

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL



Equal Opportunities Policy

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS

RESPONSIBLE PERSON - HEADTEACHER

January 2017

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Statement of intent

We have created this Equal Opportunities Policy because we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity; to removing barriers to learning; and to recognising and challenging, where possible, barriers which prevents the full access of children and young people to the rights and services which are guaranteed to them through both national and international law.

We hope that, by establishing a clear framework in which to govern the treatment of all pupils at our school, we can remove human prejudice from the decision-making process and overcome any inequality, ensuring that every child and young person that attends our school receives an education which offers them the best chance to be all that they can be.

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Equality Act 2010
- 1.2. This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DfE 'The Equality Act and schools' 2014
 - DfE 'Promoting the education of looked after children' 2014
- 1.3. This policy is related to the following other school policies:
 - Children Looked After Policy
 - SEN Policy
 - Anti-bullying Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Behaviour Management Policy
 - Data Protection Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The Headteacher will implement this policy, ensuring that all staff and pupils apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- 2.2. The Headteacher will ensure training is provided for all members of staff to raise awareness of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- 2.3. It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to the possible harassment of pupils, both inside and outside of the school, and to deal with incidents of harassment/discrimination as the highest priority.
- 2.4. The Headteacher will review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- 2.5. Teachers will have due regard to the sensitivities of all pupils, and not provide material that may cause offence.

3. Data protection

- 3.1. The school will adopt secure controls on sensitive personal data, ensuring all data is accurate, secure and processed fairly and lawfully.
- 3.2. The school will gain consent from the pupil and parents/carers before any sensitive personal data is processed.
- 3.3. The school will respect all pupils' right to privacy and will not disclose a pupil's trans* status or sexual orientation to any other pupils, staff members or third parties.¹
- 3.4. The school holds a Data Protection Policy containing further information addressing data protection.

4. Protected characteristics

- 4.1. We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of their:
 - Sex
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Religion or belief
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy or maternity
- 4.2. We will not discriminate against a pupil, or prospective pupil, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent/carer, with whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated. .

5. Sex

- 5.1. We will ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to pupils of other sexes, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.
- 5.2. There may be occasions where we deem it necessary to teach some subjects in single-sex classes, such as sex and relationship education (SRE), but we will ensure that such classes do not give children an unfair disadvantage when compared to children of the other sex in other classes.

¹ Trans* is an umbrella term that refers to all of the identities within the gender identity spectrum.

- 5.3. Both sexes will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities.

6. Race and ethnicity

- 6.1. We will ensure that pupils of all races and ethnicities (including those who have English as an additional language) are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.
- 6.2. We will not segregate pupils on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' cannot be sustained, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

7. Disability

- 7.1. We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably than other pupils due to the nature of their disability, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure they are fair.
- 7.2. We will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide auxiliary aids where possible to secure full access to the curriculum for all pupils.
- 7.3. We will review accessibility planning needs and ensure any premises alternations take full account of the variety of needs of our pupils.
- 7.4. The school holds a SEN Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for pupils with SEN.

8. Religion and belief

- 8.1. We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.

9. Sexual orientation

- 9.1. We will ensure that any gay, lesbian and bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents/carers, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils, regularly reviewing our school practices to ensure that they are fair.
- 9.2. We will ensure that we deliver SRE sessions in line with legal and ethical requirements appropriate for our pupils

10. Looked after children

- 10.1. We will ensure that pupils are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

- 10.2. The school holds a Children Looked After Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for CLA.

11. The curriculum

- 11.1. We believe that pupils should be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, and will not make any unjustified changes to our curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a pupil may have.
- 11.2. We will ensure, however, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way as to prevent discrimination, and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.
- 11.3. The observation of inclusive teaching strategies is a key aspect of the school leadership team's annual programme of monitoring.
- 11.4. We will respect the right of parents/carers to withdraw their child from religious education classes.

12. Promoting inclusion

- 12.1. We will promote inclusion and equality at our school through:
- Ensuring that pupils are called by their preferred names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
 - Ensuring, as far as possible, that our Governing Board and school staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
 - Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
 - Instilling, where appropriate in pupils an awareness of prejudice.
 - Providing a variety of curriculum and educational visit opportunities which expose pupils to a range of cultural experiences.
 - Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
 - Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
 - Communicating our policy to parents/carers to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
 - Discussing equality issues as an agenda item for the school council.

13. Supporting pupils with medical conditions

13.1. We will ensure that any medical conditions related to a pupil with a protected characteristic is fully supported in line with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions in School Policy.

14. Pupils that have left school

14.1. Our liability not to discriminate, harass or victimise does not end when a pupil has left the school, but will continue to apply with regards to subsequent actions related to our previous relationship with the pupil, such as the provision of references.

15. The Public Sector Equality Duty

15.1. We will meet our duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding pupils who have any of the protected characteristics outlined in [section 4](#).
- Equality objectives (at least every four years) outlining how we may further equality in our school.

15.2. There are some protected characteristics where statistical data is less likely to be readily available, and pupils will not be pressured into providing information related to any characteristic which they may identify with.

16. Bullying and discrimination

16.1. Our Anti-bullying Policy will be used in conjunction with this policy in order to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents.

16.2. Any incidents of a safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Safeguarding Policy.

16.3. It will be up to the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Officer to decide whether it is appropriate to notify social services, and/or the police, of any incident.

16.4. Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in our Complaints Policy.

17. Staff training

17.1. New staff will receive relevant training on the provisions of this policy during their HR induction.

17.2. Staff will receive the appropriate equalities training on an annual basis, which will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide support for teachers to effectively manage any discrimination towards pupils with protected characteristics.
- Provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- Develop appropriate strategies for communication between parents, educators and pupils about any issues related to a protected characteristic.
- Ensure that the school is aware of, and participates in, relevant awareness days, such as Black History Month, World Disability Day, and International Women's Day.

18. Policy review

18.1. This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher on a bi-annual basis, updated where appropriate, and duly communicated to staff members.