

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY POLICY

EATON HOUSE SCHOOLS
POLICY DOCUMENT

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Policy Statement

Eaton House Schools recognises that diversity, equality and inclusion are the concepts that all aspects of school life should be based upon. This brings significant educational benefits to all pupils, enabling the creation of learning experiences enriched by different life experiences, varied perspectives, flexibility and creativity.

It is the school's policy to accept & celebrate diversity; any form of intolerance is counterproductive and unacceptable. The school is therefore committed to building an environment where:

- all pupils are treated with dignity and respect
- diversity is valued
- stereotypes are questioned
- bias, bigotry, prejudice and racism are wholeheartedly rejected.

This policy applies to all children at Eaton House Schools, including those within the EYFS.

The Aims of the Policy

In accordance with its legal responsibility, Eaton House Schools fully support the single public sector equality duty and the specific duties on public bodies introduced by the Equality Act 2010. Our overall aim is to create an equal opportunities community in which all adults and young people feel valued, thrive and achieve their potential.

The nine protected characteristics defined by the Act are:

- age (adults only)
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership status
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation

No child or adult is prevented from taking a full part in the life of the school.

Everyone at the school will take responsibility for challenging stereotypes and all forms of discrimination.

The school will promote equality of opportunity and will investigate all complaints of discrimination.

The school's equality objectives are published on the website, in compliance with the public sector equality duty.

In carrying out our core purpose to educate our pupils, we will actively seek opportunities to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not.

Procedure

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of our equality policy are that:

- all learners are of equal value
- similarities and differences are recognised, respected and celebrated
- we foster positive relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
- we treat all candidates and staff equally in recruitment, retention and development
- we work to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
- we consult and involve others in the development of our policies and educational provision
- we actively address prejudice
- we continually improve our practices by annually formulating and implementing equality objectives.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

All pupils learn differently because of their ages and stages of development, their prior learning, aptitudes and talents and preferred learning styles. It is integral to the professional role that teachers use a range of teaching and learning strategies to engage and challenge all pupils.

Nevertheless, in some individual circumstances, such as where a pupil has a disability, access to learning requires some compensatory features such as specialised resources.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior management are responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented. This includes:

- ensuring that the school meets the public sector equality duty
- ensuring arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions
- making reasonable adjustments to the premises or employment arrangements if needed
- planning to increase over time the accessibility of the school to pupils with disabilities
- giving due regard to its own membership and the recruitment of new senior management
- setting equality objectives
- manage the school's finances to ensure that resources can be devoted to any special arrangements needed for pupils or staff.

The Head and senior management team are responsible for:

- formulating and implementing this policy

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- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support
- taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination or practices
- ensuring the place of equal opportunities within the school improvement plan
- co-ordinating the curriculum in conjunction with subject leaders to ensure equality of opportunity is represented in all subjects
- ensuring that equal opportunities is covered within all subject policies and plans
- providing the opportunity for resources to be ordered to support this policy
- monitoring performance by groups of pupils and individuals.

All staff are expected to:

- understand and support the aims of this policy, the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and our guiding principles
- uphold public trust and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour by:
 - treating all pupils and adults with dignity and building relationships rooted in mutual respect
 - showing tolerance of, and respect for, the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that might foster prejudice and hatred
 - promoting equality and inclusion in the classroom, amongst pupils, colleagues and with visitors to the school
 - dealing with any prejudice-related incidents that occur
 - providing and analysing quantitative and qualitative data that supports better understanding of protected characteristic groups
 - attending appropriate training to keep up to date with equality issues

Success Criteria

The long-term success criteria are that on leaving school:

- all pupils will have made at least expected progress as defined by the Department for Education (or the individual targets set by the school)
- all groups of pupils make good and better progress so that there are no attainment gaps

- pupils have a good understanding of the different communities within our country and global society and are prepared for their next stage of life
- pupils have a firm set of values that are based on appreciation of, and respect for, others.

The medium-term success criteria are that:

- the school implements equality objectives successfully
- the learning environment informs and celebrates similarities and differences
- incidents of bullying and harassment are low and are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

The ongoing (day-to-day) success criterion is that:

- the school is a happy and cohesive community.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation takes the form of:

- scrutiny of planning and pupils' work
- observations as pupils arrive at school and in shared areas throughout the day
- observations of the progress of all pupils during lessons
- surveys and formal and informal discussions with pupils
- surveys and discussions with staff
- surveys and discussions with parents and carers
- analysis of data.

