



THIRSK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT

Statement of Principle

This school is committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity is provided for all members of the school community. Each individual has a right, based on natural justice, to equality of treatment and access to education, irrespective of gender, race, culture, class or disability.

Aims

1. To promote equal access by all pupils to the full range of opportunities for achievement that the school provides.
2. To provide a model of good practice in the way equality of opportunity is made available.
3. To help all individuals:
 - to fulfil their potential, making most effective use of their skills and talents, both for the benefit of others and to achieve self-fulfilment.
 - to develop appropriate self esteem and respect for others.
 - to avoid prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping or bias in the treatment of others.

Every pupil and teacher is expected to further these aims by personally contributing towards a caring environment and by showing respect for, and appreciation of, each other as individuals (this will be an integral part of the school's whole curriculum).

Guidelines

Admissions: The school's admission policy is stated in the school prospectus and is in accordance with the LEA admissions policy.

Access to the curriculum: All pupils will have access to and equal opportunity to benefit from the whole curriculum, through appropriate teaching and learning strategies, pupil grouping, timetabling and access to resources. This does not mean that all children will receive the same provision or that they will be expected to achieve and develop in a uniform way. It does mean that curriculum access and expectations of achievement will be appropriate to children's needs and potential. Equality of access will apply to all areas of provision including extra-curricular activities.

Curriculum content: Every effort is made to ensure that the curriculum content reinforces messages of equality. By providing a balanced curriculum we endeavour to counter stereotypes or bias being transmitted. All pupils will be given the opportunity to develop whatever skills, knowledge and positive attitudes they can, irrespective of traditionally held gender stereotypes. Curriculum content will reflect the fact that we live in a culturally diverse and multi-faith society.

Teaching: Teachers will have high expectations of pupils in terms of effort, achievement and behaviour and take care not to limit these expectations because of gender, social background, ethnic origin or disability. We will use a range of teaching strategies, differentiated activities and pupil groupings to ensure all pupils have access to the curriculum to which they are entitled. We will avoid traditional stereotyping bias or labelling in their treatment of others and in what they say and teach. No particular group or individual should be disadvantaged by our marking, assessment and reporting procedures.

Teachers' recording procedures enable different aspects of pupils' achievements and capabilities to be recognised. No child should experience a sense of failure caused by criticism or ridicule from others or by rejection when he/she is slow to comprehend.

Staff: All staff will recognise that they provide a positive role model for pupils in the area of equal opportunities as in other areas and that this will raise pupils' awareness of their own potential. Conversely, to offer children stereotyped and biased role models or views limits their thinking and potential for growth. We must be aware of any gender, social or cultural assumptions or bias in our own attitudes and be constantly alert to the fact that our own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each pupil. .

Pupils: Pupils will be made aware of our policy on equal opportunities. In school and society, children should expect that their own needs and the needs of others will be met. They should feel that they are functioning as effective participants of their community, recognising and supporting the needs of others. We will encourage them to have a positive self image and a respect for the self image of others. They need to be made aware of the wide diversity of society and cultures outside the local community, breaking down traditional stereotypes and building trust and respect for those who are different. We recognise that children benefit from interaction with people, having background, experiences, and cultures different from their own. Children should understand that they are entitled to be treated in an unprejudiced way and that the school has procedures for dealing with discrimination (see LEA Guidelines: A Framework page 15 - 'Procedures for dealing with incidents or alleged incidents of discrimination').

Staffing and management: We will endeavour to present relevant role models to pupils in the way that the school distributes teachers and others within the staffing and management structure, including the allocation of curricular and other responsibilities.

Recruitment and Professional Development. We will ensure that discrimination on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, marital status, disability or religious beliefs, play no part in determining recruitment and selection of staff or access to promotion benefits and training. We will endeavour to support the needs of all members of the school community by relevant in-service training.

Resources: Stereotyped attitudes and bias are not only transmitted to children through language they hear and behaviour to which they are exposed, but through the books they read, the pictures they see and the resources they handle. Our aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability or ethnic origin. We will be sensitive to stereotyping and equal opportunity issues in resources used in class and held centrally. Whenever possible we will ensure that resources used in all curriculum areas are multicultural and non-sexist, containing positive images of all groups. Variety should be evident in the stories and information offered to children and they should have access to accurate information about similarities and differences between cultural groups. We will also ensure that children's access to space, amenities and facilities within the school are in accordance with this policy.

Parents: We will provide equal access to information and advice and support for all parents. Parents will be made aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities through information in the school prospectus as well as through the overall ethos and informal communications. A copy of this policy is available on request.

Monitoring: As part of the process of monitoring pupils' achievement, checks will be made to ensure that children are not underachieving as a result of needs stemming from factors of gender, or ethnicity. Teachers are able to use the results of such monitoring in future planning. Senior staff and governors will monitor the effectiveness of this policy by checking that it is seen to be in practice in all aspects of the school's work.

All staff should implement this policy. It has the support of governors and is known to parents and pupils.

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