



Equal Opportunities Policy

Created: November 2017 by Matt Cahill, Teacher

Reviewed: November 2018 by Nicole Bradley, Headteacher

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Contacts: Nicole Bradley

Blue Skies School

01634 357770

nicole@blueskiesschool.co.uk

Blue Skies School Equal Opportunities Policy

AIMS

- To ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all students
- To provide an environment that is safe and welcoming; and where there is respect for oneself and others
- To encourage all students to develop a positive self-image
- To promote understanding and acceptance of others whatever their age, ability, belief, ethnic origin, gender, race, sexual orientation or social background
- To enhance awareness amongst all members of our school community of the many faces of discrimination and the need to combat it
- To prepare our students to help develop a society which respected the diversity of human experience and promotes equality of opportunity
- To ensure that all sectors of the school community review their current practice in the light of this policy

1. THE CURRICULUM

All students should have an equal chance to participate in a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which enhances their diverse experiences and strengths.

1.1 Entitlement

1.1.1 Whole School

The school curriculum should reflect awareness of the ethnic, gender, class, ability, experiences, age and special needs of all students. It should promote understanding and valuing of ethnic difference and gender equality and cater for all abilities in its content and delivery.

- a) The curriculum should support the development of policies, which seek to eliminate discrimination and enhance the equality of learning opportunity for all students.
- b) It should provide opportunities for girls and boys to develop interests and skills in 'non-traditional' female/male areas and activities and encourage the continuing pursuit of this development.
- c) It should encourage students to recognise that communities here and in other parts of the world have their own values, traditions and everyday living patterns. Each should be considered in the context of its own society.
- d) It should encourage awareness and study of languages, science, arts and other cultural forms outside the western world.
- e) It should look to the political, social and economic reasons for racism sex and class discrimination, their past and current effects on our society and others throughout the world.

1.1.2 Work Experience

- a) All work related activities and guidance should demonstrate commitment to equal opportunities with regard to race, gender and ability issues.
- b) Where barriers exist, these should be challenged.
- c) The range of work experience placements should cater for all students.
- d) Where there is over-subscription, selection should not be made on the grounds of race, gender, ability or disability.

1.1.2 College Links

- a) Courses should be open to all students.
- b) Where these are over-subscribed, selection should not be made on the grounds of race, gender or ability.
- c) All information relating to courses should use language and images that are non-stereotypical.

1.2 Curriculum Content

The curriculum can be a powerful vehicle for challenging and changing attitudes.

1.2.1 Course Design

- a) The curriculum should reflect and draw on the background and experiences of all students.
- b) When addressing the curriculum and designing courses, attention should be given to meeting the mixed ability, ethnic and gender needs of the classroom.

1.2.2 Resources

- a) Resources should demonstrate the contributions made by men and women of all races to every area of learning.
- b) Resources should be critically assessed for bias or stereotyping and, where possible, should be chosen for their positive and non-stereotypical representations of diverse groups.
- c) Resources should take account of the mixed ability, ethnic and gender needs within the classroom.

1.3 Curriculum Delivery

- a) Teachers should be aware of the different learning and language need within their classrooms and develop strategies for communication with all students.
- b) Strategies should be developed which specifically seek to redress inequality of learning opportunity within the classroom.
- c) Groups tasks should actively encourage all students to work together across ethnic and gender boundaries.
- d) Teacher time should be divided between students as fairly as possible.
- e) Staff should encourage the active participation of all students.
- f) Teachers should actively seek to develop classroom management strategies that uphold the school values in a non-confrontational way.

1.5 Accessing the Curriculum

In order to achieve equal participation in the curriculum, students may need different levels and kinds of support.

- a) Each teacher is responsible for identifying the specific strengths, difficulties and needs of individual students.
- b) Systems and strategies for learning support must take account of students' entitlement to whole curriculum access.