Pupils' Rights and Responsibilities

Pupils have the right:

- to not be discriminated against
- to make a complaint if they feel that they are suffering discrimination
- to have their complaint listened to and dealt with
- to not be victimised if they do complain

Pupils have the responsibility:

- to not discriminate against others or to support the discrimination of others
- to support other people who may be discriminated against
- to report to a responsible person if they think that discrimination is taking place
- to not victimise anyone who makes a complaint of discrimination

Disability Discrimination

A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as a “physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

It is important to distinguish clearly between pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs: a pupil with disabilities does not necessarily have special educational needs and vice versa. Care must be taken that a pupil with disabilities does not end up being treated as a pupil with special educational needs through lack of appropriate provision. This would constitute discrimination because the pupil would have been treated less favourably than others.

Schools must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities (including prospective pupils) are not placed at a disadvantage in comparison to pupils without a disability in any area, including:

- admissions and exclusions policies
- general education, including field trips, extra-curricular activities and sports
- after-school clubs and leisure activities.

This involves:

- anticipating the barriers that pupils with disabilities may face
- removing or minimising them before the pupil is placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The school is not required to do anything that is unreasonable or impracticable.

Auxiliary aids or services must be provided for pupils with disabilities where it is reasonable to do so.

Religious Discrimination

The school recognises, respects & values the various traditions, customs, rules and religious or philosophical beliefs of different religious groups and individuals and will not discriminate against any pupil on the grounds of their religion or belief.

The school understands that for religious reasons certain pupils might wish to behave in ways that are contrary to accepted school rules. Every effort will always be made to meet the sincere wishes of these pupils.

The school undertakes to tailor collective worship and religious teaching to reflect the particular racial and religious mix in the school.

The school will not tolerate any form of religious discrimination. This is included in its equal opportunities and behaviour policies, anti-bullying policy and the curriculum.

Racial Discrimination

The school will promote equal opportunity and takes into account of racial equality in the day-to-day policy making, service delivery and other functions. No pupil should be discriminated against because of:

- colour
- nationality (including citizenship)
- ethnic or national origin.

The school will not tolerate any form of racial discrimination, racial harassment and abuse to physical violence or inciting of racial hatred. This is included in its equal opportunities and behaviour policies, anti-bullying policy and the curriculum.

Incidents of this nature may be offences under criminal law and will be treated as such.

Sex Discrimination

All applicants for admission to the school, and all pupils of the school, will be treated the same way, irrespective of sex. In particular, the school will ensure that:

- no attempt is made to balance the number of boys and girls admitted to the school
- any tests used to screen pupils are identical for boys and girls
- all children have equal access to the curriculum
- careers advice, interviews and literature are not sex discriminatory.

All pupils, regardless of their sex, will have equal access to:

- all classes
- all subjects in the curriculum
- all benefits
- all forms of community and social service
- all recreational, sport and social facilities
- all out-of-school activities.

Exceptions to sex discrimination

Exceptions to sex discrimination law include the following.

- Where a single-sex school is planning to turn co-educational, it can apply for permission to discriminate by admitting more members of one sex for a limited period of time.
- Single-sex competitive sport is allowed where the physical strength, stamina or physique of the average woman would put her at a disadvantage to the average man.

Sexual Orientation and Homophobia Discrimination

The school will not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone because of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation.

The school will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone because of the person's actual or perceived sexual orientation.

The school will promote equality of opportunity for all pupils regardless of their sexual orientation. This is included in its equal opportunities and behaviour policies, anti-bullying policy and the curriculum.

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for all pupils and staff and will apply the school's anti-bullying policy to deal with all instances of homophobic bullying or abuse. Homophobia is an active or passive dislike or fear of someone who is, or is perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual or heterosexual. It is a form of bullying and will be tackled proactively, including taking action against derogatory and aggressive language.

The school makes clear that teachers should deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support where necessary. The school will liaise closely with parents, in order to reassure them of the content of programmes and the context in which they are presented.

The increase in cyberbullying is of particular concern. Please refer to the Cyberbullying Policy for more information.

Training

The school will provide training for teachers and support staff on the implementation of policies and statutory duties relating to equality of opportunity, discrimination, disability legislation and different religious practices.

New staff attend induction training. Policy newsletters are also e-mailed out to staff.

Linked Policies

Pupil Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Inclusions Policy