



Elemore Hall School

Policy Title	Equal Opportunities Policy
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This version	December 2020
Approved by	<i>Draft</i>
To be reviewed by	Curriculum, Standards and ECM Committee
Review Due	November 2021

POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Elemore Hall School has a long-standing commitment to equality of opportunity. This commitment is confirmed in a number of pre-existing policies including Special Needs Policy Statement, Anti-Bullying Policy, Positive Management of Behavior Policy and Recruitment Policy. Where equality of opportunity exists, all staff and learners work in a more rewarding and less stressful environment, one free from prejudice and harassment and one more likely to enhance their performance and achievement.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Equality Information and Objectives 2020-24 document.

AIMS AND INTENTIONS OF THE POLICY

The Durham County Council CS (Children Services) has a Vision for Education, a Mission Statement and a Commitment to Equal Opportunities which the School Governing Body fully supports and endorses.

The Vision for Education states that:

Durham is a county committed to learning where all can reach their full potential by accessing high quality education.

The Mission Statement states that CS is committed:

to provide a culture of equality and opportunity so that all can be inspired to enjoy learning through their lives, access a high quality education which will give them confidence, raise their aspirations and enrich their lives, and reach high standards and gain personal fulfillment through learning so that they and their communities can develop and prosper.

The Commitment to Equal Opportunities states that:

In CS we will pursue a culture of equality and opportunity which actively values diversity and challenges disadvantage, inequality and discrimination, in order to meet the real needs of the community and ensure that everyone has equal access to all our services and is treated with equal respect within our workplaces.

LEGISLATION

This policy recognizes the requirements of:

The Equality Act 2010, and

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

POLICY

The School Governing Body's Definition of Equality of Opportunity:

Equality of opportunity requires that everyone has an equal chance to develop themselves to their full potential. Consequently, equality of opportunity implies that:

- Equality of access exists for all;
- Individual choices are widened and everyone is treated fairly and with respect;
- Everyone is unique and has different needs and will be provided with a differentiated provision to meet those needs (equality of opportunity is underpinned by the idea of equity, and equity implies not sameness of service but diversity to meet diverse needs);
- No one experiences disadvantage or discrimination;
- Stereotypes are challenged;
- All forms of bullying and harassment are challenged;
- Change is managed for the benefit of all;
- Individual and community needs are responded to in a sympathetic and imaginative manner; and
- Individuals and groups are allocated appropriate levels of support to ensure that their potential is fulfilled.

In relation to its more restricted role in the curriculum the School Governing Body defines equality of opportunity as a cross-curriculum dimension, which should be woven through the life, and work of the school, enlighten every area of the curriculum and be addressed by everyone who works within the school on a paid or voluntary basis.

ENTITLEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All learners and staff are entitled to work in an environment that meets their individual needs and develops them to their full potential.

All learners are entitled to full access to a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects, values and celebrates diversity within the school and within society locally, regionally and nationally.

All learners and staff are entitled to work in an environment that does not unfairly discriminate against them in any shape or form.

All learners and staff are entitled to be treated equitably and with respect irrespective of their gender, ability or sexual orientation, their social, cultural, ethnic or religious background, or their family circumstances or age.

All learners and staff are entitled to work in an environment in which they do not encounter bullying or harassment in any shape or form.

All staff are entitled to equitable treatment in their recruitment, employment and training.

All those associated in any shape or form with the school are entitled to equality of opportunity as defined in this Policy and Guidelines, and they should have responsibility for its successful implementation.

Learners and staff in particular have a responsibility to own this Policy and Guidelines and to promote equality of opportunity.

GUIDELINES

The Curriculum:

The School Governing Body believes that equality of opportunity should permeate all aspects of the curriculum and be promoted by all who work in the school on a paid or voluntary basis. There is no subject or programmes of study that cannot be approached in a manner sympathetic to the aims of equality of opportunity. Consequently the School Governing Body will ensure that a curriculum review is undertaken by October each year which:

- Ensures that all pupils have access to the same broad and balanced curriculum and which is appropriately differentiated to meet individual needs and aspirations;
- Ensures that equality of opportunity is taught as a cross-curricular dimension;
- Examines existing schemes of work and curriculum guidelines to ensure that full advantage is taken of the National Curriculum and Religious Education to promote equality of opportunity;
- Ensures that equality of opportunity contributes to Citizenship Education;
- Ensures that the curriculum reflects the diversity of the school community, and of society locally, regionally and nationally;
- Ensures that resources reflect the diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally;
- Ensures that resources portray members of all groups, and particularly those groups most likely to encounter disadvantage and discrimination, in ways which are positive and non-stereotypical, especially in teaching groups which do not contain members of such groups;
- Considers the benefits of grouping pupils and students by gender and/or religion when particular activities are undertaken (e.g. Physical Education or swimming) or when particular topics are addressed (e.g. sex education); and

Whole School Issues:

The School Governing Body believes that pupils learn from the informal as well as from the formal curriculum. Consequently, it will ensure that:

