

Mount Street Junior School



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Headteacher:

Date:

Date for Review:

Equal Opportunities Policy

The staff and governors at Mount Street Junior School are committed to delivering a strong Multicultural/Anti-racist/Equal Opportunities perspective which through the school Strategic Equality Plan ensures quality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

The school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

To do this, we:

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement data according to the various protected characteristics and action any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of the various protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- encourage classroom and staff and governor discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

We will work to achieve these aims by ensuring :

- a. Every individual within the school achieves their full potential and has the same opportunities;
- b. Every child tries out new roles and takes part in all learning activities;
- c. Every child shares the teaching spaces, playground space and other play facilities equally;
- d. Every child has equal access to creative, scientific and technological materials and to the development of related skills;
- e. Every child has equal access to PE activities;
- f. We inform and educate staff, parents and children and remind ourselves of the issues;
- g. We can live in harmony and create a more equal society;
- h. We will break down prejudices and build positive attitudes;
- i. We prevent the waste of individual talents and use the expertise available to us;
- j. We attempt to make more caring, responsible and contributory members of society;

- k. We promote knowledge, understanding and mutual respect of all members of society regardless of differences;
- l. We reduce discrimination by operating in a just and fair school society. We will report, investigate and deal with all reports of discrimination received;
- m. Continuity of approach is given throughout the school;
- n. Changing needs are responded to;
- o. Quality of life is improved for all individuals.

We will work continually to identify equal opportunity issues and implement strategies outlined in Appendix A – Procedures for identification and Strategies used to tackle Equal Opportunity issues.

Equal opportunity issues

The Race Relations Act 1976 & Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 outlines the requirement to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote racial equality and good relations between persons of different racial groups. We will work to do this by implementing the objectives outlined in our Race Equality Policy and Action Plan.

The school will aim to ensure that all its employees have fair and equal access to training appropriate to their jobs.

The Disability Discrimination Acts recognise people with disabilities have rights and ensures we recognise and provide for those rights.

The Acts define a disabled person as someone who has “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect of his/her ability to carry out normal day to day acts”. A long term effect is one lasting or expected to last for at least 12 months or the rest of his/her life.

In order to meet the provision of the Acts the school and /or the LA will need to:

A. Consider making reasonable adjustments to:

- i. The curriculum
- ii. The premises
- iii. Organisation of teaching areas
- iv. Arrangements for entering/leaving the building and teaching areas
- v. Arrangements for playtime activities.

B. Be aware of our responsibilities when we are involved in the selection and management of employees

C. Understand the issues outlined in the Act to avoid discrimination against prospective and existing employees

D. Avoid discrimination in job adverts, the application process, selection criteria, interview procedures, decisions about engagement, promotion or dismissal, the terms and conditions of employment and professional development

E. Consider reasonable adjustments to:

- Re-allocation of duties
- Re-deployment of staff

- Altering working hours
- Changing a person's place of work
- Allowing absences during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- Providing additional training
- Acquiring or modifying equipment
- Providing a reader or signer

F. Monitor and review sickness which would lead to long term impairment. Do not assume that retirement on the grounds of ill health is the appropriate course of action. Seek advice from the LA

G. Provide a meeting area for parental meetings which a parent with disabilities can access.

H. Publish arrangements for pupils with disabilities in the Governors annual report to parents

This policy was agreed by staff and governors and shall be reviewed every four years unless new legislation comes in to place.

Appendix A

Procedures for identification of and strategies used to tackle Equal Opportunity issues in school

A. Procedures for identification of Equal Opportunity Issues

We need to recognise that the experiences of all pupils differ due to the diversity of experiences and cultural background.

1. Identification of racism issues may be found through:

Fear - low self esteem, ignorance, intolerance, prejudice, misguided Nationalist feelings, media presentations, literature, religion, colonial attitudes (historical - negative assumptions), differences within racial groups, exploitation issues (national/international), family attitudes - strong influences, bigots (awareness that there are such people), behaviour issues (verbal/physical abuse, graffiti), patronising behaviour (can positive discrimination be counter productive?)

