

## Recreation Road Infant School

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY



This policy forms part of our Equality Scheme

#### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Recreation Road Infant School is committed to welcoming all children and families to our school community, celebrating richness of diversity and promoting positive cultural identity. We create a happy, secure environment where each individual is respected and valued.

We aim to ensure that all children, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, gender, appearance, social circumstances or ability, both physical and academic have the opportunity to achieve the greatest possible progress and to develop their talents to the full.

We believe that:

*A commitment to providing Equal Opportunities for all pupils should permeate all areas of the curriculum.*

(National Curriculum Council 1990)

Consequently, we ensure that principles of equality underpin all our school policies and that they are translated into practice throughout the school.

#### **EQUALITY ASSURANCE**

We are committed to the three tasks of 'Equality Assurance' as defined by the Runnymede Trust (Equality Assurance in Schools). These are as follows:

##### **1 Ensuring High Quality of Education for All**

All pupils, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, gender, ability, appearance or social circumstances, have the opportunity to make the greatest progress possible. The school meets the requirements of the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) and the Race Relations Act (1976 and 2000) and recommendations of the Macpherson Report (1999). All pupils are made aware that staff have high expectations of them and are continuously challenged to reach high standards.

##### **2 Supporting Positive Social and Cultural Development**

At Recreation Road Infant School children are encouraged to share their ethnicity and learn from each other. School resources and displays will reflect a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society including a diversity of languages and scripts. We

enjoy celebrating the diversity within our school community. We are pro-active in dealing with prejudice.

### **3 Preparing for Full Participation in Society**

When appraising schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In geography topics 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.

The curriculum of this school tries to broaden the horizons of all pupils so that they understand and contribute to a pluralist society. Children are encouraged to question stereotypes. We promote positive cultural identity. We are particularly aware of issues relating to the following:

- a Ethnicity
- b Culture
- c Gender
- d Ability - both physical and academic
- e Social circumstances

#### **a&b Ethnicity and Culture**

- (i) We actively encourage people from all ethnic groups to take an equally active part in school life.
- (ii) We foster a positive anti-racist culture in which the children feel confident and supported in challenging discrimination.
- (iii) We aim to create an environment where no member of the school should experience racism.
- (iv) No racist behaviour is tolerated in the school or playground. Racist incidents are promptly dealt with according to the Code of Practice (*Appendix 1*) and the school's *policy on Racial Equality*.
- (v) All materials and resources will be scrutinised for stereotyping or prejudice. They will reflect our multi-ethnic society and will include positive images of people from ethnic minorities.
- (vi) Displays will also include positive images and will include examples of a variety of languages and scripts.
- (vii) All staff will plan carefully to meet the needs of EAL children. There will be liaison with the EAL support teachers.
- (viii) Parents and all members of the school community will be made aware of our commitment to anti-racist beliefs and attitudes through our school brochure.

**c Gender**

- (i) We will combat sexism by raising the awareness of everyone involved in our school.
- (ii) Language that gives rise to stereotyped images and prejudices will be avoided, eg “I need four strong boys ...”
- (iii) Boys and girls will be equally represented in all activities going on in school.
- (iv) All children will have equal access to all areas of the playground and field.
- (v) Staff will ensure that all children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that stereotyped attitudes to subject areas are actively discouraged, e.g. boys will not dominate use of the computer.
- (vi) All materials and resources will be carefully chosen to avoid stereotypes of gender roles and to present positive images of everyone.

All sexist incidents will be promptly dealt with as appropriate. Persistent offenders will be dealt with in line with the code of practice for dealing with Racist Incidents (Appendix 1).

**d Ability**

At Recreation Road Infant School we will emphasise children’s strengths and build on them.

Differently-abled people will be represented in resources and materials throughout the school.

All children, whatever their ability, will be given appropriate challenging learning experiences.

We will not allow any child to be discriminated against on grounds of ability.

**e Social Circumstances**

All staff are aware that people can be discriminated against because of their social/economic circumstances. We will actively combat discrimination on these grounds.

Resources and materials throughout the school will be scrutinised for stereotypes and will portray people from a wide range of backgrounds and family circumstances.

**4 The role of governors**

The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.

The governing body will, in its annual report, make reference to arrangements for disabled pupils.

The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.

The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, 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 affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

The governing body ensures that the school does not discriminate against pupils, job applicants or staff on the grounds of sex, race, disability, age, or marital status.

## **5 The role of the Headteacher**

It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy and she is supported by the governing body in so doing.

It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.

The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.

The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

## **6 The role of the class teacher**

The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.

When selecting classroom material, teachers pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In geography topics 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 challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents, and draw them to the attention of the Headteacher and the LEA. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

## **7 Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities policy. The governing body does this by:

- monitoring the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- requiring the Headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy;
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils;
- monitoring the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

**All visitors to Recreation Road Infant School will be expected to uphold this policy.**

**Staff will continue to undertake training. All new colleagues will receive a copy of this policy and be offered time to discuss it if necessary.**

**All school policies will be underpinned by this policy.**

## Appendix 1

### Code of Practice for Dealing with Racist Incidents

#### A Definition of racism and racist incidents

- Physical harassment - physical intimidation to include minor acts of intimidation which are cumulative in effect
- Verbal harassment - name calling, ridiculing a person's background or culture
- Non-co-operation - refusing to work or play with an individual can be racist if there is a racist motivation
- Disrespect - this may be inadvertent disrespect, e.g. ignorance by any member of the school community of an individual's cultural practice which causes that person to feel uncomfortable as a result of his/her race
- Stereotyping - "All ..... are ....." can lead to discrimination
- Other incidents, racist jokes, vocabulary, graffiti, etc.

#### B School's Response

- All racist incidents must be responded to immediately and treated seriously however minor or inadvertent they appear. Failing to respond may be seen as condoning racist behaviour.
- There is no single correct way of responding. It is important that each incident should be dealt with in a way appropriate to the incident itself.
- The perception of the person who has experienced a racist incident should be taken most seriously and understanding and support should be given to them.
- If considered appropriate, both victim and perpetrator will be brought together to discuss the incident and issues arising from it.
- All racist incidents and the context in which they took place should be recorded in a *Racist Incidents Book*- kept in the HT filing cabinet.

#### C Guidelines

- Physical Attack - immediately report to the Headteacher. Procedures that stress the seriousness of the offence will be put into practice, including involving parents.
- Verbal harassment and non-co-operation - Staff must not ignore any form of racist verbal abuse, and/or non-co-operation. Staff should explain fully and firmly to the perpetrator that such behaviour will not be tolerated. The victim must be supported and re-assured. The Headteacher must be informed and the incident recorded in the Racist Incident Book. Parents/guardians of both the victim and the perpetrator will be informed by letter as well as at a parent/school interview when an incident occurs.
- Racist materials - remove the offending materials and refer to Headteacher. Parents/guardians will be informed