



# **Equal Opportunities Policy**

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*Loving Learning,*  
*Striving for Success,*  
*Achieving Everyday*



## **Equal Opportunities**

The first consideration for pupils is whether they have adequate and equal access to the whole curriculum. This is guaranteed through comprehensive policies and principles which when implemented determine the rights and experiences of all pupils.

The London Borough of Newham is committed to achieving equal opportunity through its education service. The whole curriculum is available for everyone irrespective of race, sex, disability, age and class. To ensure the highest level of pupil achievement, all schools must promote standards of excellence for both pupils and staff.

### **Colegrave Primary School's Equal Opportunities Statement**

At Colegrave Primary School we aim to create an environment which is accepting and understanding, safe, secure and welcoming, in order to enhance learning and promote success in social, emotional, physical and academic development of all the members of our school community. We believe that each person has a unique and valuable contribution to make in enhancing and enriching our community.

We are therefore wholeheartedly committed to the notion of equality of opportunity for all members of our community, regardless of issues of race, belief, disability, sexuality, gender or class and seek to provide equality of access for all to the experiences and opportunities available within our school.

In this way we are preparing children for life in the wider context of the society in which we live.

It is essential; that any attitudes based on ignorance or lack of understanding are challenged so that each community member will feel of equal value and no community member will suffer any form of discrimination or abuse at school. It is also essential that all community members become aware of their own prejudices nurtured by social conditioning within their own upbringing and cultural background, in order to understand and challenge these attitudes.

We must ensure that we have very high expectations of each other and of ourselves. Teacher should have very high expectations of each child so that all may achieve their full potential socially, academically, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

## **Introduction**

We at Colegrave Primary School believe in the inherent equality of individuals of all races, classes, sex abilities and disabilities. The concept of equality of opportunity is concerned with enabling all students to achieve their fullest potential and develop all their talents and ensuring that all contributions are equally valued. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of Equal Opportunities in our school:

- Appreciate and value different cultures and ways of life without prejudice
- Develop respect for themselves and each other
- Appreciate the fact that everyone has a contribution to make to the school and to the wider community

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the whole staff.

## **The Nature of Equal Opportunities**

### **Staffing**

While we agree that female and male staff should be fully represented across the whole range of posts and at all levels, along with teachers from any minority group, we are not in a position to influence this. However we strive to ensure that all staff feel valued and respected.

We must ensure that any newcomers to the school, as well as support staff from other centres, are made fully aware of the school's equal opportunities policy. It is equally important that all staff, including welfare and lunch time assistants are aware of this policy. Whenever possible, both female and male staff should be involved in both discipline and positive pastoral work with children of both sexes. All posts in school will have job specifications which are based on clearly defined professional criteria.

Administration and organisational details can serve to differentiate between and discriminate against certain groups. We will not allow educational practice to be determined by administrative conveniences e.g. segregation by gender, for lists, registers etc.

The writing of reports and assessments will be based on standard objective observations and not stereotypical modes of behaviour and achievement e.g. accepting different standards of behaviour from different children. We must ensure that routine tasks are delegated equally amongst the children and not just the chosen few. We will take care to ensure that non-biased language is used at all times e.g. in assemblies and written communication.

## **Involving Parents and the Community**

The school's view and policies on equal opportunities should be made explicit to all parents and carers. If necessary, meetings may be needed for parents to discuss equal opportunities with staff. All communications from school should try to eliminate all bias by the use of appropriate language. All parents/carers are given the opportunity to have all documents explained and/or translated where possible.

## **Gender**

We recognise that the gender of a child should not inhibit learning and we aim to ensure that stereotyped attitudes and opinions are challenged. We are aware of the need to constantly examine our own attitudes and practices as well as those of the children. Images of girls and women should reflect the reality of our society today i.e. many women work outside the home and bring up a family: also both men and women have begun to move away from the stereotyped job, career and domestic roles.

- We are aware of the specific needs and abilities of individual children, and of the inequalities of a society in which gender bias operates
- All procedures and provisions will be subject to continuous, thorough and in-depth scrutiny, thereby ensuring that inequalities within the school are eradicated. It is imperative that all persons associated with the school actively participate in this process.

The examination must include-

- Classroom practice – to ensure neither gender is allowed to dominate or monopolise.
- Curriculum-to ensure that the tasks, activities and learning opportunities are suitable and accessible to all.
- Procedures- to ensure that the general school and administrative procedures do not discriminate in a way that is detrimental to the advancement of any group.

