



Equal Opportunities Policy

'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day'

Reviewed By	Annette Hixon	Policy Owner	November 2019
Approved By	Annette Hixon & Cate Gregory	Headteacher	November 2019
Ratified By	Peter Gould	Governor	December 2019
NEXT REVIEW	January 2022: this policy is being reviewed and an updated policy will be available by the end of the Spring term 2022.		

Background

Shirley Infant & Shirley Junior Schools are large schools in an urban area with pupils from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of children come from the school's catchment area.

Pupils from ethnic minority groups are well integrated and generally perform above the national average. We have children arriving each year with little or no English. These pupils are well supported.

There is an equal balance of girls & boys and attainment for both girls and boys is above the national average for each gender.

The schools have a Disability Equality Scheme which is monitored regularly by staff and governors. (See below)

We are in line with national figures regarding pupils who have some learning need. Sometimes children in the school may have an educational Health Care Plan in place, nationally this is around 17-18%.

Equality Act 2010

The school has complied with the Equality Act 2010 which requires schools to publish equality data.

The Equality Act 2010 defines nine protected characteristics that all employers must comply with. These are:

- Age
- Disability (Also includes 'discrimination arising' – see section headed 'Disability' for more information)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

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- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (Also includes 'sexual harassment')
- Sexual orientation

In the Equality Act, no one protected characteristic has a higher priority than any other. In accordance with the Equality Act the school upholds that discrimination claims can be made on the grounds of:

1. a single protected characteristic - for example, because an employee is female
2. a number of single, but unrelated, characteristics – for example because an employee is female and also because she is of a particular age (in these situations, each characteristic would be considered separately).

Under the Equality Act, there are four main types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation.

No minimum length of continuous employment for staff is necessary for a discrimination claim to be made to an employment tribunal. Protection starts from when a role is advertised through to the last day of employment and beyond to include references.

The schools monitor equal opportunities for pupils across a range of aspects; -

- attainment,
- participation in school activities,
- learning support,

Ofsted 2016 reported that in the Infant School 'In addition, you ensure that pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well. Overall, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good'.

Ofsted 2017 reported that in the Junior School 'Pupils from minority ethnic groups are articulate about their learning. They have positive attitudes and make good progress. By the time pupils leave the school, almost all are on track to achieve or exceed the standard expected for their age.'

Current objectives Infants; -

- Increase attainment for EAL children who are working within our lowest 20% in reading, writing and mathematics across KS1 so that they are in line with those found nationally by July 2020.
- To continue to ensure SEN support pupils make expected progress across the key stage as a result of well targeted support by July 2020.
- To continue improving attendance of EAL families with a particular focus on persistent lateness to above 95% by July 2021.

Current objectives Juniors; -

- Increase progress rates of progress for pupils who are disadvantaged in maths across KS2 so that these are in line with those found nationally by July 2022.
- Ensure SEN support pupils make expected progress across the key stage as a result of well targeted support by July 2022.
- To widen the participation in home learning from families of a range of backgrounds and circumstances, in the event of a partial or full lockdown. Ensure access to activities and resources, support the full range of home set ups and languages by 2022.
- To improve attendance of pupils with SEN support to above 95% by July 2022.

Aims

Shirley Infant & Junior Schools aim to provide equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of attainment. Care for each other is an overarching value which underpins all we do. Inclusion applies to all members of the school community: pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers and wider community. We recognise that equal opportunities for pupils are inextricably linked with equal opportunities for staff. The adults in the schools' act as role models for pupils and are more likely to promote equal opportunities for pupils if they experience these opportunities themselves.

Our schools' vision is **EVERY CHILD, EVERY CHANCE, EVERY DAY**. Our schools create memories. Our curriculum captivates, challenges and is constantly evolving. We nurture every child to believe in themselves and give them opportunities to discover their endless potential. Each member of our community celebrates individuality and respects diversity. We prepare our learners with the skills to be creative, future thinkers who will be responsible and ready to make a positive contribution to our ever changing world.

These values are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all adults and children, taking account of differences in ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, language, age, ability, family circumstances, sexual orientation, linguistic background, disability and social circumstances. It is important to us that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a diverse society that is multi-ethnic and inclusive.

Inclusion is a right to be included. We believe in the principle that inclusion is the right for all children. We ensure that every child:

1. Has equal chance to learn and develop
2. Has the opportunity to participate equally
3. Is given opportunity to communicate in their preferred format
4. Has their individual needs known and met
5. Feels safe and know they belong
6. Is valued as a unique individual
7. Feels strong and confident about their identity.

Commitment to Disability Equality

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Shirley Infant & Shirley Junior schools are committed to carrying out the duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in particular; -

- to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- to eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- to eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- to take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities

According to the **The Equality Act 2010** the definition of a disabled person is: - **a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day- to- day activities**

Our Accessibility plan aims to:

- Promote access to curriculum activities and other learning opportunities for all children who have disabilities
- Make available information to disabled persons in alternative formats
- To take reasonable steps to adapt the environment to cater for the needs of disabled children and adults

Commitment to Race Equality

- Shirley Infant & Shirley Junior schools are committed to carrying out the duties of the Race Relations legislation (Race Relations (Amendment Act 2000) in particular; -
- To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.
- To promote equality of opportunity.
- To promote good relations between people from different social groups.

