



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. RATIONALE

Prior's Field is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity through the creation of an environment in which individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. The School respects all its members and values the harmonious relationships between them. As a community we are committed to the active promotion of equality between all races who live, study or work in the School. Provision is made for individuals with particular religions, dietary, language or cultural needs, as appropriate.

The School opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, trade union membership, disability (see Prior's Field Accessibility Plan), political views religion and belief. In line with the Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEN Code of Practice, discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and discrimination arising from a disability are also unacceptable.

Discriminatory behaviour may be direct or indirect. Direct discriminatory behaviour includes verbal or physical abuse, belittling, name-calling, insults, jokes, refusing to co-operate with an individual, etc.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a requirement or condition which cannot be justified, although applied equally, is more likely to be disadvantageous to people of a particular group than to others not in that group.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To promote actively the principle of equality of opportunity and justice in all aspects of school life
- To provide for all pupils access to the full range of opportunities for educational and personal development
- To provide a learning environment which effectively counters prejudice and values diversity.
- To ensure that no pupil receives less favourable treatment because of disability, race, religion or belief, cultural or linguistic background, special educational need, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or academic or sporting ability.
- To provide a curriculum which emphasises the positive aspects of all cultures
- To provide an environment that responds to individual needs in relation to religion, diet, language or culture.
- To develop approaches to learning and teaching which promote equal opportunities

- To ensure that any allegations or incidents of discrimination relating to pupils are investigated thoroughly and dealt with effectively
- To review, regularly, arrangements for staff recruitment, promotion and performance management to ensure that they are non-discriminatory
- To ensure that any allegations or incidents of discrimination relating to staff are investigated thoroughly and dealt with effectively – if necessary, through the school’s grievance procedure.

3. SUCCESS CRITERIA

This policy will be considered successful if;

- All members of the Prior’s Field community feel equally valued
- Incidents of discrimination are dealt with effectively.

4. METHODOLOGY

- Religious observance and dietary requirements are accommodated on behalf of any pupil or staff member who so requests

Teaching and learning

- Heads of department organise programmes of study which concur with the objectives of this policy
- Differentiation strategies are used to enable pupils to interact in a variety of ways
- Teaching materials are monitored to ensure that a variety of cultures, backgrounds and circumstances are displayed positively, and in which characters from minorities have important roles and/or hold positions of authority.
- In addition, it is our policy to minimise any attainment disparities which are, or may be, caused by ethnicity. To this end, the school will encourage all girls to integrate fully into curricular and extra-curricular aspects of School life, giving academic and pastoral support as required.
- Prior’s Field accepts pupils of varying abilities and, where specialist help is needed, will do what it reasonably can to make that provision
- Displays around the school represent social, cultural, physical and linguistic diversity
- Language is recognised as confirmation of a person’s individual identity and sense of belonging
- The experiences of pupils are valued and are used as a positive resource

- Assumptions and stereotypes are challenged, cultural bias is avoided and inclusivity embraced.

Assemblies

Whole school assemblies, house assemblies, Year assemblies. PSHEE lessons and Form Time create opportunities for all girls to participate, to consider spiritual and moral issues, to reflect upon religious beliefs and to listen thoughtfully to the ideas offered. They are also an opportunity for our ethos of equality to be promoted and for different religions, languages and cultures to be considered and celebrated.

Selection processes

For prefects' teams, sports teams and school trips the criteria for selection are open and reflect the skills required for these positions.

School policies and procedures

The following contribute to equal opportunities:

- Code of Conduct
- Behaviour policy
- Prevention of bullying policy
- Disability policy and access plan
- Learning Support policy

These policies should ensure that staff and pupils react appropriately to any incidents which prevent equal opportunities and that staff lead by example.

From time to time staff training will address these issues. The school's PSHEE programme deals with them in a variety of ways.

Monitoring

The tone and language of all school documents and teaching materials is monitored to ensure it reflects the commitment to equal opportunities.

Under the direction of the Year Team Leaders, all staff monitor the group dynamics of the pupils. Any incident, such as racist behaviour, or homophobia involving pupils or staff, is taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

5. EVALUATION

The SLT will assess the effectiveness of this policy through:

- Evaluation of the PSHEE programme with Year Team Leaders and the PSHEE Co-ordinator
- Evaluation of subject programmes of study with Heads of Department
- Review of the procedure for tackling racist, homophobic behaviour with Year Team Leaders if any incidents re occur.

6. REVIEW

Date of next review: 1 December 2016