type. We actively tackle discrimination against those with a disability, racist discrimination, homophobia, sexual harassment and discrimination. We promote equal opportunities and good relations between and amongst us all. We aim to ensure that the Academy promotes the individuality of all our students, regardless of ethnicity, attainment, sexual orientation, disability, gender or background. We are committed to ensuring that positive action is taken when necessary to redress any inequalities which may exist. We aim to reflect the diversity of our local community and society and to ensure that the education which we offer fosters positive attitudes to all.

Our Academy admissions policy is equally open to students in all groups.

Policy Development

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole Academy community.

Monitoring and Review

Equality has been identified as an area which requires careful, ongoing and sensitive monitoring in the Academy Development Plan and attention is given to the promotion of all aspects of equality in the Academy Development Plan.

The member of staff responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation is a member of the Leadership Team responsible for:

- Providing updates on Equalities legislation and the Academy's responsibilities for this. Leading groups, arranging training, keeping all staff updated and giving support to equality discussions within the Academy community.
- Working closely with the governor responsible for this area.
- Supporting positively the evaluation activities that moderate the impact and success of the policy.

We regularly review the impact of our policies on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for students, staff and parents from the equality strands referred to in this policy. We specifically monitor the impact that our policies have on the attainment of students from different groups .e.g. Children Looked After, Students with Special Educational Needs, Black and Ethnic Minority Students and students who receive Free School Meals Ever 6. We make regular assessments of all students' learning and use this information to track progress as students move through the Academy. As part of the tracking programme we regularly monitor the performance of different groups to ensure that all students are reaching their potential. We use this information to address future teaching and learning plans. Resources are available to support groups of students where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it could be. The governing body receives regular updates on student performance. Academy performance data is compared to Local Authority and National data to ensure that students are making appropriate progress when compared to all, as well as comparable, schools.

As well as monitoring student performance, we also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Exclusion
- Attendance
- Incidents of racism, homophobia, disability and sexist incidents and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extra curricular activities
- Truancy

Our monitoring activities allow us to identify any differences in student performance. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups and to set targets in our strategic plan, in order to make the necessary improvements.

Promoting Equality through the Curriculum

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this teaching and learning will:

- Ensure quality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping.
- Promote attitudes and values that challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions.
- Develop students' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias and challenge discrimination leading to justice and equality.

- Ensure that PSHE and Citizenship cover issues of equalities, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion: as well as ensuring that different types of family (including families with lesbian, gay or transgender parents) are presented as of equal value.
- In all subject departments, where appropriate, celebrate diversity and promote the contribution of different ethnic groups to the curriculum area as well as profiling the positive contributions made to society by other minority groups, such as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people.
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education.
- Identify resources that support staff development.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, social background or sexual orientation. To secure the best possible outcomes for all we recognise the importance of:

- Teacher and support staff enthusiasm as a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students.
- Adults in the Academy community trying to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- The whole Academy placing a very high priority on the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities. We aim to meet the learning needs of all students including Able, Gifted and Talented through carefully assessed and administered programmes of work (see SEN policy and Disability Equality Scheme).
- The Academy providing an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- Creating an environment where all students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.
- A range of teaching methods used within the Academy to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students.

Curriculum

At the Academy we aim to ensure that our:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity.
- Students will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality.
- All steps are taken to ensure that all students have access to mainstream curriculum by taking into account the cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of all students - their linguistic needs are taken into account and their learning styles are considered.
- All students have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

Ethos and Atmosphere

- At the Academy we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the Academy community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the Academy community.
- There is an atmosphere which welcomes all visitors.
- The students greet visitors with friendliness and respect.
- Displays around the buildings are of a high quality and reflect diversity across all areas of equality of opportunity and are frequently monitored.

- Physical access to and around the building is good and is continually reviewed and improved.
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all through the planning of assemblies, classroom based and externally based activities.

Resources and Materials

The provision of high quality resources and materials within the Academy is a high priority. Staff are reminded that when ordering new resources and materials they should consider how they promote equalities. These resources should:

- Reflect “the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society”.
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints.
- Show positive images of males and females in society including people with disabilities.
- Reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context.
- Include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunities status.
- Be equally accessible to all members of the Academy community consistent with health and safety.
- Not include explicitly and implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist materials.