Our aims are to

- ensure that all pupils and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their potential
- respect and value differences between people and to prepare pupils for life in a diverse society
- be proactive in promoting good race relations and to oppose all forms of racism, racial prejudice and racial harassment
- make the school a place where everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, feels welcomed and valued and to work with parents to promote racial equality
- ensure that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained
- be proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination
- ensure fairness in all recruitment and selection procedures.

Leadership and Management

The schools' policies reflect a commitment to inclusion. A clear ethos is set by the governing body and the school management team and reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community. The school promotes positive and proactive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

The school management works in partnership with others to promote Race Equality, inclusion and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

All staff and governors contribute to the development and review of policy documents and take steps to enable the contribution of parents. Evaluations of policies are used to identify specific actions to address equality issues. Teaching is monitored by Senior Leadership Team to ensure high expectations of all groups of pupils and individuals and compliance with ethos of inclusion.

Resources are targeted according to need and monitored to ensure that everyone receives their curriculum entitlement.

School Ethos

Shirley Infant & Shirley Junior schools oppose all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination and publicly support diversity. The schools actively promote good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the schools.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all pupils. Children are encouraged to participate in tasks with no reference to their gender, for example girls play with construction toys and boys play with dolls. The schools cater for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups. Pupils and staff celebrate festivals and other events relevant to particular faiths and children are actively encouraged to understand them. Achievement of all groups of pupils is celebrated in classes and in school assemblies and staff ensure that the success of all children is recognised.

Clear procedures are in place (Behaviour policy, Anti Bullying policy and in escalated purpose the Safeguarding policy) to ensure that staff deal with all forms of intolerant behaviour, bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently led by our Restorative Practice.

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching are responsible for:

- Being vigilant in all areas of our school for any type of harassment or bullying
- Dealing effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the subtler forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences
- Identifying and challenging bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture
- Promoting equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, religion, age and sexual orientation
- Promoting an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society
- Keeping up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources
- Reporting concerns on CPOMs system

However, employers should be aware that 'harassment' is covered under the Equality Act and a harassment claim can be made to an employment tribunal, whereas a claim of 'bullying' cannot be taken to a tribunal because it is not related to a protected characteristic. While the unwanted behaviours that constitute bullying and harassment are the same, harassment is behaviour related to a protected characteristic, with the exception of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct that is of a sexual nature and/or relates to the protected characteristics of sex and/or gender

reassignment. There can be circumstances where an employee might experience conduct amounting to both bullying and harassment, with the bullying part of the behaviour not related to a protected characteristic, and the harassment part of the behaviour related to a protected characteristic. Employers have a legal 'duty of care' for all their employees, are usually responsible for the acts of their employees and are accountable for taking all reasonable steps to prevent both bullying and harassment. In an extreme case, where bullying and harassment caused an employee to become ill, an employer might face a civil claim under common law. Acas characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power through ways that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Admissions and Attendance

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all pupils.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language(s), religion, disabilities, physical needs, diet etc. is included or requested on all admission forms. Parents are asked to inform us of their own disabilities if they choose to do so, in order for us to ensure that they have appropriate access to information.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance, which includes staff as well as pupils. See Attendance Policy.

Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the needs of all pupils and is reviewed to ensure that it is free from bias of access, delivery and content. The schools aim to raise children's awareness through cross curricular activities of the diversity of customs and cultures and to encourage respect and understanding of these differences.

The schools monitor and evaluate their effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds. Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and promotes positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

Adaptations to curriculum or resources, and extra support are made available to pupils with disabilities to enable them to have inclusive access to the whole curriculum, school activities and learning experiences.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages staff and pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypical ideals exhibited in language, behaviour, and attitudes which might limit children's achievement.

Extra-curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture. Some funding is made available to enable disadvantaged children to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued. All pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum and teachers take

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positive steps to include groups or individuals by providing adapted resources or extra support where appropriate. Pupil grouping in the classroom is planned and varied and contributes to inclusion of all.

Pastoral support takes account of cultural, religious and ethnic differences.

The schools use a wide range of access strategies for pupils learning English as an additional language including the support of bilingual assistants to support pupils and their families. The use of community languages is encouraged and support is in place where possible so that children may use home language in school.

Staff raise awareness of pupils to equal opportunities issues during assemblies, class discussions, and religious education and P.S.H.E. lessons. These lessons include discussions about being the same or different from others and challenge stereotypes. Strenuous efforts are made to ensure that the school and its curriculum are equally accessible to all parents and pupils. All pupils should be encouraged to work collaboratively and independently, irrespective of differences. We help all pupils to understand the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups, nations and the environment.