- Equality of access exists for all pupils and staff;
- The aims, objectives and implications of inclusion are understood by all pupils, staff, parents and primary carers;

- Accurate information is kept about the ethnic origin, first language, religious affiliation and special needs of all pupils;
- Assessment procedures do not disadvantage any group of pupils;
- Assessment procedures are adequately resourced to take account of the specific needs of minority ethnic pupils, and of pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties;
- Underachieving pupils are given the support and encouragement required to enhance their performance without the performance of other pupils being affected detrimentally;
- Gifted and talented pupils are given the support and encouragement required to enhance their performance without the performance of other pupils being affected detrimentally;
- Strategies are put in place to motivate and reintegrate disaffected pupils;
- Reliable and effective means exist to inform all parents and primary carers of their children's progress;
- Community languages other than English are valued and encouraged;
- All pupils are given opportunities to meet their religious needs, especially when important festivals occur;
- All pupils can dress and worship in ways which do not conflict with the cultural or religious conventions of the home;
- The dietary needs of all pupils are met;
- Members of all groups are welcomed and valued;
- Members of all groups are encouraged to play an active role in school affairs, perhaps making a contribution towards the governance of the school;
- As far as is possible, staffing reflects the diversity of society locally, regionally and nationally; and
- All incidents of bullying and harassment are dealt with in an effective and consistent manner.

Bullying and Harassment:

Equality of opportunity will not exist in a learning environment in which bullying and harassment occur. Durham LA and the School Governing Body have already adopted policies condemning behaviour that amounts to bullying or harassment, and the staff of the school are familiar with their content and implications. Bullying is defined as:

the intentional abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent and motivation to cause distress to another individual or group. It may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. It may occur frequently or infrequently, regularly or irregularly, but it should be taken seriously even if it has only occurred on one occasion.

Harassment is defined as:

any behaviour or action otherwise directed at an individual that is found to be offensive to the recipient and might threaten an employee's job security or create an intimidating environment.

The Home Secretary's Action Plan for the Implementation of the Macpherson Report reminds us that:

All schools are required in law to have behaviour and discipline policies. As from September 1999 they will also need specific strategies to prevent all forms of bullying. They must also aim to promote good relations and mutual respect and tolerance between different racial groups (...) The DfES will make clear in "School Inclusion: Pupil Support" guidance that all racist incidents are to be recorded and that parents and governors are informed of the nature of the incident and the action taken to deal with it. Governing Bodies will be expected to inform local education authorities, on an annual basis, of the pattern and frequency of such incidents.

The school already follows the advice in the LA's Anti-Bullying Policy to record all incidents of bullying. Because of this, and the requirements outlined above, it is now the policy of the school to:

- Record all incidents of bullying and harassment;
- Take appropriate action whenever such incidents occur;
- Ensure that victims are given appropriate support, including counselling if necessary;
- Ensure that perpetrators are aware of the seriousness of their actions and, if necessary, receive counselling;
- Ensure that an individual who makes a complaint about bullying or harassment is not victimised in any shape or form;
- Inform parents and primary carers when their children are involved in incidents of bullying or harassment as either victims or perpetrators;
- Undertake an annual review of the number and the nature of incidents of bullying and harassment;
- To report the outcome of the above annual review to a meeting of the full governing body;
- Ensure that any reporting mechanism to the LA has been followed and;
- Develop protocols, including training and development, to ensure that the above is undertaken.

Safeguarding pupils/students from being drawn into or supporting terrorism

Schools have a vital role to play in protecting pupils from the risks of extremism and radicalisation, a role which is underpinned by the Counter- Terrorism and Security Act 2015 "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as: Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

The Government's Prevent Strategy has raised awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism and terrorism. There have been nationally situations in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

Elemore Hall School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of individuals, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Elemore Hall School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.

Elemore Hall School seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

Risk reduction

The school governors, the Head Teacher/Principal and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce any identified risks.

Procedure

Keeping children / young people safe from these risks is a safeguarding matter and should be approached in the same way as safeguarding children from other risks.

When any member of staff has concerns that a pupil may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the school's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for safeguarding pupils from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. This will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will have responsibility for assessing whether the pupil may be at risk of radicalisation, and where relevant, for referring the child to the Local Authority Channel Panel.

The SPOC for Elemore Hall School is Richard Royle.

Numerous factors can contribute to and influence the range of behaviours that are defined as violent extremism, but most young people do not become involved in extremist action. For this reason the appropriate interventions in any particular case may not have any

specific connection to the threat of radicalisation, for example they may address mental health, relationship or drug/alcohol issues.

Monitoring

The Governing Body will appoint a governor with “Special Interest” in equal opportunities including race issues.

Once a year teaching staff and the Governor with Special Interest in equal opportunities will use a twilight training session to monitor the progress made in implementing the Policy and Guideline.

Following the above training session the Headteacher and the Governor with Special Interest in equal opportunities will prepare a brief written annual report for the Governing Body on progress made in relation to equality of opportunity. This report should allow the Governing Body to determine whether this policy is being effectively implemented.

This policy will be reviewed annually

December 2020