



Greenfields Community School Equal Opportunities Policy

Vision & Aims

Equal Opportunities at Greenfields fully reflect the published aims of the school. These are: -

- To maintain high standards through teaching a rich and varied curriculum, ensuring all children reach their full potential
- To enjoy learning and teaching and to have fun
- To value and respect each other
- To draw on the strengths of our parents and our local community
- To create a safe and stimulating learning environment

1. Gender

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

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 gender bias and promoting equality of opportunity.

At the same time 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.

As a school we work to incorporate guidelines for Equal Opportunity into our primary practice. Certain strategies are employed to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all of the life and work of the school.

Children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. This includes both the Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets for the National Curriculum subjects; other subject areas currently outside the National Curriculum and areas such as 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 both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles
- Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and non-teaching staff of both sexes

Teaching and other groupings, such as dinner queues, assembly seating, lines for dismissal, 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.

- Discipline procedures – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for both sexes
- Our school uniform policy reflects equality of opportunity for all children

- Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other

Any differences involving gender, which arise inside or outside the classroom, are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.

All teaching and non-teaching posts are not sex-specific. Both men and women are encouraged to teach all age groups and each Key Stage. All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.

Practices and approaches involving equal opportunity in terms of gender issues are regularly reviewed by all members of staff.

2. Access for All

We will strive to make the school accessible to all pupils, parents and staff regardless of any disability. The building has been adapted for wheel-chair access, including ramps, wide doorways, open-plan classroom areas and a toilet for people with disabilities.

We will make every effort to ensure that no pupil, parent or member of staff is excluded from any activity because of different abilities.

Where necessary and where possible, we will adapt activities and resources to make them accessible to people of different abilities.

3. Ethnic Diversity

The school maintains the ideal of 'Education For All', appreciating that in our pluralistic society members of all ethnic groups, whether minority or majority, should be recognised and valued.

Children are prepared for life in a multicultural society. They are helped towards an awareness that people in Britain today come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and ethnic origins and as such may have their own distinct language, religion, and culture; including such aspects as music, food, literature and customs.

We aim to help children to develop the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes with which to play a full and active part in our multicultural society.

As a cross-curricular dimension, the issue of 'Education For All' permeates all aspects of life in school and is encompassed within the teaching of many subjects in the curriculum, notably Music, English, Drama, Art, Geography and RE. It is an integral part of the whole curriculum and is not seen as a separate subject.

Through a variety of learning experiences the children will be able to explore the contributions of different cultural, racial and religious groups in our society and at the same time broaden their knowledge and understanding of such groups. In this way it is hoped that the children's awareness and respect for cultural and ethnic diversity in the classroom, the school or the community will be developed.

Work to develop this cross-curricular dimension may be included in both class and whole school based topics or themes. For example a topic such as, 'food' or 'light' may focus on various aspects of one (or more) of a community's culture and life. Both religious and secular festivals provide excellent opportunities in which to consider ethnic diversity and could be included in class and school assemblies. A topic in geography will also provide an opportunity to consider other cultures and ethnic backgrounds. The use of literature in the form of story and poetry may provide a useful vehicle for encouraging children to recognise and understand people from other races, cultures and religions.

Through the partnership that exists between home, school and the community, we hope to enrich the curriculum by encouraging people from other cultures, religions and ethnic backgrounds to visit school and share their experiences and ideas with the children.

Teachers are encouraged to consider the information they place before the children. Resources are carefully selected for use with the children to ensure that they do not display a cultural or racial bias or show stereotyping or prejudice. Such resources, where possible should reflect life in multicultural Britain. Cultural similarities as well as differences should be highlighted.

As a school we actively promote attitudes and values that enable the children to recognise the worth of every individual. The children are encouraged to respect themselves and others, be it in pupil–pupil relationships, pupil–staff relationships and relationships with others in the school and wider community. Tolerance and understanding of others is promoted amongst children and staff who are encouraged to appreciate individual differences.

Through our general routines in school and in the classroom we strive to ensure that our practices and procedures are not discriminatory in any way.

As a school we acknowledge and respond to the differing needs of all individuals whatever their cultural or ethnic background and experiences. Therefore all individuals receive equality of opportunity in our school. Where necessary the curriculum can be adapted so as to respond to the particular needs of a group of children, for example where English is a second language.

Staff try to eliminate any bias towards or against any particular group or individual. They are asked to respond positively in their approach to incidents relating to race or religion be it in the classroom or the playground or with parents.

4. Inclusion

" Inclusion" can be defined as:-

"The process by which all those who provide education develop their cultures, policies and practices so as to include all learners. It is a crucial part of strategic planning for improvement. An educationally inclusive school is one in which the learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of all learners matter. They are able to engender a sense of community and belonging, and also offer new opportunities to learners who may have experienced previous difficulties. This does not mean that they treat all learners the same way. Rather, it involves taking account of learners' varied life experiences and needs."

