



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Introduction

Our school's mission statement talks of valuing the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, race, culture or religion, home language, attainment, age, learning difficulty, ability, disability, gender or family background.

Aims and objectives

In line with the Equality Act (2010) and as employers and providers of education, the school does not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil or parent, with regard to the protected characteristics as enumerated in the Equality Act (2010):

- Sex
- Age
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity

We promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school. We value diversity and differences. 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, so that the individual needs of all children will be met.

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, inappropriate attitudes and practices and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

We value each pupil's worth and we show respect for all minority groups. All pupils are included, valued and supported in the school.

We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and 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.

Pupils are encouraged to value and respect others through the tutorial system, social, moral and cultural education, class discussions, assemblies and the emphasis on character development

The Laurels School is committed to working with parents and other agencies as required in order to ensure that our aims in terms of equal opportunities are met.

Racial Equality

In our school we will:

- Strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups.

It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the school can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the school. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures (see Behaviour policy) and report it to the governing body.

We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups.

Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups.

Disability Non-discrimination

Some children in our school may have disabilities or special educational needs. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled children.

The school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children or those with special educational needs full access to all areas of learning.

Teachers make reasonable adjustments by modifying teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities or learning difficulties. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, or modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

The Role of Governors

In this policy statement the PACT 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 seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment properly accommodates people with disabilities.

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 her race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. If a child's culture or 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' role to implement the school's Policy on Equal Opportunities, and she is supported by the Senior Management Team and governing body in so doing.

It is the Headmistress' 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 Assembly, for example, respect for other people is a regular theme, as it also is in displays around the school.

The Headmistress views all incidents of unfair treatment, and any racist incidents, with due concern. Any allegations and incidences of a serious nature are recorded in an Incidents Book.

The Role of the Teacher

Teachers recognise their own prejudices, but do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.

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.

All our staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. Teachers will endeavour to speak to all parties concerned as soon as possible after any such incident. If the matter is not resolved or in the case of a more serious incident, parents may be informed and a meeting may be requested with the Headmistress. The Senior Management Team discuss any such incidences during their weekly meetings, and they ensure that any notes are recorded in the Incidents Book.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the PACT governing body to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the inclusive practices at The Laurels. The governors will therefore:

- require the Headmistress to report on the effectiveness of this policy;
- 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.

Signed: Linda Sanders, Headmistress

Title	Equal Opportunities Policy	Author	Linda Sanders
2.4	Autumn Term 2021	Reviewed by SMT	Head
Next Review Date	Autumn Term 2024	Reviewed by SMT	Head