

COPTHILL SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy

1 Introduction

Equal opportunities, in a school situation, means ensuring that every individual has equal access to an education or to career development in education. Equality means having the same rights and status as everybody else.

This policy outlines how our school ensures that equality is being promoted, outlines what provision is available and what action is to be taken. It is the responsibility of the whole school community to abide by our policy.

This policy takes account of the Equalities Act 2010

2 The Aims of the Equal Opportunities Policy

At Copthill School we believe that every member of our school community has the right to receive education or employment in an environment which is free from prejudice. Every pupil has the right to receive the best possible education. We are committed to providing all our pupils with an equal opportunity to thrive in a setting free from discrimination in all its forms. We strive to be a school where adults and children, whatever their race, religion, gender, abilities, family and social circumstances, will find safety and respect for themselves, their families and their traditions. Our policy should ensure that every member of our community respects others and is respected, achieves his or her full potential and is welcomed and valued.

To make this commitment real, we aim to develop policies and practices based on the particular needs of our school and its community.

We aim to:

- ✓ ensure that pupils have the opportunity to reach their potential in all areas of school life;***
- ✓ ensure that parents and pupils can make choices free from prejudice and stereotyping;***
- ✓ oppose any form of racism, sexism or any other form of discrimination;***
- ✓ value every pupil's language and cultural background;***
- ✓ promote respect between cultures.***

3 Ethos and Atmosphere

The school positively values all the staff and pupils and welcomes diversity.

We seek to promote the achievement of all pupils. Teaching staff make time to praise

children for their behaviour, contributions and their work. Each week we hold an assembly where children are publicly awarded for achievement in all areas of school life. All pupils will have examples of their work displayed in classrooms and corridors.

Our assemblies and Religious Education promote justice, fairness and equality as well as informing pupils of many different religious stories, traditions and beliefs.

We have a children's School Council which meets regularly to discuss concerns and suggestions raised in classes. The councillors are elected by their class members. The council initiates many discussions and makes contributions to the decision making process of issues concerning children in the school.

Equal opportunities is discussed as part of our PSHE. Children and class teachers contribute to rules and expectations at the beginning of each school year and address equal opportunity and how they are going to ensure equality in the classroom.

Playground behaviour is monitored and unacceptable behaviour challenged to ensure that pupils are safe and free from harassment. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with immediately. We have developed systems to deal with playground incidents. Offensive remarks or behaviour based upon prejudice or misinformation are always challenged (refer to Behaviour Management Policy).

4 An Inclusive Curriculum

At Copthill School pupils have the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills, concepts and experiences through their participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We have high expectations of all our pupils and do not make assumptions about ability or areas of interest.

The school aims to deliver an inclusive curriculum with due regard to three key principles:

- 1 setting suitable learning challenges;
- 2 responding to pupils' diverse learning needs;
- 3 overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage makes the same commitment to meet the diverse needs of children through:

- ✓ careful planning;
- ✓ appropriate teaching strategies and support;
- ✓ providing a safe environment where racial, religious, disability, class and gender stereotypes are challenged.

Religion is taught within certain topics as well as in assemblies and as a subject in its own right. Religions, cultures, traditions and societies are presented by the teacher with equal respect and value. When discussing these issues, teachers focus upon similarities as well as on differences.

Children who speak English as an additional language and those who have been identified

as having educational or physical needs are considered in all aspects of planning, teaching and assessment.

Observing inclusive teaching strategies is a key element of the Senior Management Team's annual programme of monitoring.

5 Classroom Management and Organisation

All class teachers develop strategies to ensure appropriate access to classroom equipment and **resources***. In the classroom, teachers regularly mix groups working together to enable pupils to work with a variety of class members. As some styles of teaching can advantage particular pupils, we use a variety of strategies which include whole class teaching, group discussions, paired and individual activities.

6 Pupil Welfare and Guidance

Pupils are offered sympathetic support by their class teacher and other members of the school community. We have a carefully planned programme of personal and social education which includes sex education.

There are planned opportunities, often arising from literacy and humanity topics, to discuss equality issues, to challenge stereotyping, discrimination and harassment. This ensures that these issues are dealt with pro-actively, not just after an incident. We have developed a behaviour policy and an anti-bullying policy which includes positive strategies and monitoring procedures.

***Resources**

The term "resources" is used to include all the learning materials used in school.

We intend for pictures and posters on display around the school to present positive images of people from all sections of our society. We aim to show a positive portrayal of women and men, people of different ages, physical abilities, races and religions, across the social class spectrum.

KS2 children are encouraged to challenge stereotyping, prejudice and omissions in existing resource material. We aim to meet specific resource needs for pupils of different abilities. Please see the Special Needs Policy for further information.

7 Staff

The school is committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. Further details of some relevant legal provisions are set out in this policy.

A commitment to equal opportunities is included in the selection criteria for all posts.

8 Equal Opportunities Affecting Particular Groups

There are times when an individual or group of people need additional support to assist them in reaching their full potential. It is our aim to recognise these areas for concern and to act accordingly. We have identified particular groups and we aim to address equality in the following ways:

Class

The school values all its staff and pupils. We are not judgmental of our families regarding their employment status and all people are valued regardless of social background and social or economic needs.

Gender

We specifically encourage girls to achieve in curriculum areas such as Science, Information Technology and Design and Technology which have in the past been dominated by male students. We actively encourage boys in activities which have traditionally been seen as in the female domain.

Language

Bilingualism is seen as a positive advantage. Children are encouraged and given opportunities to use their first language. Bilingual pupils work with monolingual pupils who provide good role models of language use at their own level.

Learning Ability

We recognise that all pupils are entitled to follow a broad and balanced curriculum and we aim to ensure that all pupils have access to such a curriculum. Children with an IEP or a statement of need are treated with equal respect and value. All staff have high expectations of all pupils.

There is a wide range of resources available to cater for pupils of all abilities and work is often differentiated so that pupils can achieve personal goals.

Physical Ability

The school welcomes staff and pupils with differing physical abilities.

Staff are made aware of pupils' individual needs and how to cope with them (e.g. asthma attacks) in a safe, sensitive and practical way.

For more information about how the school meets the needs of children with differing learning or physical abilities, please see the Special Educational Needs Policy, Staff Handbook and Health and Safety Policy.

Race

Britain consists of a racially diverse population and we recognise that our multi-cultural society enriches schools in a positive way. All staff and pupils are encouraged to adopt a respectful awareness of other cultures and languages, to be thoughtful, tactful and to examine

and be critical of their own racial prejudices. It is important to remember that racism can take place on a conscious and unconscious level.

Resources should give a positive view of our multi-racial society and encourage respect for people as individuals. Resources should present a global view of the world.

Religion

We welcome families of any religious or non-religious persuasion. All individuals have the right to express their religious views and practices within the constraints of the National Curriculum, whilst maintaining respect for the belief of others.

Lessons and assemblies regarding religion give pupils opportunities to learn about the variety of world religions. Pupils are encouraged to accept and respect a variety of religious and cultural views within the religions studied. Pupils are encouraged to challenge stereotypes and discuss diversity.

Displays and resources should reflect the diversity of religions. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from R.E. lessons and collective worship.

Sexuality

The school welcomes parents, carers and staff, whatever their sexual orientation.

9 Dealing with Harassment

Harassment on account of ability, gender, race, religion, sexuality are unjust and totally unacceptable. Harassment can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments and jokes.

We aim to take all incidents of harassment seriously. We have developed a clear procedure for dealing with complaints and grievances including those regarding harassment. For more information, please see the handbook.

10 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher and Directors monitor the policy, its effectiveness and any issues arising.