Role play areas include dolls and dressing up clothes from different cultures and sexes. When choosing books, resources and displays, efforts are made to achieve a variety of positive role models and reflect the cultural diversity of the school. When choosing art or music, examples are taken from different cultures, religions, festivals and languages. We endeavour to learn more about the lives, cultures and out of school activities of our pupils in order to be sensitive to their needs.

Where religion is concerned:

A variety of religions are explored and respected. It is also recognised that some families are not religious. (See Religious Education Policy for details.)

Where gender is concerned: Gender stereotypes are challenged and we do not make assumptions about the interests and aptitudes of girls and boys. Boys and girls should not be entered separately in registers, class lists, etc. except for the purposes of monitoring, or where stipulated by the DfE. Boys and girls should not be lined up separately and girls should never be used to separate boys. Games such as netball and football should be open to both sexes and support may need to be given to those pupils who experience peer group pressure not to take part. Drama lessons should incorporate, where appropriate, the reversal of traditional gender roles. The expectations of boys and girls should be expanded by focussing occasionally on people who do non-traditional jobs, e.g. male nurse, female bus driver. We show awareness of differences in our teaching of boys and girls.

Where racism is concerned: We follow HAMWIC Guidelines and the Heads of school oversees this area of work. (See Race Equality Section.)

Where cultural diversity is concerned: We endeavour to demonstrate the cultural diversity of our school community. We are aware that all subject areas can have a multicultural perspective and ensure that this is reflected in the multicultural elements identified in all medium and short term planning.

Where ability is concerned: The needs of all pupils will be met through differentiation of the curriculum. (See Able Pupils, Special Educational Needs, Teaching and Learning Policy and Subject Guidelines for details.)

Where physical disability is concerned: We make every effort to accommodate children within the limitations of our building. The governing body seeks to improve access and facilities. We seek to ensure equal access to the curriculum for all pupils.

Where family circumstances are concerned: We recognise that many of our pupils come from homes that do not contain both parents. We try to ensure equality of access to residential visits, musical instruments, off-site activities, etc. through our Charging Policy.

Where sexual orientation is concerned: We challenge prejudice and insulting behaviour. We are a Stonewall trained school and educate our pupils to understand and tackle homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying.

Assessment, Pupil Achievement and Progress

All pupils and staff have the opportunity to achieve to their highest standards. The schools ensure that assessment and performance related pay is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid.

The monitoring and analysing of pupil and staff performance by gender, ethnicity, disadvantaged pupils and disability enables the identification of groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, benefit from assessment, which summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning and staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupils' progress.

Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions

The schools expect high standards of behaviour from all pupils and strategies are in place which promote and value positive behaviour (See behaviour policy). The staff recognise their responsibilities in preparing young people for life in our culturally diverse society and showing, by example, the value of respect for each other, as well as self-respect.

The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all. It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour and all staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.

Pupils, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. Language or behaviour, which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group, is always unacceptable. In accordance with the Anti Bullying and Behaviour Policy all forms of harassment are recorded, followed up and monitored by school staff and overseen by the senior leadership team.

Partnership with Parents and the Community / Community Cohesion

The schools work towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities and in which the diversity of people's backgrounds is valued, a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all and a society in which strong positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in school, the workplace and wider community.

The schools work in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

The schools aim to make meetings for parents accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure as much participation of all groups as possible. At least 95% of parents/carers attend pupil progress meetings with teachers. The school works to encourage as many parents/carers as possible to attend school events such as parent/carer workshops and monitors attendance at events by different parent groups.

Information for parents/carers is becoming more accessible for all. Where possible verbal translation into languages other than English is available, and parents are often keen to support each other, particularly for parents who have may difficulty accessing information.

Staffing: Recruitment and Continuing Professional Development

Equal opportunities will be provided for all staff in our selection processes and in all management processes within the school.

The schools adhere to recruitment and selection procedures, which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and Hamwic Education Trust guidelines. Key staff attend Safer Recruitment training. The school ensures that our recruitment and selection procedures contribute to the prevention of employing unsuitable people to work with children.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme and receive a copy in the Induction Pack.

The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise. Continuing professional development activities are available to support practice in relation to this policy.

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees; whether or not they are disabled, whatever ethnic, cultural, or religious affiliation, whichever gender.

Staff, guest speakers and parents provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body and Head Teacher ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation including the duty to promote race equality, and the disability discrimination duty, and also ensures that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Head Teacher

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will also ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy, and are given appropriate training and support.

The Head Teacher is responsible for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination following procedures established by Hamwic Education Trust.

The named members of staff in each school who are responsible for co-ordinating work in Inclusion is;

Infant and Junior School Inclusion Manager: Sarah Nutbeam

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community and the effectiveness of the policy will also be evaluated and reviewed regularly by the members of staff responsible for Inclusion.

This policy to be read in conjunction with; -

Teaching and Learning Policy

Code of Conduct

P.S.H.E Policy

SMSC Policy

Behaviour policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

RE Policy

SEND Policy

Race Quality Policy