OFSTED is now using the term "educational inclusion" to cover all the following equalities groups: -

- o Girls and boys, men and women
- o Black and Minority Ethnic and faith groups
- o Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- o Learners with "special educational needs"
- o "Gifted and talented" learners
- o Children "looked after" by the local authority
- o Sick children
- o Young carers
- o Children from families under stress
- o Learners at risk of disaffection and exclusion

Guidance in Implementing the Policy

- Staff who follow up absences should be aware of, and sensitive to, relevant community issues
- There must be an awareness of the rights of staff and learners to provision made for leave of absence for religious observance.
- Results should be monitored by ethnicity as well as overall.
- Expectations must be high for all learners in the school.
- Cultural, linguistic or gender bias must be removed from all aspects of school life.
- The access needs of all learners should be addressed so that they do not face barriers to learning, particularly in any assessment processes.
- Learners should be appropriately supported in assessments so that they are able to show fully both what they know and what they can do.
- Specific attention should be paid to identifying and meeting the needs of groups that are particularly disadvantaged.
- The school will publicly support and value diversity, actively promote inclusion and openly oppose all forms of discrimination.
- There should be a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust between learners and staff from different groups.
- Children must be encouraged to share their worries and fears with adults.
- School discipline must be fair and equitable.
- Teaching styles should include collaborative learning so that learners appreciate the value of working together.
- Teachers and tutors should use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural traditions.
- Learners should have the opportunity to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality, and to make connections with their own lives.

- All posts within the school, including those for non-teaching staff, should be formally and equitably advertised and open to the widest pool of applicants.
- All those involved in recruitment and selection should be aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure good practice throughout the selection and recruitment process.
- Questions relating to equalities and inclusion issues should be raised at all staff interviews.
- Any incidents of staff harassment or bullying will be recorded and analysed on equalities grounds.
- All information and material for parents/carers should be made accessible in user-friendly language.

This policy should be read together with the school's policies on:-

Equal Opportunities
Policy for Dealing With Racist Incidents
Religious Education
Behaviour
Bullying
Special Educational Needs
PSHE and Citizenship

A Gender Awareness Checklist

An awareness of Gender should begin as soon as the child comes into school. Within our school there should be no activities that are solely for boys or girls. All children should experience the whole school curriculum without bias.

Here are some Gender questions to ask yourself.

- 1 How much time do we spend responding to disruptive behaviour by boys compared to girls?
- 2 How do we evaluate the time we spend with boys and girls in the classroom?
- 3 Do we expect girls to be quieter and better behaved?
- 4 Do we expect boys to be more imaginative and resourceful?
- 5 Do we expect girls to be more sensible and responsible?
- 6 What behaviour do we reward and punish in boys and girls?
- 7 How do we encourage other patterns of behaviour e.g. helping girls to participate and boys to listen?
- 8 How do we group children in the class? Do we have them in single sex groups or mixed groups? There may be times for both types of groups.
- 9 How do we line, or allow the children to line up, to come into school, walk around the school and go into the hall?

Gender Opportunities in the Curriculum

- 1 Opportunities should be provided for both boys and girls to participate in activities that may have a 'Gender Bias' e.g. boys washing brushes, pots, sweeping floors, sewing, cooking etc. Girls having the chance to play with lego and 'boys' toys, to have maximum participation in Science, Maths, Technology etc.
- 2 Girls need to be encouraged from early years, to investigate and play with building and mechanical materials and regularly have experience of 3D work. There is evidence that deprivation of these early experiences result in poor mathematical attainment at a later age. If possible encourage the girls to be first with these materials. Let them discover and then show and teach the boys.
- 3 There is also some evidence that boys do less well than girls in language and communication and boys need to be encouraged to take part in activities that will help them to develop these skills.
- 4 At school are currently well off for positive female role models from different ethnic groups, but not so well off for equivalent male role models.
- 5 However we can encourage visitors into school, especially from ethnic groups.
- 6 Do look at books and material within the class, the corridors and library including posters and display. Try to avoid gender and ethnic stereotyping. The library was examined and heavily restocked in 1997 and has continual update and reviews. New books are selected with care. We are always striving to add to our resources (jigsaws, topic packs), to ensure that they promote a variety of positive images (new suppliers are welcome).
- 7 In Early Years - home corners should take on various descriptions e.g. shops, post office, office, burger bars, garage etc., all of which should reflect our multi-cultural society. They could become clothes shops with clothes from various cultures or a hairdressers showing various ways people dress their hair etc. (it may be advisable to use dolls and dolls heads for the hairdressers so that brushes and combs are not shared by the children.). During role play we must ensure that both girls and boys adopt a variety of roles in their play.
- 8 Be conscious of gender stereotyping, especially that of the portrayal of the male 'macho' image, which can be powerfully portrayed through all forms of media. We need to assist boys to come to terms with stereotypical portrayal of masculinity by acknowledging this tendency. We then try to provide counter images of alternative male role models.

