



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (INCLUSIVE OF THE EYFS)

Education is about maximising opportunities for personal growth and fulfillment. Opportunities should be available to all, regardless of ability, age, gender, ethnic or social background. These opportunities need to be secured through positive action by the school and the community.

At Highfield and Brookham Schools we seek to ensure that all our pupils secure these opportunities. We celebrate diversity of culture, race and talents and try to ensure that everyone is given opportunities to value their own contribution to the school and to have this noticed and valued by others. We seek to give all pupils equal opportunities, irrespective of gender, ability (both physical and mental), race or religion. This is fully reflected in our school aims, which promote good relationships between everyone in the school community, building an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence. The Brookham School SENCo is Georgie Cooke-Priest and the Highfield School SENCo is Colette Pollock.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

Human Rights Act 1998

The Education (School Performance Information) (England) Regulations 2001

Gender Recognition Act 2004

Equality Act 2010

We understand that the Equality Act 2010 combines and builds upon the existing legislation covering discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity.

We recognise that this Act brings together into one Act those areas now known as 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection from discrimination such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To ensure mutual respect for all pupils and staff, positive self-images and a positive attitude to the multicultural society in which we live.
- To ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity within the school.
- To develop in all pupils and staff an awareness of and commitment against racism, sexism and classism. Positive action will be taken against such attitudes.
- To root the curriculum in the child's experience, relating his/her cultural experiences to those on offer in school.
- To nurture amongst all staff and pupils an awareness of all cultural diversities reflected in the school community.
- To minimise the distress and disruption to those pupils and school personnel who are transgender.
- To achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning for all children irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ENVIRONMENT

General

Stereotyping of any kind is totally unacceptable in school.

Racist/sexist/classist literature should not be used.

Equal opportunities policies should be clearly reflected in the work and actions of the school in the community.

It must be clear that every pupil, parent, member of staff and visitor is equally valued in our school.

Race

Racism is a particularly virulent form of prejudice and needs a great deal of attention. The following are some ideas of how it can be combated:

Pupils' names should be pronounced correctly and nicknames should be the prerogative of the nicknamed.

Attention should be paid to spelling names correctly at all times.

Literature in school should include names from a wide variety of cultures.

Racist language must be categorically rejected.

Racial stereotypes should never be used or allowed. Those in classical literature must be made explicit to pupils and contextualised.

Bi-lingual pupils and parents must be allowed to nominate an interpreter when necessary.

Lack of fluency in the English language should not be used as an indication of academic potential.

Sex

No pupil should be excluded from receiving the curriculum on the basis of their sex.

No privileges must be reserved for pupils on the basis of their sex.

Assumptions should not be made about peoples' sexual orientation.

Class

Assumptions should not be made about pupils' home circumstances or potential based on social class.

Pupils must be allowed to talk in their natural dialect as and when they need to.

Direct speech in children's work may reflect dialect, particularly in the lower school before punctuation differentiates speech in written work.

School and Classroom Organisation

School lists are organised chronologically or alphabetically, rather than by gender (unless this is required by an outside agency for a particular purpose).

Equal opportunities will be considered when grouping children for activities. This may involve special specific groupings to ensure that every child participates fully.

Each child will be given opportunities to exercise responsibility within the classroom or the school, with care taken regarding stereotyping of roles. We see boys and girls as both carers and leaders.

When lining up, boys and girls are mixed (within their own class).

A quiet area will be provided for those who prefer less boisterous activities at break times.

Resources

Books and resources are checked before use to ensure that they do not give a stereotypical or oversimplified view in terms of gender, race, culture or disability.

When choosing new materials we seek balance in the representation of the sexes and minority groups, looking for positive role models in stories and settings.

Language used in resources is monitored for bias so that we do not promote negative or derogatory images.

Display materials and illustrations reflect the diversity of our society where appropriate and show both men and women in positive situations and roles.

Personnel and Staffing Issues

The school affords equal treatment to all its employees and prospective employees. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less than favourable treatment on grounds of race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origins, sex or marital status or physical or other handicap, or is disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

Selection and promotion criteria will be kept under continuing review to ensure that individuals are selected and promoted on the basis of their relative merits and abilities, having agreed to the need of the specific job. Where possible, training will be given to enable employees to have an opportunity of promotion and progression according to their ability and potential

Early Years Foundation Stage

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children at Brookham refer to children from 2 to 5 years of age in our Pre-Nursery, Nursery, and Reception classes. Brookham EYFS is included in the Equal Opportunities Policy (Pupils) with the whole school.

Brookham values diversity and difference and promotes equal opportunity for all children, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities. The individual needs of all children are met through Circle Time, PSHE, assemblies, displays, music and celebrations of other cultures and other events. Inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged through the opportunities above and children are encouraged to value and respect others.

Staff consider how the individual needs of all children will be met and how all children, including those with disabilities or SEND will be included, valued and supported and how reasonable adjustments can be made for them. Individual support is considered in consultation with parents and other agencies as appropriate. For example children with EAL are included in all activities and staff will consider how best to support them on an individual basis.

Brookham has and implements an effective policy ensuring equality of opportunities for supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a setting in receipt of government funding we have regard to the SEN code of Practice. Brookham EYFS ensures specific learning, developmental or physical needs are identified. Provision is then related to specific need and recorded suitably; guidance is offered to adults on adapting daily provision. Parents and relevant agencies may need to be included in discussion or informed of provision. The effectiveness of our inclusive practice is reviewed and monitored and evaluated regularly in respect of individual children. Reviews are shared with parents.

The SENCo is responsible for the EYFS at Brookham and key staff have undertaken inclusion training. Further details of how the SEN code of practice is put into practice are described in the Special Education Needs policy for the whole school inclusive of the EYFS.

EYFS staff have separate meetings to review, monitor and evaluate inclusive practices and the findings inform IEPs, class planning and action planning.

Complaints

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our equal opportunities policy, but a copy of the School's Complaints Procedure is available on the school website or from the school office.

PGSE/SEWB (September 2017)

Reviewed PGSE/SEWB (June 2019)

Reviewed PGSE/SEWB (September 2021)