## **Anti-Racist Statement**

Any manifestation of racial harassment, racist or discriminatory behaviour or practice is at odds with the whole ethos of the school. As such it will be recorded (Classroom and SLT behaviour log book) and dealt with firmly.

We ask that all parents assist us in dealing with matters of racial harassment, by reporting incidents to us and co-operating in the eradication of all racially motivated behaviour.

It is important that displays of work and the general ethos of the school should reflect the cultural diversity of the people within it and of the world in which we live and generate a positive attitude towards our multicultural society. As such, displays must offer a balanced mix of European, Black and Asian images in non-stereotypical roles.

Concerns about racism, name calling incidents or abuse must never be ignored. Children must be given appropriate information when and where situations arise. Staff must avoid denial of differences that do exist between people and cultures that act as a cover for racism. Issues to do with racism should be discussed in a manner that will lead to positive statements about our multicultural society being made by both children and adults.

**We will achieve this by;**

- Recognising and teaching British Values
- Encouraging pupils to develop a positive sense of their own cultural identity
- Recognising the creative opportunities afforded by a multicultural society
- Obtaining and developing teaching materials which reflect the multicultural nature of society
- Acknowledging the achievements of and contributions to human knowledge, of all children

**The staff and Governors of Colegrave Primary School will NOT tolerate:**

- Any physical assault against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity
- Derogatory name calling, insults and racist jokes
- Racist graffiti or other written insults
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia
- Any racist materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines being brought into the vicinity of the school
- Any threats against any person because of colour or ethnicity
- Any racist comment in the course of discussion in lessons
- Any attempt to recruit pupils to racist organisations or groups

Where evidence of a racist incident arises, staff will immediately talk to the person being offended/hurt and the perpetrator, complete the school Racist Incident Book and take appropriate action. (Please also see our Anti Bullying Policy)

**Special Educational Needs**

At Colegrave Primary School, we see each child as an individual and recognise that children may have special educational needs. Children with special educational needs include 'more able' children, children with learning difficulties and children with physical difficulties. Early identification of any Special Educational Need is vital for the child to benefit fully from the learning environment in school. We recognise the need for a partnership between parents, teachers and other professionals to discover and understand the nature of the difficulties of individual children. Once identified, those needs will be met by sensitive and on-going assessment and by making the needs known to all those working with the child. Name calling or insults based on Special Educational Needs will never be tolerated. If such an incident should arise, staff will immediately talk to the child who is at the receiving end of the insults, and perpetrator in a manner which will lead to an understanding of the feelings of the victim. Where appropriate, the parent/carer will be contacted.

## **The Curriculum**

When planning the curriculum, a number of factors need to be taken into consideration.

The need for differentiation, so that tasks can be adapted for those children identified as having Special Educational Needs.

Resources need to be selected to reflect the multicultural society and present positive images of men and women and not stereotypes. Particular areas which need to be addressed are: play areas, books, pictures, notices and displays.

We recognise that positive action may sometimes be necessary e.g. girls only sessions for computers, building etc. boys only sessions for imaginative play, sewing etc. This can be identified by observation of classroom dynamics and clearly planned for.

## **Multicultural**

Culture is central to a child's identity. We aim to create a learning environment which will reflect the cultures of those within it and within the society at large. To this end all adults in the school must be aware of the cultures represented in the school and the community and the customs and attitudes within those cultures. All staff need to be sensitive to the feelings of the children and parents where these relate to the cultural conflict and to reinforce positive attitudes towards multicultural education and equal opportunities. We are committed to taking a firm stand against racist attitudes wherever they are encountered and trust that in doing so we shall be furthering progress towards a more harmonious multicultural society.

## **Language**

We encourage the use of home languages in school and aim to support this by involving parents and members of the wider community wherever possible.

All children will be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards bilingualism and to share their languages in school by:

- Provision of bilingual books and tapes
- Notices and posters in a variety of languages
- Bilingual story sessions
- Encouraging parents to translate children's books
- Language of the month

Wherever possible resources will reflect our multicultural society and will avoid stereotyping.

## **Religion**

We recognise and aim to provide for the religious practices, dress and dietary requirements of all children without isolating them or embarrassing them. Children will be encouraged to be tolerant of, and respect religions other than their own and Religious Education in the school will reflect this.

Teachers will treat all religious beliefs as having equal value.