Language

We recognise that it is important at the Academy that all members of the Academy community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes.
- Does not intentionally offend.
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document.
- Creates the conditions for everyone to develop their self-esteem.
- Uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals e.g. Inuit rather than Eskimo, Native Americans rather than Red Indians.
- Uses first language effectively for learning.

Extra Curricular Provision

It is our policy to provide equal access to all activities from an early age e.g. girls’ football teams and mixed teams whenever possible.

The Academy will draw on the expertise and skill of non-staff members when appropriate and will always ensure that these individuals are DBS checked.

Provision for Bilingual Students

We undertake at the Academy to make appropriate provision for all EAL/bilingual students to ensure their access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Asylum seekers (who may be Children in Care)
- Students for whom English is a second or third language
- Those from refugee families
- Traveller and Roma students
- Students who are new to the United Kingdom

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Pastoral staff take account of disability needs, gender, religious and ethnic differences, sexual orientation and the experience and needs of particular groups such as asylum seekers and refugees.
- All students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed upon them due to their disability, gender or race.
- Every member of the Academy community is given appropriate support should they experience discrimination. We also realise that the perpetrators of discrimination are sometimes victims of personal circumstances and where appropriate work will be done to ensure such actions do not occur again.
- Positive role models are used throughout the Academy to ensure different groups of students can see themselves reflected in the Academy community.
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the Academy community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This must include students' access to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages. We encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals. It is our policy to provide staff training and development which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of students in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Staff Recruitment and Professional Development

- All posts are advertised formally and are open to the widest pool of applicants.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice which takes account of equalities through the recruitment and selection process.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed with the Local Authority to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of the Academy to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g.

- Unwanted attentions (verbal or physical).
- Unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender). The Academy has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these.

Partnerships with Parents, Carers and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers to help all students achieve their potential. We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to reach out to all diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond. We could do this by:

- Encouraging all parents and carers to participate at all levels in the full life of the Academy.
- Encouraging members of the local community to join the Academy in events e.g. through the community library.
- Continuing to explore the possibility of the Academy having a role to play in supporting new and settled communities e.g. through providing rooms and facilities.

Responsibility for the Policy

At the Academy all members of our community have a responsibility to support the agenda. Responsibilities are laid out as follows:

The Local Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that:

- The Academy complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the Academy community.
- The Academy's Equality policy is maintained and updated regularly.
- Procedures and strategies related to the policy are implemented.
- The named Equality Governor will have an overview, on behalf of the governing body, on all racist incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy and ensure that appropriate action is taken in relation to all said incidents.

The Principal and Leadership Team, along with the Local Governing Body, are responsible for:

- Providing leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Scheme e.g. Racist monitoring and reporting, Disability Access, DfE regulations, The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation and Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, and the Disability Equality Scheme.
- Co-ordinating the activities relating to equality and evaluating impact.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support.
- Taking appropriate action in response to racist incidents, discrimination against persons with a disability and sexual harassment and discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping.
- Not discriminating on grounds of race, disability, sexual orientation or other equality issues.
- Keeping up to date with equalities legislation by attending training events organised by the Academy or Local Authority or recognised training provider.

We ensure that the commitments embodied in our mission statement for equality permeates the full range of our policies and practices.

- Equal Opportunities
- Students' progress, attainment and assessment
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Students' personal development and pastoral care
- Teaching and Learning
- Induction
- Admissions and attendance
- The curriculum
- All subjects
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Governor and staff training and professional development
- Partnerships with parents, carers and the community
- Visits and visitors

The measurement of the impact of the policy

Each policy and any other relevant policies as outlined in the specific duties placed upon us by the relevant legislation will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on students, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our Academy.

Impact Assessment

The key topics for assessment are:

- Outcomes for Learners, i.e. are all learners of equal value?
- Recognising relevant differences e.g. Disability, Ethnicity, Gender
- Benefits for the workplace i.e. workforce development
- Attitudes, relationships and cohesion e.g. promoting positive attitudes and relationships, consultation and involvement
- How society will benefit
- Addressing current inequalities and barriers and reducing them