



CONISTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
working together we can succeed

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Reviewed & Adopted May 2018

This School provides an education for all, acknowledging that the primary focus of education is to promote equal life chances.

Aims of Equal Opportunities Policy

Equality of opportunity and valuing diversity is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community: pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

It is based on the following core values and ethos as expressed in this school's vision statement:

Working together we can succeed

Education:

These aims are designed to ensure that the school requests and meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this school we value cultural diversity, meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion and ensure that all pupils are prepared for full participation in an equal, respectful society.

Operation:

It is also important that, in the operation of our organisation, we promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled persons, male and female, and people of different racial or cultural groups. In addition, we must eliminate discrimination and rather, promote positive attitudes to all and encourage participation by all, which takes accounts of individual's specific needs.

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The School's Commitment to Racial Equality

The School provides an education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by the ethnic diversity, culture and faith of its citizens. The National Curriculum states that all school must provide a curriculum which:

“promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society”

All schools are also required to promote “British Values”, including:

- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

The School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

We recognise:

- the inclusive nature of our curriculum and the opportunities it presents for encouraging 'respect for diversity';
- the importance of recognising festivals from diverse faiths;
- that minority ethnic groups include Gypsy Travellers, Refugees and Asylum-seekers, migrant workers and less visible minority groups eg Irish;
- the important contribution immigrants and their descendants have made to Britain;
- the importance of Global Citizenship;
- the importance of strong home/school and wider community links;
- our duty under the Race Relations (Amendment Act 2000) to promote race equality actively;
- the recommendations of the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence:

"That Local Education Authorities and school governors have the duty to create and implement strategies in school to prevent and address racism" (Recommendation 68).

The definition of institutional racism is "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their culture, colour or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtless and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."

Actions to ensure Race Equality

These commitments are substantial and significant are carefully planned to make them manageable.

1. This Equality Policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher & Governing Body, along with the Accessibility Plan incorporating race and disability with all stakeholders made aware of its targets.
2. The Governing body will annually comment on how race equality targets have been met.
3. The school will take steps to monitor and further develop good practice, monitoring pupils by ethnic group, as well as other vulnerable groups.
4. Race Equality policy will be part of the induction & Staff development programme for teaching and ancillary staff, student teachers and governors.
5. We shall adhere to South Gloucestershire LA's guidance on Dealing with and Reporting Racial Incidents.
6. All class teachers/tutors will be trained in the care and support of pupils who have experienced racial abuse.
7. The school will endeavour to ensure that the governing body & staff team reflects the local community it serves.
8. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school. Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups.
9. The school caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups, on request, with reasonable adjustments.

10. The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand these.

School's Commitment to Disability Equality:

In seeking to promote equality for all, in line with the 'Disability discrimination Amendment Act (2005)', Coniston Primary School is committed to promoting disability equality, for all disabled pupils, staff, parents and members of the public who may use the school. Access to the school or full involvement in the school is not inhibited by disability, where reasonable adjustments can be made.

Identification: Pupils, parents and staff likely to be considered disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) will be identified on a disability register. "A person has a disability if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities." Part 1, para 1.1.

To fall within the Act, a person must be substantially affected by their disability in one of the following capacities:

- Mobility
- Physical co-ordination
- Manual dexterity
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing, eyesight
- Memory or ability to learn, concentrate or understand
- Perception of risk or physical danger.

For the purposes of definition, the effects of medical or other treatments or aids and appliances are to be ignored ('Disability Equality in Education January 2007: p16')

The Disability register, being created in 2008/9, will be annually updated, from census information and at other times, from specific information arising from pupils, parents, staff, or outside agencies.

Adaptation and response:

From awareness of a person's disability, consideration will be given through policies practices and the physical environment, to steps needed, "to take account of a disabled person's impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other persons." (p6)

Such actions ensure 'equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled persons.' They also promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.

Whole school actions form part of the Equalities Action Plan (sub-section: Disability equality), to be reviewed annually, by the governing body, and shared with all stakeholders.

Monitoring impact:

Formal tracking of disabled pupils' achievements, along with discussions with disabled parents / staff and invitations for written comments on the school's effectiveness in providing disability equality, will help to assess the impact of policies, procedures and practices, as identified below.

Policies, Procedures and Practices,

Leadership and Management

All the school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities. All staff contribute to the development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and takes appropriate steps to enable the contribution of parents, with revised policies published in the entrance hall, or through newsletters, for comment, before being agreed.

The evaluation of policies are used to identify specific actions to address equality issues, which form the single 'Accessibility Plan', incorporating:

- Racial Equality
- Disability
- Gender

The governing body and school management set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.

The school management works in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity, and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for minority ethnic and traveller pupils) are appropriately monitored.

The school promotes positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity, through the curriculum, assemblies and the operation of our organisation. Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of **all** pupils and appropriate breadth of content, to develop pupils' understanding of issues surrounding equality.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds, race, gender and abilities, through tracking of pupils' progress.

Staffing: Recruitment and Professional Development

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures, which are fair, equal, and in line with statutory duties and LA guidelines.

We are an equal opportunities employer.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme.

The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff, are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge. Professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.

We aim for Staff and visitors to provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community, presenting positive images of race, gender and disability. Where reasonable, steps are taken to remove any barriers to disabled staff, or those from different racial groups, working in the school.

Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils.

The curriculum builds on pupils' starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls;
- pupils learning English as an additional language;
- pupils from minority ethnic groups;
- pupils who are gifted and talented;
- pupils with special educational needs;
- pupils with a disability;
- pupils who are eligible for the Pupil Premium (described as "disadvantaged")
- pupils who are looked after by the local authority;
- pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity and disability. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

We aim to provide a breadth of extra curricular activities and enrichment events, aiming to cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils regardless of race, religion or culture, gender or disability.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued.

All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum, with support or adaptation where necessary. (Allocations to appropriate teaching and support groups are kept under review)

Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles and takes account of pupils' cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and disability.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Assessment, Pupil Achievement and Progress

All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school ensures that assessment is free of gender, cultural, social, or non-disabled bias, and that assessment methods are valid and accessible to all. The monitoring and analysing of pupil performance by gender, ethnicity and vulnerable groups enables the identification of groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment which summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning. Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupils' progress.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

The school's procedures for managing behaviour are fair and appropriate. (see behaviour policy)

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.

It is recognised that cultural background and disability may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment (in line with local authority guidelines). They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic, derogatory towards disability, or potentially damaging to any vulnerable group is always unacceptable and will be acted upon seriously.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

Exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils. There are strategies to reintegrate vulnerable and excluded pupils which take into account the needs of all pupils.

Personal Development and Pastoral Care

Pastoral support takes account of religious and ethnic differences, and the experiences and needs of refugee and asylum seeker children.

The school provides appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

The school takes account of the needs of Traveller pupils.

Admissions and Attendance

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged. Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, disability, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admissions forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance which includes staff as well as pupils. Provision is made for pupils on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Attendance will be monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and disability and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

Partnership with Parents and the Community

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school. We actively aim to remove any barriers to access to school events, due to race, language or disability.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all, removing any barriers where reasonable. Parental involvement is monitored to promote the participation of all groups.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific issues.

Information material for parents is easily accessible in user friendly language and is available in languages other than English, and other formats (such as Braille or large print) as appropriate, on request.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible, as far as is possible, for use by all groups within the community.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

The members of staff below will be responsible for co-ordinating work in equal opportunities.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be annually monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community, but promotes equality and values diversity.

Members of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities: SENCo and PSHE co-ordinator.

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(Chair of Finance & Premises Committee)

Next Review Date: May 2019