

# **Staines Preparatory School**



## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

**September 2024**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Our aim is for every person to be enabled to develop to his or her potential socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically, regardless of racial or cultural origin, religion, physical or intellectual ability. Also, where applicable, gender or sexual orientation, or circumstances relating to gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity/paternity or linguistic background.

Every child should experience different teaching styles, which will facilitate his or her individual access to the whole curriculum.

We aim to instill in our pupils a sense of self-respect and respect for others by providing a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment where all members of our community feel that they have the right to be treated with courtesy and understanding and the duty to treat others similarly.

## **2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil or parent, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or sexual orientation or background, or against those whose personal circumstances relate to gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity/paternity or linguistic development.

We promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We recognise that doing this may entail treating some pupils differently.

We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.

We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.

We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.

We challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

We value each pupil's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centered on our school, aim to prepare children for living in a complex multi-cultural society and we show respect for all minority groups.

We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and/or by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes, and respect for all.

We aim to provide a safe and welcoming place for all our members and to ensure that anyone experiencing a disability is not disadvantaged.

We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage.

We will recognise in our teaching the contributions to the development of Science, Technology and the Arts which have been made by everyone.

## **3 RACIAL EQUALITY**

Our pupils are from diverse racial and cultural origins, growing up in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society where racial prejudice and hostility exist.

Our School stands against racism and all forms of discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin or religion.

## **Curriculum Support**

New pupils to the School who speak little English should receive language support out of school to maximise access to the curriculum, in addition to support provided by the School. English as an additional language provision and social interactions with the School community is essential if pupils are to develop competent skills in English language.

The various languages spoken by the children should be given full respect and recognition by staff and pupils. The school's English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy covers this in more detail.

## **Some Specific Considerations English**

When staff are choosing reading schemes, books, etc., they should consider resources:

- which portray a world view as seen from different cultural perspectives and thereby communicate how it feels to be of another ethnic or cultural group.
- which are factually accurate and use up-to-date text, illustrations and maps.
- which do not:
  - stereotype individuals or groups.
  - equate any single ethnic group with 'civilisation'.
  - use paternalistic approaches to other people or cultures.
- which show the achievements and attributes of different societies.
- which positively and realistically portray children from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups and class backgrounds.
- in which children from ethnic minority groups can find characters which enhance their self-esteem, where ethnic minority characters have important roles and adults hold positions of authority, which accurately reflect the population of Britain.
- which use a wide range of tales from different oral or cultural traditions.

## **RE**

In our School we have pupils who adhere to many different religions or to none. We strive to give all pupils some understanding of this complex subject and of the importance of respecting different faiths and viewpoints. Pupils should understand the differences in dress, hairstyles and diet. At the times of major events in the religious calendars of different faiths pupils are encouraged to talk about and discuss their customs and beliefs.

We also ensure that our pupils have a knowledge of Bible stories and of Judeo-Christian influence on the development of thought and culture.

## **General**

- Staff make an effort to develop a sound understanding of their pupils' backgrounds; this gives them a greater ability to deal with any problems that may develop in those areas and help to eradicate any stereotypical views of other groups.
- Staff treat all pupils equally regardless of their racial and cultural origin and are aware of the need to avoid expressions or remarks suggestive of stereotyping.
- Complaints of racial harassment, although extremely rare, are taken very seriously and are investigated and dealt with promptly and firmly. It is made clear that this type of behaviour is completely unacceptable. If any pupil were to persist in racist behaviour the parents would be made aware of the problem and asked to co-operate with the School in overcoming it. If there was still no improvement, they would be asked to remove the child.

Help, support and counselling would be given as appropriate to everyone involved.

## **4 DISABILITY NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Equality Act 2010 (which repealed and replaced the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 except in relation to Northern Ireland) aims to end discrimination against people with disabilities and to improve access in all areas of life. It is unlawful for schools and Local Education Authorities to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in admissions and exclusions, in education, and in associated services.

It is unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises. Along with all other public buildings, our school is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable access.