2. Identification of sexism issues may be found through:

expectations, generation gap, sport and leisure, attitudes (self image. peer groups, threatening), employment (opportunities, expectations, management, institutionalised sexism), discrimination, class (culture, religion, political), labelling/assumptions (sexuality, language), literature, TV, press (roles perpetrated), education (home, school, clubs, etc).

3. Identification of class issues may be found through:

“Classless society”, material goods (dress, designer labels), class mobility (up/down? within or between classes), self perception of class and place in the system (confidence, self esteem), ability to communicate (accent vocabulary, dialect), stereotypes (accent), income earners, family size, opportunities available (or lack of), education (2 tier), health, power and influence (behaviour, different codes), wealth/poverty (comparative measure), expectations (within class), status (royalty, aristocracy, expect patters of behaviour).

4. Identification of physical issues may be found through:

being aware of any aspect of health which may affect a child/adult at school (from parents, the persons themselves, school health, GPs, health visitors, speech therapists, etc).

maintaining a record of the above so that all necessary professional parties can have access to the information.

The need for confidentiality is important.

5. Consultation and respect for advisory and support teachers/agencies in order to ensure equal access in the classroom and school.

6. Involvement of parents.

7. Strategies to help identified children/adults, e.g. Bullies, bullied, “loners etc.

8. Active/positive participation of all staff (necessary for a successful school policy) and in-service training for staff development on equality issues.

Strategies used to tackle equal opportunity issues in a positive cross-curricular way

1. Activities of a non-stereotypical nature (role play, apparatus).
2. Give more time and space for talk (i.e. class discussion times give all children equal opportunity to voice opinion 'circle time', class time/school council) on a regular basis with all age groups throughout the school.
3. Give opportunity for individuals to discuss how they are feeling.
4. Encourage the sharing of experiences (cultural and other).
5. Role play experiences to include addressing age, disability, race and gender.
6. Clear statements on the unacceptability of: name-calling, bullying, abuse (verbal, physical).
7. Scape-goating - be aware of this potential within the peer group and among parents.
8. Awareness of peer pressure.
9. Awareness of/sensitivity to home background expectations and attitude to out of school activities and discuss issue with parents if appropriate.
10. Staff on playground duty to look for "loners", the "macho" group, assertive pupils, physical contact, tight huddles of groups, high profile pupils, the non-demanding pupils, mixed group games.
11. Monitoring groups within the classroom for: domination attitude, flexibility.
12. Clear statements of adherence to disciplinary procedures within the school (statement in the School Prospectus and agreement within the classroom), eg. reward stickers and certificates, whole class involvement, commenting on positive behaviour, self direction or peer group, encourage awareness of acceptable behaviour.
13. Clear definition and understanding of the term 'bullying: that there is a 'victim', there has been intentional threatening behaviour to others, that differences have been highlighted, that several have been at variance with one (groups/packs), that personal possessions or clothing have been damaged as a result of an aggressive plan.
14. Recognition that: children will 'clown around' as a strategy for dealing with a threatening situation, children need to be approved of by peers, a child will set his/her potential lower so that s/he does not appear different or to be approved of.
15. Provide a differentiated curriculum, by developing classroom approaches which allow individual differences but which do not make distinctions which have negative effects on children learning and developing.

16. Provide entitlement curriculum which aims to offer the same coherent and balanced curriculum and learning experiences to all learners.
17. Children will be encouraged to think about the exclusion of others and the effect it has using Kiva approach.. Children will be given games to enable work on 'partners'/ 'friends' e.g. talk to the person next to you.
18. Songs, rhymes, PE games to be introduced to individual classes and then to others to overcome bullying issues.
19. Involve all pupils in a 'rule making' and 'rule keeping' both for the classroom and the school.
20. Use targets and rewards for individuals re: acceptable behaviour/attitudes.
21. Make targets for behaviour achievable.
22. Peer approval/disapproval - involvement of children in decision making. Discussion on what is acceptable behaviour.
23. Review and update resources so that the message given should represent the children.
24. Introduction of appropriate role models in school. Teachers should act as an appropriate role model in terms of their behaviour, speech etc.
25. Ensure that all pupils have equal access to all resources. Pupils may need specific encouragement/direction in the use of materials.
26. Use assembly times to reinforce equal opportunity issues.
27. Use of books, stories to reinforce positive attitudes.