1.6 Assessment

- a) Teachers should take account of individual needs (ability, ethnicity, gender) when designing their methods of assessment, reporting on and profiling their students.
- b) Methods of assessment should avoid ethnic or gender bias.
- c) Commenting on students' efforts and attainments should avoid actual or potential stereotyping.

2. Organisation and Administration

2.1 Admissions

It is important that every student and parent or carer feels welcome in the school.

2.3 Student Grouping

- a) Class groups should be created with a view to achieving an ethnic, gender and ability balance.
- b) Selection and grouping of students for activities should promote equality of opportunity.
- c) Registers, class lists, group lists, etc and 'link up' of students for general purposes should be in alphabetical order.
- d) Students are entitled access to their files. These should be organised corporately and individually to reflect the school's commitment to equal opportunities.

2.2 Language

Language plays a powerful part in the creation of a person's self-image.

- a) All words containing a specific gender reference should be avoided.
- b) All forms of sexist, racist or personally offensive language and remarks from staff or students are unacceptable. If any occur, they should be dealt with according to specific guidelines. (refer to anti-racist policy)

2.5 School Functions

- a) Participation in all school functions (e.g. assemblies, presentation evenings, etc.) should reflect the composition of the whole school community and provide models of achievement for all.
- b) Assemblies should be viewed as valuable forums for promoting diverse cultural experience, a balanced representation of gender experiences and a range of ability.
- c) Visits and trips should be organised with an awareness of their implications for equal opportunities.

2.6 School/Home Communication

2.6.1 Letters and Information

- a) Standard letters and information packs should be available
- b) Letters home should be jargon-free and written in as clear and direct a style as possible.
- c) Correct titles and family names should be used.
- d) Photographs/illustrations in information packs etc. should reflect the whole school community and avoid stereotypical representations.
- e) In all general communications her/his etc. should either both be used or both be avoided.

3. THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Common Areas

- a) Common areas of the school, such as corridors, should be free from harassment. Students should feel able to report incidents. These should be dealt with according to specific guidelines.
- b) The outside space should cater for the interests and needs of all students. Specific areas should be designated a particular purpose e.g. 'quiet', 'active'. These should be open to both sexes and their appropriate use communicated to students.

3.2 Displays

- a) Displays should demonstrate the variety of talents, interest and achievement of the whole school community (its ethnic, gender, ability and social composition).

3.3 Access

- a) The school should continue to consider the needs of individuals with disabilities in any future building plans.
- b) The school should do all it can to alleviate difficulties experienced by staff and students with disabilities, who are presently in the school.
- c) The range of food provided should take cultural and dietary requirements into consideration.

4. THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

4.1 Sexual and Racial Harassment

Guidelines for dealing with sexual and racial harassment and personally offensive behaviour involving students, staff, parents/carers should be followed.

4.2 Staff Development and Appointment

- a) The school's approach to the recruitment, professional development and promotion of all staff must ensure equal opportunity.
- b) As far as possible the staffing profile should reflect that of the community it serves.
- c) The school should encourage the professional development of all staff through the implementation of an agreed staff development policy.
- d) Interview procedures, formal or informal, the compiling of references or other forms of reporting on staff should refer to equal opportunity criteria.
- e) Staff files are open to scrutiny at any time by the person on the file.

4.2 In-Service Training

In-Service Training should be provided to enable staff, students, parents or carers to move from policy to practice on equal opportunities.

5. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- a) Each member of staff must be responsible for implementing and monitoring the Equal Opportunities Policy, both inside and outside the classroom.
- b) The policy should be subject to regular systematic review and evaluation.
- c) Parents/carers need to be actively involved in the implementation of the policy, through clear communication and discussion of the policy and its rationale.

6. MONITORING/EVALUATION

- a) A regular agenda item of meetings.
- b) Monitoring displays and assemblies.
- c) Programme of observation worked out in collaboration with colleagues.
- d) Through schemes of work.
- e) Regular reporting to parents or carers.
- f) Inspections focusing on Equal Opportunities.

Signed:	Print Name:
Position:	Date:

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