Our Accessibility Plan details the changes required to our buildings and to other aspects of our school, so that we fulfil our legal requirements, and remove barriers to inclusion for all pupils and staff with disabilities.

### **What Is Disability?**

- The Equality Act defines disability as when a person has a "physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments and learning difficulties. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. The Act sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.
- Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

### **Removing Barriers**

- Disabilities can limit the extent to which children are able to participate in the curriculum, and can impede the delivery of information. So, for example, if a child suffers from hearing loss, the teacher will always try and face the child when addressing the class, or, in severe cases, the teacher may wear a microphone and transmitter.
- The Accessibility Plan covers the measures we have already taken, and are still taking, to improve our school within the limits of the resources available and its physical environment.

### **The Curriculum**

- We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.
- Our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.
- The school regularly reviews the way resources are matched to the needs of all the children. If necessary, to improve our provision, adjustments will be made to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.
- Many of the adjustments we make are dependent upon individual needs, and Individual Support Plans are effective and manageable.
- Information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about school events) will be made available in alternative formats that are clear and user-friendly. These include Braille, audio tape, and large print. It may be transmitted orally, through lip-speaking, sign language, through a recognised symbol system, or ICT.
- We seek and respond to guidance from the parents and the children to help us meet their individual needs.

### **Information**

We always take account of disabilities, be they the pupils' or their parents'. For example, communication with a parent who is visually impaired may need to be by telephone rather than by letter.

### **Staffing**

- When advertising posts, interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.
- Should a member of staff become disabled, the governing body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements and to the premises, in order to enable them to continue in post.
- All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.
- This school will liaise with specialists and staff to support individual pupils.

### **Health and safety**

- Members of staff follow the school procedures both for the storage and administration of medicines to pupils. We have procedures for blood or other bodily substances to be cleared away.

- The school has members of staff qualified in giving first-aid treatment, and the emergency services will be called, should they be required.

## **5 GENDER NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Staff should choose resources which:

- Portray a world view as seen from male and female perspectives.
- Which show the achievements and attributes of both sexes, past and present.
- Show children of both sexes involved in the activities described e.g. science, design, music, mathematics and the arts.
- In which both boys and girls can find characters which enhance their self-esteem, where males and females have important roles and hold positions of authority.

The School does not believe that males being the dominant gender or females the subservient gender. No gender should dominate the other for reasons of gender alone.

### **Subject Specific Considerations: PE**

Up to Year 2 children participate in physical activities together and experience all sports. From Year 3 upwards boys and girls take part in a variety of mixed sports and are able to select the sport they wish to participate in.

At break times all pupils play together.

## **6. POLICY INTO PRACTICE**

The governing body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate.

The Headmistress will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

### **The Role of Governors**

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

The governing body collects, analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving. To do this we monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parents' and pupils' questionnaires.

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 has a bearing on school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively, and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

### **The Role of the Headmistress**

It is the Headmistress's role to implement the school's policy on equal opportunities, and she is supported by the governing body in so doing.

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

The Headmistress ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against.

The Headmistress promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and in providing opportunities for training.

The Headmistress promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life; in the assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it is also in displays around the school.

The Headmistress views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern.

### **The Role of the Teacher**

When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources which give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.

We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how we approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics include examples of the significant contributions women have made in this country's history. In geography 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 and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents and draw them to the attention of the Headmistress.

It is the responsibility of the school to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The Headmistress will therefore:

- monitor the progress of pupils from minority groups, comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitor the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity;
- monitor the school's behaviour policy, and the numbers of exclusions, to make sure that pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

The Headmistress will report to governors annually on the effectiveness of this policy.

## **7 MONITORING**

We have high expectations of all our pupils. We monitor a range of data to make sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible, and that no groups of pupils are underachieving.

We monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- parental and pupil questionnaires.

Evaluations based on these data are then reported to the governing body, and an action plan will be drawn up if necessary.

Our policy has been devised with reference to the Equality Act 2010. More detail can be found in the school's Cultural, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy.

This policy also applies to the **Early Years Foundation Stage**.