

HAZEL OAK SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, GENDER and RACE EQUALITY POLICY

Date of Policy: March 2013

Member of staff responsible: HT

Hazel Oak School is a Special School which caters for up to 135 pupils with moderate learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). Some pupils have additional needs such as medical or physical difficulties and some exhibit challenging behaviours. The school is situated in the south of the Borough of Solihull.

The ethnic composition of pupils is predominantly White British with approximately 92% of pupils from ethnic minorities. Of the school population, approximately two thirds is male.

All pupils at Hazel Oak School are working towards and within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. The current eligibility for free school meals for the school population is above the national average. Some pupils are transported to school, which is provided by the Local Authority, some walk either accompanied or independently and some are transported by their parents.

Aims and Values

Equality of opportunity at Hazel Oak School is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement.

The school aims to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. We strive to meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all, ensuring that all pupils are prepared for maximum participation in a multi-ethnic society.

Ethos:

- Staff have the responsibility to ensure that no pupil is discriminated against and that each is respected
- Staff should encourage pupils to respect and tolerate others
- Staff should enable all pupils to achieve their fullest potential to develop all their talents and ensure their contributions are equally valued
- Staff should be aware of the additional pressures that can be placed upon pupils e.g. through stigma, and through inadvertent discrimination
- School displays should reflect the broad multicultural society in which we live
- Hazel Oak School is committed to race equality
- Hazel Oak School ensures that no discrimination takes place on the grounds of gender. The school recognizes this legal duty and aims to adopt positive strategies to achieve equality of opportunity for both sexes.
- Hazel Oak School ensures that all pupils and staff are encouraged to achieve their full potential
- Hazel Oak School respects and values differences between people by promoting cultural diversity
- Hazel Oak School prepares pupils for life in a diverse society

We aim to:

- enable all pupils to live, learn and play peacefully and with full equality of access and opportunity in all aspects of the life and work of the School
- encourage all persons involved in Education to recognize the value and worth of their own cultural background, including its language, beliefs and customs
- promote in all persons a sensitive regard for the needs and welfare of others and to encourage respect for and appreciation of the language, beliefs and customs of all cultural groups
- build upon the strengths of cultural, linguistic and religious diversity for the benefit of all, whilst paying full attention to the fundamental similarities which all persons share
- meet appropriately and effectively the particular needs of all involved within the education service - with due regard to cultural, religious or linguistic issues
- combat racial and/or cultural intolerance where it occurs and to provide staff and students with an understanding of the origins and processes of racism and stereotyping
- deal firmly and properly with all cases of racial or sexual harassment consistent with the school's disciplinary and behaviour policy
- encourage the recruitment from minority ethnic groups of teachers, administrators and other staff at all levels, and the appointment of governors from minority ethnic groups
- Challenge any sex stereotyping that exists which can potentially lead people to conform to gender roles which can inhibit their abilities, preferences and aspirations.

Leadership & Management and Governance

The governing body maintains an overview of implementation of the policy.

All school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities, including race equality.

The governing body and school leadership team set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality and diversity.

The school promotes a proactive approach to valuing and respecting diversity.

All staff contribute to the formulation, development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and where appropriate, takes steps to enable the contribution of pupils and their parent/carers.

Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all pupils and appropriate breadth of content.

Access to all aspects of the curriculum is ensured irrespective of gender. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum for the exploration of issues relating to gender. Anti-sexist issues are dealt with in a consistent way throughout the school. The curriculum both formal and informal promotes positive images of both sexes (display books, role modelling).

Policy Planning & Review

Monitoring data (including ethnicity) will be used to monitor the attainment and progress of pupils, and targets set to remove any identified gaps.

Monitoring data (including ethnicity) on admissions, attendance, exclusions, sanctions and rewards will be used to inform planning and decision-making.

All policies, functions and strategies will be regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in a) eliminating racial discrimination, b) promoting racial equality, c) promoting good race relations.

As further equality requirements come into force policies, functions and strategies will be regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in fulfilling the requirements of the legislation.

Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and the LA. Members of the school community will also be kept informed, ensuring that no individual can be identified.

Admissions and Attendance

Due to the nature of the school, Hazel Oak only accepts pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need, consistent with Local Authority Policy. Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admissions forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibility in relation to pupil attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance, which also includes staff.

Attainment, progress and assessment

Staff have high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to reach high standards.

The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. Baseline assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. Pupils are assessed through a range of diversity groups: FSM, gender, ethnic background, age groups, ASD and pupil premium. This ensures that positive intervention can be made where there are risks of groups underperforming.

Personal development and pastoral care

The pastoral support system takes account of religious and ethnic difference, and needs of refugee, asylum seeker, and traveller children.

The school provides appropriate support for EAL pupils and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

Support is given to victims and perpetrators of harassment and unacceptable behaviour. External agencies are used, where appropriate.

Teaching and Learning

All pupils have access to the school curriculum.

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles with the teacher taking positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning where possible.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils and the school monitors and evaluates its 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 to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils.

Extra curricular activities and special events e.g. school productions, cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

Staffing Recruitment & Professional Development:

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and LA guidelines.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. It is available to view on the school website.

The skills of all staff, regardless of job title or status, are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Regular professional development activities linked to the School Development Plan are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

Ethnic monitoring of employees: Routine monitoring of job applicants and staff by grade and by ethnic groups is carried out and data is provided to the LA.

Partnership with Parents and the Community

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

Information material for parents is easily accessible in user friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English as appropriate.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

Monitoring and Review

All members of staff and the governing body have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.