

Gullane Primary School



Equal Opportunities Policy
May 2009

AIMS

RATIONALE

The school is required to conform to the wishes of the Equal Opportunities commission that opposes all forms of discrimination and states that schools should provide equal opportunities for all children and staff. The philosophy of 'inclusion' encompasses equal opportunities for all.

AIMS

- To endorse the principle of inclusion for all at our school
- To provide equality of opportunity for all children and staff whatever their age, ability, disability, gender, religion, race, background or culture.
- To work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes and practices are in line with inclusion for all
- To provide equality of opportunity through its ethos and working practices
- To implement the advice and procedures outlined in the East Lothian Council's Race Equality guidelines

We aim to provide equality of opportunity for all children whatever their age, ability, gender, race, background or culture. We want all our children to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes and practices do not prevent any child from reaching their potential.

As a school we work to employ certain strategies to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all of the life and work of the school.

We recognise that a child's self perception can be influenced by his/her environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence by positively working to reduce any bias or stereotyping and promote equality of opportunity.

Gender

- We are aware that as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop, their perception of sex roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer group and the media.
- Teaching and other groupings, queuing, classroom seating and playground areas are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship.
- Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.
- Any differences involving gender which arise inside or outside the classroom are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.
- We will ensure that no staff member is discriminated against because of his or her gender.

Race or Cultural Background

- Under the amended 'Race Relations Act' (2001) it is unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their race.
- Through implementation of the East Lothian Council's 'Race Relations Guidelines' we will ensure that children/parents/staff from different ethnic groups, cultures, religions and background are provided equality of opportunity and are not discriminated against either openly or covertly.
- Through our teaching we take positive steps to promote mutual understanding and respect for people from different backgrounds.
- We follow the East Lothian Council's 'Anti-bullying and Anti-Racist Procedures' Policy for recording racist incidents.

Age

- We make efforts to ensure that children of different ages are provided with appropriate activities and that children are not excluded from activities solely on the grounds of their age.
- We will ensure that all staff are given equal opportunities within the school regardless of age.

Ability

- We want all our children to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes and practices do not prevent any child from reaching their potential whatever their ability.
- We will make efforts to ensure that all children receive equality in teaching time and support.

Disability

- "Anyone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is stated to be disabled." (Quote from Disability Rights Commission).
- Disability is not about wheelchair users only; it includes dyslexia, epilepsy, dyspraxia, diabetes, ADHD, sensory impairment and cancer.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act 2001 places new duties on all school to avoid discrimination against disabled children. It also makes it unlawful to be discriminated against because of a disability in areas of employment or access to goods, facilities and services.
- We will endeavour to provide appropriate access, both physical and through the curriculum, for all children with disabilities with appropriate support, when required, from the local authorities and outside agencies.
- Staff with disabilities will be afforded the same support.

Equal Opportunities for Children

We will:

- Ensure all children will have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. This includes the Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes and outside areas such as extra-curricular activities.
- Take account of pupils' cultural backgrounds, language needs and different learning styles in learning and teaching.
- Encourage all children to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

- Make efforts to ensure that children in different localities, rural or urban have access to the same opportunities.
- Ensure all learning materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and overt or covert discrimination.
- Ensure teacher time, specialist support, attention and all resources are given equally to all children.
- Encourage all children to work and play freely with each other.
- Ensure discipline procedures - notably rewards and sanctions - are the same for all children.
- Encourage all children and staff to value each other and build up and maintain co-operative working relationships both within school and in the community, based on mutual respect for each other.

Parents

- We will ensure that each parent/carer is treated in a manner, which ensures that they have full and equal access to support, information and resources.

Staffing

- We will ensure that in appointing staff, we endorse the statements set out in this policy and will avoid discrimination by gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, culture or age.
- All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.

Monitoring and Review

- Practices and approaches involving equal opportunity in terms of age, ability, disability, gender, religion, race or cultural background will regularly be reviewed by all members of staff when auditing aspects of ethos throughout the school.
- We will also audit our school policies to ensure they take account of inclusion and equal opportunities for all.
- Practices and procedures will also be amended in light of any changes to legislation.
- We will monitor pupil attainment/achievement and progress to ensure that we have equally high expectations of all pupils and no pupil is underachieving because of race, gender, ability, disability, age or culture.
- The Head Teacher will be responsible for the overall monitoring and reporting of issues relating to equal opportunities.

M.R. Tremmel