

Equal Opportunities Policy

Rationale

The School is committed to ensuring equality and celebrating diversity in the life of its pupils throughout all aspects of their education at Cheam. Equality and diversity are central to our philosophy as we aim to provide all pupils with a secure environment in which they can flourish and achieve all five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- enjoying economic wellbeing

We seek to value all individuals equally and to foster tolerance, honesty, cooperation and mutual respect in our community. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate academic and pastoral curriculum provides equal opportunities for all pupils to maximise their potential regardless of race, gender, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, religious or other beliefs. We endeavour and actively seek to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community as part of our strategy to enable pupils to maximise their potential at Cheam. The school recognises the need for pupils to learn within an environment that promotes a positive ethos and aims to raise the achievement of all pupils.

Aims of the Policy are to:-

- Ensure all staff, pupils and parents are aware of their responsibilities to ensure there are equal opportunities for all.
- Identify, where possible, and deal with, any incidents of discrimination or harassment.
- Ensure all staff and pupils are treated lawfully and fairly.
- Ensure the school provides facilities for education without sexual or racial discrimination with full regard to their age, gender, ethnic background, aptitude and any special needs.
- Ensure resources are appropriate to a pupil's needs.
- Provide every member of the community with a sense of worth and personal esteem.
- Enable individuals to develop and grow to his or her full potential.
- Recognise that all have both abilities and needs.
- Avoid stereotyping.
- Avoid attaching negative language to any group.
- Encourage mutual respect.
- Celebrate differences between people of different backgrounds whilst acknowledging that people have much in common.
- Provide positive role models for pupils of all backgrounds.
- Value the role of parents and the wider community in the school.

Actions which promote the Policy

- Value the equal rights of the individual and not tolerate any discriminating behaviour against staff or children.
- Eliminate and deal positively with any incidents of aggression, bullying or threatening behaviour.
- Provide a caring, positive environment where adults and children feel safe, secure and confident.
- Ensure children have equal opportunities to access the curriculum that is appropriate to their individual needs.
- Through planned and informal experiences promote an interest in, and share the languages, cultures and beliefs of others and to see this as an enriching experience.
- Ensure activities within school reflect the range of cultures and beliefs in our society.
- Ensure that inappropriate attitudes and behaviour that cause offence to any member of the school community are recognised and dealt with sensitively.
- Foster positive attitudes to cultural diversity, gender equality and special needs.
- Ensure all facilities and resources are available to pupils regardless of race, ability or gender.
- By example, and through the curriculum, ensure all children are taught to respect and value each other.

The School as a Multi-Faith Community

- Whilst the school is predominantly Christian, it will welcome the insights of other world faiths.
- Worship will take account of the festivals and prayers of other faiths.
- Religious education will promote an understanding of and a respect for the major world faiths.
- There will be a sensitivity to religions and cultural customs in all areas of school life, including diet and uniform.
- The school will consider any request for variation of the school uniform on ethnic, cultural or religious grounds.
- Pupils will attend Chapel. However they may pursue alternative forms of worship with the Headmaster's approval.
- Pupils for whom English is not a first language receive support, as appropriate, from our Learning Support Department.
- The Catering Department will cater for pupils with a diverse range of dietary needs and will work with individuals to ensure that their requirements are met.
- The School, through the pastoral structure, will make every effort to support individual pupils with particular cultural needs.

Individual Responsibilities

Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and everyone has a duty to ensure that equal opportunities are available to all staff, pupils and parents.

Pupils should

- Refrain from telling inappropriate jokes and using inappropriate language.
- Not wear unsuitable badges or insignia that will cause offence.
- Report any incidents of harassment to a member of staff.

- Respect each other and show tolerance, valuing one another.

Staff should

- Deal with incidents of inappropriate language and behaviour immediately.
- Support and teach children through the PSHCEE programme about appropriate and acceptable behaviour.
- Follow procedures set out in the behaviour policy.
- Report racist incidents to the relevant member of the pastoral team who will keep a record of the incident on file.
- Monitor pupils' achievement by gender, attainment and ethnicity to ensure fairness of treatment.
- Monitor and report on incidents of discrimination and harassment.

Parents should

- Stress to children the importance of social behaviour.
- Report to the tutor any suspicions they may have about discrimination or harassment.
- Actively endorse and support the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Support the school in dealing with any incidents of discrimination or harassment.

The School's Atmosphere and Environment

- The school will provide a welcoming atmosphere and an environment which is safe for all its members.
- Pupils will not be discriminated against because of their Special Educational Needs, or their academic or sporting ability.
- Relationships within the school will be governed by mutual respect between all its members, and behaviour shall include the common courtesies.
- Displays in the school will reflect the diversity of its intake and the achievements of all levels of ability.
- Anti-social behaviour will be dealt with in a way which ensures just and fair treatment for all pupils.
- The school aims to be free of graffiti, and offensive graffiti will be dealt with as a priority.

The School's Teaching Resources

- Teachers will seek to understand the nature of bias in teaching resources, so as to ensure the careful selection of textbooks and other materials to avoid stereotypes.
- The school will seek to use the diversity of its pupils, their parents and the communities from which they come as important resources.

The School's Curriculum Organisation

- The fundamental unit of teaching groups for each new intake will be mixed ability groups encompassing the full range of faith backgrounds and communities from which pupils come.
- The school will strive to make the curriculum accessible to all regardless of ability, race, culture or physical disability.

- In subjects which are set according to achievement, we will provide support to encourage the proportional representation of pupils by gender and race.
- The school will ensure that stereotyped images of subjects are avoided.

Language and Dialect in the School

- The school will encourage pupils to take a pride in their first language.
- The school will provide support for pupils whose first language is not English.
- Negative and abusive language shall not be used.
- Language should not reinforce prejudicial stereotypes.

Monitoring of the School's Equal Opportunities Policy is through:-

- Progress reports and internal school examination results
- External examination results
- The composition of sets where setting arrangements are used in different subjects
- Internal referrals for misbehaviour
- Exclusions from the school
- Parental support at meetings
- Pupil destinations at 11+ and 13+

Allegations of racist behaviour, sexual harassment or other serious breaches of this policy will be investigated and recorded by a senior member of staff.

It is an aim of Cheam to foster an atmosphere in which no person involved should be discriminated against or discriminate, on the grounds of gender, race or culture. Furthermore, positive images of other cultures should be, at all times, encouraged.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of discrimination and harassment will be in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

Reviewed: September 2022
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