### **Equal Opportunities in the Planning and Review of the Curriculum**

- Choices about the forms of learning (whether based on knowledge, skills or understanding) within the curriculum are wide ranging and avoid all forms of stereotyping and bias.
- The diversity of background of Newham pupils and the varying communities of Britain is reflected in the content of the curriculum.
- Deliberate strategies are adopted to acknowledge, respect and develop links with the community as part of every curriculum area.
- Areas for positive action are deliberately considered within every curriculum area.
- The accessibility of every curriculum area is reviewed in terms of language demands and the ways in which the development of concepts is under-pinned by language.
- Opportunities for use of community languages and other communication channels are actively explored.
- All cultures are recognised as having their own traditions, styles and values which need to be considered in the context of that society/culture. When comparisons of cultures are made a focus for learning, a deficit model of comparison is avoided.
- Attitudes towards every curriculum area are monitored to establish whether patterns of preference emerge according to criteria of race, gender etc.
- Assumptions about the skills needed to be successful in every curriculum area are questioned and stereotyping of pupil's potential according to gender, race etc. is deliberately avoided.

### **Equal Opportunities in the Organisation of Children's Learning**

- All children are aware that all teachers have very high expectations of them, and are continually challenged to reach higher standards.
- All children feel engaged in learning, and all are encouraged and motivated to persevere and contribute
- All children have opportunities to learn from a variety of experiences, perspectives and viewpoints.
- Classroom interactions are deliberately structured and monitored to ensure that all pupils can participate.
- All children have opportunities to work together in a variety of groupings within any one class.

- Teachers are aware of the various cultural and educational backgrounds of all children and use this knowledge to provide appropriate learning experiences for them.
- Children and teachers have information on the languages spoken/read/written by children within the class and opportunities are planned within the curriculum for pupils to use their full linguistic repertoires.
- It is recognised that talking contributes to all pupils' capacity to work on their understanding and talk is given status in the classroom.
- All children's learning needs are identified and met through appropriately developed programmes of study and their achievements recorded through appropriate assessment processes.
- All pupils' experience, knowledge, views and feelings are treated as a major resource for learning.
- When children are involved in independent learning and play activities it is important that teachers are aware of the dangers of stereotyping and that all pupils are encouraged to experience all the activities available.
- Staff have, and follow, agreed procedures for dealing with racist, sexist or insensitive comments in the classroom.

### **Issues of Equal Opportunities in the Resourcing of Pupil's Learning**

- Resources positively reflect the diversity of the whole school community by presenting non-stereotypical images of race, gender, nationality, culture, age, disability and religion.
- Resources positively reflect the diversity of the whole population of Newham and not just those communities which currently make up our school.
- Printed materials are available and visible in a range of scripts to demonstrate that the school values the languages of the wider community.
- The range of resources available to children promotes a view of the world which recognises the contribution of diverse cultures to the development of learning.
- The school recognises its staff as a resource and identifies the contribution they can make to the development of the institution.
- The school recognises its pupils as a resource and identifies the contribution they can make to each other's learning.
- The school recognises the parents and carers of its own pupils as a resource and negotiates the contribution that they can make to the development of the school.
- The allocation of financial resources avoids disadvantages to any group on the ground of its race, gender, nationality, culture, age, disability or religion.
- A token approach to all categories of resources is avoided.

### **Issues of Equality of Access to the Curriculum Specific to bilingual (EAL) pupils**

- The issues of access to the curriculum for bilingual English learners is addressed in a whole school policy.
- Teachers are aware of the stage of development in English of each bilingual learner and teaching materials are presented in a way which takes account of the different levels of English.
- Talk is valued as a key in which bilingual learners develop their language skills in English and there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to interact with each other within the learning situation.
- Conscious decisions are made by the school and by individual teachers about the groupings of developing bilinguals in order to facilitate their acquisition of English in real contexts, in interaction with fluent English speakers.
- A range of practical activities in all curriculum areas offers EAL opportunities for repetition of English in a natural context.
- Our EAL teacher supports pupils with little or no English through small group work and also supports teachers work in mainstream classrooms, taking a full and equal part in the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

### **Issues of Equality of Access to the Curriculum Specific to Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

- Issues of equality of access to the curriculum specific to pupils with special educational needs is addressed in a whole school policy.
- The school's SENCO has access to S.M.T. meetings.
- Resources Provision is provided to enable all children to take part in the processes of learning and recording achievement.
- All staff have access to information about the formal processes involved in making provision for children with statements of Special Educational Needs.
- All staff have lines of access to other professionals involved with children with special needs.
- Interactions between staff and children, and children with each other reflect positive images of disability.
- Learning support and behaviour support teachers work in the mainstream classrooms, taking a full and equal part in the planning and delivery of the curriculum. Their contribution is focused on equality of access for children with special needs.

