



REACH SCHOOL

2019-2021

Equality and Diversity Policy

**Date of Issue: March 2019
Date of review: March 2021**

Purpose

This policy has been created to inform all stakeholders of REACH School that we identify, prevent and redress unfair discrimination against groups who may be disadvantaged, and, that we seek to create a community in which everyone, without exception, is respected, valued and happy. Compliance with this policy will also help to ensure that employees do not unwittingly commit unlawful acts of discrimination and that the work environment is free from harassment and bullying.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to seek to ensure that the school is free from discrimination of any kind. We all have responsibilities to promote equality of opportunity, experience and treatment, and to challenge stereotypes. Our school community consists of a diverse range of people, employees, students, parents and visitors. We need to celebrate our differences, by understanding them and enjoying the diversity this brings. Issues of equal opportunity should be part of the education of all learners. In this way we can work towards mutual respect and understanding in an increasingly interdependent world. Our Equal Opportunities Policy is designed to help us positively promote each other's individual rights and our responsibilities towards others.

Aims

This policy reflects our aims that students will:

- achieve or surpass their educational attainment on public examinations based on predictions from prior educational achievement
- show respect in valuing themselves and recognising the values of others
- uphold the values of the local, national and international community
- be able to challenge injustice and possess the compassion, courage and understanding to do so fairly
- be provided with appropriate interventions and enhancement programmes to allow all to
- have a broad and positive educational experience
- feel valued and included in every area of REACH School

At REACH School, we also aim to:

- actively promote equal opportunities and not discriminate either directly or indirectly against anyone on the grounds of disability, colour, race, nationality, age, religious or other beliefs, sexuality or gender
- create an environment, which promotes understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice
- promote a positive self-image and mutual respect within the REACH School community
- challenge stereotyping
- empower students to make informed choices so they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community
- endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents / carers, governors and members of the wider community
- expect all our staff to act in a non-discriminating manner and be mindful to avoid actions that could be deemed as harassment
- make reasonable adjustments which include the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if these physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for anybody to access
- address any barriers that may impede anybody from having access to services we provide

Types of discrimination

Direct discrimination

This is always unlawful and occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because of their sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or on racial grounds.

Indirect discrimination

This can occur when a condition or requirement is applied equally but is such that the proportion of members of one sex, racial group etc who can meet it is considerably smaller than the proportion of members of the other sex or other racial groups. Indirect discrimination is unlawful unless the person imposing the condition can show that it is justified, irrespective of the sex or race of the person to whom it is applied.

Harassment

This is where there is unwanted conduct related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination

This is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination

This is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment

This occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic by third parties such as staff, students, governors, parents, educational advisors.

Victimisation

This occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under *The Equality Act 2010*, or because they are suspected of doing so.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments

This is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- * We will value each member of the school community as an individual.
- * We will not define individuals in terms of labels.
- * We will look at ways in which ability/disability is presented through the curriculum and stereotypes.
- * We will ensure that ability/disability is not used as a term of abuse.
- * Issues relating to ability/disability should be investigated in positive terms.
- * We will be aware of the ways in which institutional and textbook language can disempower people.

Individual needs can take many forms and be met in a variety of ways, and so we will ensure that we access appropriate agencies fully.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN PRACTICE

Dealing with the issues

In order to achieve the aims of our policy, we will:

1. Treat all staff, students and visitors to the school with dignity.
2. Respond positively to ethnic diversity.
3. Make regular, detailed reviews of materials and practices in order to eliminate bias or discrimination.
4. Deal with all discriminatory incidents whether physical or verbal in accordance with the policy guidelines.
5. Encourage open discussion about living in a multi-ethnic society and this should include discussions about the cause of racism.
6. Reflect the different backgrounds of the students in all aspects of school life.

The physical environment

Our physical environment can reflect racism by graffiti in and around the building, the absence of displays reflecting the multi-cultural society in which we live. Alternatively, the elements that together make up the ethos and climate of the school can give a positive message, which is clearly opposed to racism. Cumulatively, positive attention can contribute significantly to the well-being, security, confidence and identity of all youngsters. Our awareness of such issues will ensure that:

1. Assemblies and other group meetings should consistently emphasise the varied nature of our society and underline our aims of equality and justice
2. Displays in classrooms will have a similar emphasis
3. School rules and regulations should show respect for cultural practices relating, for example, to dress and diet.

The Curriculum

Where appropriate, students will have full access to the full range of the curriculum

Equal opportunity issues will be addressed directly and consistently in the taught curriculum and indirectly in the hidden curriculum.

Equal opportunities will be taken into account in all curriculum planning reviewed annually.

Ethnic minorities within the school are taken into account in all aspects of curriculum planning and whole school activities.

The curriculum, explicit and hidden, will, through whole school policies, individual department schemes of work and support programmes:

1. Create an understanding in different environments, societies, systems and cultures across the world.
2. Study the political, psychological, social and economic reasons for racism, equality and justice and consider their present day effects in this country and the world.
3. Encourage students to recognise that each society has its own values and traditions, which will be considered in the context of that society.
4. Develop the concepts and skills, which will allow all students to participate actively in society.
5. Explore and share the ideas, opinions and interests, which derive from a broad range of cultural experience.

Resources

Resources should be free from bias and regularly reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate and effective.

Staffing

The Staff Recruitment Policy embodies the principles of equal opportunities.

All staff are included in the staff development policy.

The performance management process reflects the principles of equal opportunities.

Monitoring and Review

A log of all reported breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy is kept.

The policy will be reviewed every two years. Changes should be reflected in the school development plan and reported to the Governing Body.

SLT will monitor the operation of this policy.

Incidents

Strategies are in place and communicated to all staff for dealing with breaches of Equal Opportunities Policy, and racist incidents will be recorded. Breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy should be reported using the Incidents Log and these will be treated as disciplinary issues.

Legal requirements

The equal opportunities policy will assist the governing body to address legal, managerial and social issues from the basis of a statement of commitment to equality, supported by a more detailed policy and procedures for implementation.

Implementation

The school governing body and school leadership team will:

- carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (*including The Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Employment Equality Regulations*);

- endeavour to assess candidates objectively for employment and promotion against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary
- comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations and will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability
- reinforce the school's position as a provider of high quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities
- ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda
- work towards a staffing and governing body that reflects the composition of the wider community
- ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every student
- ensure that students and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals
- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status
- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including those who work part-time, on the basis of their assessed training needs
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/carers and students can make;
- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, to recognise discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally
- ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure

Policies linked to the Equal Opportunities Policy

- Bullying Policy
- SEN Policy
- Disability Policy
- Accessibility Plan