

Equal Opportunities Policy

Approved by RET Board

Approved on February 2015

SLT contact Headteacher

Revision due Every 2 years



1. Aims

a. RET aims:

- To provide an appropriate learning experience for all students regardless of their colour, origin, culture, gender, religion or belief, age or ability, sexual orientation
- To treat all staff equally in employment matters according to the law
- To develop policies and procedures that will lead to high standards from all staff and students.

b. The school aims:

- To provide students with the opportunity to learn in an environment free of prejudice
- To educate all students and staff against any form of prejudice or negative stereotyping
- To treat all students and staff equally according to the law
- To ensure that all people are treated equally, regardless of their colour, origin, culture, gender, religion or belief, age or ability, sexual orientation and that racial equality and equal opportunities for disabled people are promoted.

2. EDUCATION

a. Policy Statement

The school is committed to equal opportunities in education and will not unlawfully discriminate against any student who is at, or applying to, its schools on the grounds of race, gender, nationality, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief or disability.

b. This policy embraces the following areas:

1. Admissions

- A copy of the admissions policy is available from the school or on the website.

2. The Curriculum

- The school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all students, with time-tabling designed to support the widest possible access to the range of subjects available. The school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that all students will have equal access to this curriculum. Where appropriate and practicable, curricular arrangements may be adjusted to reflect students' individual needs.

3. Special educational needs

- The school is committed to supporting all students, whatever their individual circumstances, difficulties or needs, and to ensure that full access to the curriculum is extended to all. The school will work with parents / carers and any other professionals also working with the student (such as doctors) to ensure the best possible educational experience for the student.

4. Religious observance

- The school's policy is that religious studies should be accessible to all students. However, students may be excused from all or part of the programme at the written request of parents.
- Schools seek to make appropriate arrangements to reflect the requirements of different religious faiths with regard to acceptable variations to school uniform, catering arrangements and authorised absence for religious festivals falling during term time. These may include reasonable arrangements to allow for specific acts of religious observance in school.

5. Disability and access for the disabled

- The school will seek to deal with the individual needs of all students and prospective students with disabilities as far as reasonably practicable.

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- Statutory requirements regarding access for the disabled to new buildings are met. The accessibility plan sets out a structured programme to increase access to its facilities.
- Where students have physical and/or learning disabilities, the school will ensure that reasonable and practical arrangements are made to ensure that disabled students can gain access to the curriculum and that the school works effectively with local services and agencies to provide appropriate and coherent support.

6. Pregnancy

- The school will seek to support students who are pregnant, working with parents and other professionals (such as doctors or midwives, or social workers) to help the student to continue with her education as far as possible. An Individual Educational Plan will be drawn up and appropriate work provided if she is unable to attend school. If possible and where this is practical, the student will be entered for exams and helped to continue with her education after the birth of her child.

7. Gender and sexual orientation

The school will ensure that:

- All members of the school community are treated equally, regardless of gender, gender realignment, or sexual orientation
- Understanding and tolerance of all these issues is promoted
- Guidance is given on subject choices and careers encouraging students to consider non-stereotypical opportunities
- Gender issues are considered when planning all aspects of the curriculum and provision
- Account is taken of positive role models when inviting speakers and representatives into the school and in the promotion of specific initiatives.

8. Minority Ethnic Groups, including Refugees

The school will ensure that:

- Home - School links are made to involve parents directly in the life and work of the school
- Linguistic diversity is positively recognised and interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible, where appropriate
- Links are established with local community groups
- Staff work effectively with other local services
- Learning support for ethnic minority students is efficient and effective
- Provision is made for the spiritual, moral, and social and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information
- Student/students' names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced
- All students will be actively encouraged to accept and respect cultures other than their own.

9. Travellers

The school will ensure that:

- Travelling children are successfully integrated
- Where necessary, distance learning packs are provided to support continuous learning
- Travelling children with special educational needs receive appropriate support
- Travellers' cultures are affirmed to share and broaden experiences for all students.

10. Other policies

Other policies are expected to reflect equal opportunities issues. These include policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Discipline/sanctions

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- Anti-bullying
- Access/support for school trips and extracurricular activities
- Entry to public examinations.

11. Complaints

- Any parent who is not satisfied that the above policies have been properly applied may make a complaint in accordance with the school's formal complaints procedure.
- Students should be made aware of the mechanisms available to them within school to raise matters of concern of an academic or pastoral nature.

3. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

a. Policy Statement

1. The school is committed to equal opportunities in the recruitment and employment of staff and volunteers.
2. It aims to ensure that all employees and volunteers are recruited, trained and promoted on the basis of ability, the requirements of the job and relevant and objective criteria.
3. The school will not unlawfully discriminate against any employee, job applicant or volunteer on the grounds of race, nationality, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, belief or disability in any matters to do with recruitment and employment.

b. This policy embraces the following areas:

1. Recruitment and promotion

- All posts are advertised, either internally or externally as appropriate.
- Vacancies for headteacher and deputy headteachers are always advertised nationally.
- Recruitment is done on the basis of matching skills, qualifications and experience with a person specification for the post in accordance with recommended best practice for ensuring equality of opportunity in employment.

2. Recruitment and employment of ex-offenders

- Many posts involve substantial opportunity for unsupervised access to children and are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974. Applicants are therefore required to declare any criminal convictions, including those normally regarded as "spent" under the Act. All candidates offered an appointment to an exempt post are required to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed, which will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions.
- All other posts fall into the category of "regulated positions" as defined in the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2000, and all candidates offered an appointment are required to obtain a Standard Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed.
- In the event that the Disclosure reveals a criminal record or other information of concern, this will be discussed with the candidate before a decision is made whether or not to confirm the offer of employment. In making this decision, the school will consider the nature of the offence and whether or not this makes the applicant unsuitable for the type of work to be undertaken or unacceptable to other employees, how long ago the offence was committed and the age of the prospective employee at that time, together with any other factors that may be relevant.

3. Access to training and development

- Training and development opportunities are available to all staff as appropriate, and all staff are entitled to an annual review interview. All newly qualified teachers are provided with an appropriate induction training programme in accordance with national guidelines.

4. Disability and access for the disabled

- The school will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements for applicants with disabilities to attend interview. The needs of employees with disabilities will be met whenever reasonably practicable.
- Statutory requirements regarding access for the disabled to new buildings are met. The accessibility plan sets out a structured programme to increase access to its facilities.

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5. Complaints

- Any member of staff who is not satisfied that the above policies have been properly applied may make a complaint in accordance with the grievance procedure, which complies with statutory requirements.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The role of the school governing body is to:

- Monitor the implementation of the policies
- Review annually the school's policies and arrangements to ensure equal opportunities
- Ensure that equal opportunities policies are appropriately implemented
- Ensure that parents and members of the community are involved in reviewing equal opportunities policies as appropriate
- Monitor the development of the Disability Accessibility Plan
- Welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have
- Ensure that no student is discriminated against on account of their sex, race, sexual orientation, religion and belief and age
- Check regularly the school's records of discriminatory incidents and the outcomes.
- Nominate a member as designated link for Equal Opportunities to liaise with the headteacher.

b. The role of the headteacher is to:

- Implement the relevant equal opportunities policies
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers and support staff apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- Ensure that the equal opportunities policies are applied to all staff recruitment procedures, by all those involved in the selection, appointment and development of staff
- Ensure that the equal opportunities policies are taken account of in pay, performance management, promotion and training matters
- Promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promote respect for other people in all aspects of school life (for example, in assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school)
- Report as required to the governing body.

c. Teachers

1. Teachers will:

- Familiarise themselves with this Equal Opportunities Policy
- Know what their responsibilities are to ensure that the policy is implemented
- Know the implications of the equal opportunities policies for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for managing behavioural issues.
- Support staff will familiarise themselves with this policy and know what their responsibilities are in ensuring that it is implemented.

d. Students

1. Students will:

- Be involved, as appropriate, in the development of each equality policy
- Be made aware of how it applies to them
- Learn to treat each other with respect
- Be prepared to raise issues involving discrimination with a member of staff, or other adult as appropriate

e. Parents and members of the Community

1. Parents and appropriate members of the community will be involved in the development and monitoring of equality policies, where relevant, and any programmes generated by them under arrangements drawn up by the headteacher and agreed by the governing body.

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5. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- a. The headteacher will report to the governing body on the working of the policy termly.
 - Government legislation states that this can be a brief 'summary report' which is incorporated into another strategic document.
- b. The governing body will review the working of the school's policy annually and will review the policy itself at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.
- c. The policy will be actively promoted and implemented throughout the school
- d. The school policy will be placed on the website and brought to the attention of parents/carers through the headteacher's newsletter.