

Equal Opportunities Policy



Reviewed: June 2014

Ratified by the Management Committee: 16th June 2014

Next Review Date: June 2018

Equality Policy

At Palatine school we are a respectful, positive learning community where everyone is enabled to achieve the most they can, progress as far as they can and learn the most that they can.

- *We promote and value diversity*
- *We promote and value human rights*
- *We challenge stereotypes*

Our Equality Policy is essential in ensuring that this can happen.

Aims

- To enable all members of our school community regardless of race, gender, disability, social background, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or age to have the opportunities to develop in every area of our school life to the highest level
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils
- To encourage respect and tolerance for others, their faith, culture and way of life

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Palatine's ethos, policies and practices respect and protect the rights of all individuals and promote positive action to ensure that all pupils, staff, parents, carers and volunteers within the Palatine community are enabled to make the most of their abilities and qualities.

It is written within the guidelines and to ensure we fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and takes account of the updated guidance from the DfE published in May 2014.

This policy ensures, we will:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In drawing up this policy the school has consulted with staff, governors and pupils and representatives of parents.

Background Information

At Palatine School all pupils can be described as having a disability 'as the act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal and everyday activities.' There is also an imbalance of boys to girls of approximately 2 to 1. Ethnic minority groups form approximately 22% of the school population. (36 out of 113) 32% of pupils are in receipt of the pupil premium. For these reasons, the school has particular regard for equality issues relating to disability, race, gender and social disadvantage. As a special school we believe we have a key responsibility in the area of disability equality. Our mission statement includes the following principle:

'To promote equality of opportunities by constructively challenging barriers to inclusion in educational and social settings'

This reflects the overriding principles of equality legislation in relation to disability. The act enshrines equal treatment for all but makes clear that disability discrimination is different and that those with disabilities should be treated 'more favourably than a person who is not disabled.' (The Equality Act 2010 and schools, 4.2 pg. 24)

In order to ensure equal opportunities for all we ensure there is no discrimination, harassment or victimisation to pupils, potential pupils, staff, parents and volunteers. We do this by reviewing our work in the following areas (which are covered in our Equality Plan):

- Policy, Leadership and Management
- Provision of education (Curriculum, Learning and Teaching and Assessment)
- Admissions, Attendance, Positive Behaviour Management and Exclusion
- Pupils Personal Development, Attainment and Progress
- Attitudes, Environment and access to any benefit, facility or service
- Parents, Governors and Community Partnership, including Extended Services
- Staffing – Recruitment, Training and Professional Development
- Pupil Voice and Participation

At Palatine we take positive steps to ensure the continued development of equal opportunities throughout the school:

School Environment

- The site is designed to ensure access for all and physical resources are made available to allow full access to the curriculum as required and to meet the needs of all our pupils
- There will always be sufficient staff on duty to ensure children are in a safe environment.
- In the playground pupils will be encouraged to play together. Our staff lead and model play activities to promote positive play and appropriate behaviour

Learning

We organise and deliver a curriculum which ensures equal participation by pupils of both sexes in all the elements of learning, knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes

We encourage positive attitudes towards everyone

We celebrate racial and cultural diversity

We plan the curriculum and its delivery to take into account the age, ability, gender, ethnicity, background and SEN of pupils

We ensure our children are prepared to be included in society, regardless of their needs or disabilities

We expect all staff to ensure that classes are an inclusive environment and that all contributions are valued

Teachers ensure the tasks set meet the needs of all pupils with whom they are working

Teachers communicate using a wide variety of methods and the school constantly reflects on and improves its practice in this area through the Communication Action Plan

Challenging individually appropriate targets are set for all children to encourage them to learn as much as they can, progress as far as they can and achieve the most that they can at a given time

We aim to minimise the effect on pupils' learning of social and economic deprivation

The school has an inclusive approach to educational visits and risk assessments are carried out beforehand to ensure full access for all pupils and staff

We pay full attention to the physical needs of the children through our healthy schools and medical policies

Pupil Organisation

At the beginning of each school year class staff support children in composing Class Codes of Conduct within the remit of the schools' 'golden rules' outlining the behaviours we are looking for in all pupils. This is then displayed prominently throughout the school and used to promote good behaviour alongside class reward systems

We prevent discrimination, harassment or bullying on the basis of the following 'protected characteristics':

- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

All incidents of harassment are taken seriously and dealt with immediately by staff. Serious incidents are logged, outcomes agreed and reported to parents.

Resources

We deploy resources effectively and efficiently to ensure that all children receive appropriate support

Playground and sporting equipment is supervised to ensure fair and equal access

Equipment across the school and in classrooms is selected to accommodate the needs of all

Staffing and Administration

We ensure that the school's arrangements for discipline, extracurricular activities and employment of staff do not discriminate on all equality grounds

We provide training in equal opportunities and anti-discrimination issues; we ensure that staff understand what constitutes direct and indirect discrimination

We review recruitment and selection processes for potential discriminatory practice

We ensure that official guidance (such as from the LEA) on employment issues, including staff disciplinary and dismissal procedures, is followed.

All teaching and support staff posts are non-gender-specific. Both men and women are encouraged to work with all age groups and each Key Stage. All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.

All members of staff regularly review practices and approaches involving equal opportunity in terms of gender, race, and disability issues.

School Community

We Provide information to parents and carers in a form which is accessible to them if they have language or literacy difficulties

We encourage volunteers to support in school and provide work experience placements particularly from across the COP federation

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body will monitor and evaluate this policy annually alongside all other related policies with a view to considering the impact of our main activities on people with protected characteristics.

We will take into consideration all available monitoring data to inform our evaluation of our success in this area

Relationship with other policies

This policy will inform all other school policies, but will be of particular relevance to the following:

- School Access Plan
- Equality Objectives 2014-8
- Palatine School Policy Statement on Equality and Diversity in Employment
- Palatine 'Respect' agenda (visible on posters around the school)

Links to further guidance

The DfE publication, [Equality Act 2010: Departmental Advice for School Leaders, School Staff and Governing Bodies in maintained schools and academies](#) (DfE May 2014), is available to download from their guidance web page, and is particularly helpful in suggesting ways in which schools may wish to demonstrate compliance with the specific duties.