

Highters Heath Community School Community School

Equal Opportunities Policy



September 2021

POLICY FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Highters Heath Community School aims to provide all pupils with equal opportunities. They should have equal access and opportunities within the Curriculum, both formal and informal, so that when leaving our school, they have the widest possible options available to them, educationally, socially and vocationally.

Highters Heath Community School supports equal opportunities by countering stereotypes and prejudice, reducing the effects of sexual, racial and social discrimination, while at the same time acknowledging the diverse cultural and educational needs of our pupils.

Equality of opportunity for all children is essential, whatever their age, ability, gender, race or background. We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by his or her environment. We want all our pupils to achieve their full potential during their time with us. We work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, and practices – in particular those relating to gender – do not prevent any child from fulfilling his or her potential.

We understand that, as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop, their perception of gender roles alters. We also accept that such perceptions are influenced by other factors, including home, peer group and the media.

Children of both genders have equal opportunity within, and equal access to, all areas of the School Curriculum. This includes the Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets for the National Curriculum subjects, other subject areas currently outside the National Curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

- ◆ Efforts are made to recognise, and be aware of, the possibility of gender bias in our teaching and learning materials and in our teaching styles.
- ◆ Materials are selected carefully for all areas of the Curriculum to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias and celebrate sexual diversity.
- ◆ Impartiality is demonstrated by teacher time, attention and resources being given equally to boys and girls, who are encouraged to work and play freely together.
- ◆ Opportunities are given for children to work with male and female teaching and non-teaching staff when staffing allows.

Teaching and other groupings, such as dinner queues, assembly seating, lines for dismissal, classroom seating and playground areas, are organised by criteria other than gender or race, for example, age, ability, friendship.

Equality is demonstrated when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of children.

- ◆ Discipline – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for all children.

- ◆ Our school uniform policy embodies the same standards for all children.
- ◆ Separate toilets and separate changing facilities for swimming are provided.
- ◆ Children and staff are encouraged to respect and value each other, and build and maintain co-operative working relationships both within school and in the community.

Equal opportunities should be a regular topic of discussion in assemblies, check-in, lessons, staff meetings, PTA and governors' meetings. Any discrimination that arises inside or outside the classroom is handled sensitively and discussed with the children. We recognise that all prejudice should be actively confronted, and we must be aware of everybody's needs. We encourage pupils to respect each other's race and nationality, gender, disabilities, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and transgender identity.

All incidents relating to discrimination and prejudice will be monitored and evaluated by the designated member of staff within the school to ensure that satisfactory outcomes are achieved.

LGBT

School staff will consistently use the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual and heterosexual to describe sexual orientation when and where appropriate with children. School staff will use agreed definitions for these terms when supporting children's learning and understanding about such issues, to ensure consistency in our school's approach to sexual orientation.

The agreed definitions are:

gay/ homosexual: a person with emotional feelings for someone of the same gender and who is attracted to someone of the same gender.

lesbian: a female with emotional feelings for another female and who is attracted to someone who is female.

bisexual: a person with emotional feelings for both males and females and who is attracted to both males and females.

transgender: a person appearing or trying to be a member of the opposite gender.

trans-sexual: a person who has a strong desire to take on the role and physical characteristics of the opposite gender.

heterosexual: a person with emotional feelings for, and who is attracted to, someone of the opposite gender.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Highters Heath Community School recognises the value of evaluating and monitoring equal opportunities; measures include:

- ◆ reviewing attendance and punctuality – analysing reasons for absence – where patterns affect particular groups of children
- ◆ reviewing the quality of relationships between different groups of children
- ◆ analysing the attainment and progress of pupils, highlighting significant variations in attainment among pupils of different gender, ethnicity or background.

Staffing

We provide all staff at Highters Heath Community School with equal opportunities. No teaching or non-teaching post is gender-specific and, when appointing staff, recruitment procedures recommended by the Local Authority will be followed.

Tasks, duties and responsibilities are allocated without discrimination. Men and women are encouraged to teach all age groups. All staff have equal access to professional development and posts of responsibility.

All members of staff review regularly practices and approaches involving equal opportunity.

Further Information

Useful Documents and Resources

CRE	Learning for All – Standards for Racial Equality in Schools 2000
DfES for	What the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 Means Schools and LEAs (Circular 20/99)
DfES/Home Office	Social Inclusion: Pupil Support (Circular 10/99)
EOC	Sex Discrimination in Schools 1991
EOC	The Gender Divide 1996