## **Issues of Equal Opportunities for Whole School Management**

### **The Management of Learning across the Whole School**

- There are monitoring and reviewing systems in place for ensuring that the total curriculum offered to children is underpinned by values and practice which promote equal opportunities.
- There are monitoring and reviewing systems in place for ensuring that a range of learning and teaching styles is practised within the school.
- There are monitoring and reviewing systems in place for ensuring that all resources, human and material are managed in ways which promote equal opportunities.
- The school provides an appropriate programme of support to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum.
- The school recognises that effective learning and teaching are best achieved in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- The school recognises the need to underpin its equal opportunities approach to classroom management and curriculum planning by working on conforming the self esteem of both children and teachers. It is understood that work which is intended to challenge inequality may be hampered if staff and children hold negative views about themselves.
- The school has agreed approaches to assessment to ensure that there is no bias which would disadvantage any pupils as groups or as individuals.
- The school creates support or learning groups for teachers who are particularly concerned with the issues of access to the curriculum for specific groups of children
- There are procedures to ensure effective transition for all children across phases and specific groups of children are not disadvantaged.

### **Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The Head Teacher will have overall responsibility for the review and monitoring of Equal Opportunities throughout the school.
- The Senior Management Team will have responsibility for the review and monitoring of Equal Opportunities throughout the curriculum and as part of their pastoral responsibilities.
- Subject co-ordinators will have the responsibility for the review of Equal Opportunities within their specific subject area.
- Class teachers will have the responsibility for the review and monitoring of Equal Opportunity issues throughout the delivery of the curriculum within the classroom and to support all colleagues in their pastoral roles.

- Non-teaching staff will have the responsibility to monitor Equal Opportunity issues throughout all aspects of their work with children and adults within the school.
- Specific areas for monitoring both ongoing and at the end of academic year will be:
  - School policy implementation
  - Child/adult relationships and behaviour
  - Appropriate use, acquisition and distribution of resources
  - Assessment procedures
  - Children's achievement

**When striving for equal opportunities we will be successful when:**

**Class**

- Children are aware that all teachers have very high expectations of them and are continually challenged to reach higher standards.
- All children have opportunities to learn from a variety of experiences, perspectives and viewpoints.
- All children's experience, knowledge, views and feelings are treated as a major resource for learning.
- The diversity of background of children is reflected in the content of the curriculum.
- All children will be encouraged to develop their own interests across the curriculum thereby challenging society's expectations and stereotyping.

**When striving to create Equal Opportunities we will be successful when:**

**Disability**

- Educational achievement is raised amongst pupils with disabilities
- Children with disabilities have full access to the whole curriculum
- The curriculum, when delivered, is differentiated so that it caters for the needs of all children
- Available resources are used effectively to meet the individual needs of pupils with disabilities
- Stereotyped images of people with disabilities are challenged and positive role models are presented instead

- Our school buildings are fully physically accessible to all pupils
- Children and people with disabilities are enabled and empowered to participate in all forms of school life
- Pupil self-esteem and personal independence are sensitively and successfully addressed
- There is effective liaison and communication between the school and all outside support agencies

## **Gender**

### **When striving to create Equal Opportunities we will be successful when:**

- Issues of gender are challenged and addressed in the curriculum
- Strategies have been developed to address the subject specific underachievement of girls and boys
- Equal access is provided an all learning experiences for both boys and girls
- Stereotyped images are challenged and positive role models presented instead
- Action has been taken to ensure that the specific needs of girls and boys are addressed

## **Race**

### **When striving to create Equal Opportunities we will be successful when:**

- Curriculum planning significantly reflects positive images of black and other minority groups and the surrounding community
- Racial and personal abuse, graffiti and racist attacks are actively discouraged and challenged
- The learning experiences of children draws upon the linguistic, religious and cultural diversity within both the local and wider community
- Members of refugee communities within the school have full access to schooling and receive appropriate support
- School development planning and monitoring addresses issues related to black and other ethnic minority pupils and parents
- Children and parents have access to information in community languages where required
- There is effective liaison and communication between the school and outside community groups/agencies