

South Hylton Primary School



Equal Opportunities Policy

SOUTH HYLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

All pupils at South Hylton Primary School have an equal right to develop and achieve their potential. Equality of opportunity underpins the school curriculum and the work of the school. Children at South Hylton are treated as individuals with their own abilities, difficulties, attitudes, backgrounds and experiences.

The Education Reform Act entitles all pupils in school to a National Curriculum, which is balanced and broad based. The National Curriculum includes cross - curricular dimensions such as equal opportunities for boys / girls, multicultural education and special educational needs. Wherever possible the curriculum will develop children's knowledge and understanding of different beliefs, cultures and needs.

At South Hylton Primary School we aim for an atmosphere of trust and respect among children as well as between teachers and children. Our Citizenship programme, which includes a strong element of Global Citizenship, is about how we treat each other and, more importantly, how we learn to respect one another and ourselves as citizens of the world. It also fosters an understanding of the diversity of cultures and needs that exist in school and in the wider community.

Policy Aims

The school aims;

- That every individual within the school achieves their full potential and has the same opportunities
- every child is given access to the best possible level of achievement appropriate to age and ability through appropriately differentiated work
- staff, parents and children are informed and educated, and reminded of the issues to ensure a continuity of approach throughout the school
- prejudices are challenged and positive attitudes are built
- understanding and mutual respect of all children, regardless of differences, is promoted
- contributions from various cultures are included and acknowledged in the planning and teaching of the full range of National Curriculum subjects, resources and school displays
- an awareness of the unfairness and injustice of stereotyping is raised
- any form of bullying including verbal, physical and psychological bullying by any group or individuals is challenged and addressed
- high levels of acceptable group and individual behaviour are promoted by ensuring that all the school community are informed of school expectations and procedures
- there is a commitment to minimising all school exclusions by implementing agreed strategies and procedures ensuring that each child is given the opportunity to achieve and succeed
- absences, racist incidents and bullying incidents are recorded and monitored.

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Rights Respecting School

At South Hylton Primary School we have been learning about the Unicef Rights of the Child by working with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This document outlines all the rights children have regardless of where they live. We know that all children have these rights which guarantee them what they need to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their potential. Unfortunately, for some children these rights are denied. We have also learned about the responsibilities we have to ensure that these rights are met and have received recognition.

What is RRSA?

The RRSA recognises our achievement in putting the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos. By taking these steps, we are helping improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their potential. A rights respecting school not only teaches about child rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationships: between teachers/adults and pupils, between adults, and between pupils.

Our rights respecting school is one where:

- young people gain self-esteem by learning about the rights they have from birth and build from there;
- children learn the difference between wants and needs;
- young people learn that rights bring responsibilities for adults and children;
- everyone learns to use the language of rights, respect and responsibility;
- adults and young people model rights-respecting behaviour and language;
- children become active global citizens;
- children gain a powerful voice.

Strategies for Implementation

Examples of strategies used to promote equal opportunities include:

- Planning activities of a non- stereotypical nature such as the home corner and apparatus.
- Giving children time to talk in class discussions to give everyone opportunity to voice opinion and discuss how they are feeling.
- Encouraging the sharing of experiences - encompassing all equality issues.
- Reviewing/updating resources so that appropriate messages are presented to the children.
- Planning role-play experiences to include addressing age, disability, race and gender.
- Providing a differentiated curriculum by developing classroom approaches that cater for individual differences but which do not make distinctions that have negative effects on children, their learning and development.
- Displays around school promoting positive equality issues.

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- Providing an entitlement curriculum, which aims to offer the same balanced curriculum and learning experiences to all.
- Staff on playground duty to identify loners, the assertive group and negative physical contact.
- Involving children in rule making in the classroom and at a whole school level through the school council.
- Using assembly time and collective worship themes to reinforce equal opportunity issues.
- Using targets and rewards for children to reinforce acceptable behaviour and attitudes.
- Ensuring that all children will have equal access to all resources. Some children will need encouragement / direction in the use of resources.
- Subject leaders to address equality issues within their subject.
- Giving children a voice, through the school council.
- Sharing in various religious celebrations throughout the year.
- Involvement in programmes such as the Comenius project, which encourage children to become active members of the Global community.

Race

South Hylton Primary School is opposed to all forms of racial discrimination, and is committed to promoting race equality. All members of the school community are required to respect others' right to enjoy equal opportunities, and as an organisation the school actively promotes a spirit of co-operation and respect between races.

Racism is a particular virulent form of prejudice and needs a great deal of attention. The following are some ideas of how it can be combated.

- No pupil, member of staff, parent or visitor may be discriminated against on grounds of race.
- Pupils' names should be pronounced correctly and nicknames should be the prerogative of the nicknamed.
- Attention should be paid to spelling names correctly at all times.
- Literature in school should include names from a wide variety of cultures.
- Racist language must be categorically rejected.
- Racist stereotypes should never be used or allowed. Those in classical literature must be made explicit to pupils and set contextually.
- Bi-lingualism should be seen as an asset, pupils should feel free to use home- language as and when they need to, learning in the home-language is to be encouraged where appropriate and necessary. Work in the home-language should be valued
- Bi-lingual pupils and parents must be allowed to nominate an interpreter when necessary.
- Lack of fluency in the English language should not be used as an indication of academic potential.

Racism and racial harassment are not tolerated, and the whole school community, including where possible any visitors, will be made aware of this. Any alleged racial incident will be

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promptly, fully and sensitively investigated and, where pupils are involved either as perpetrators or victims, their parents will be kept fully informed.

Class

- Assumptions should not be made about pupils' home circumstances or potential based on social class.
- Pupils must be allowed to talk in their natural dialect as and when they need to.
- Direct speech in children's work may reflect dialect, particularly in the lower school before punctuation differentiates speech in written work.

Sex

- No pupil, member of staff, parent or visitor may be discriminated against on grounds of sex.
- No pupil should be excluded from receiving the curriculum on the basis of his or her sex.

Sexuality

- Assumptions should not be made about the sexuality of any pupils, staff member, parent or visitor.
- No pupil, member of staff, parent or visitor will be discriminated against on grounds of sexuality.
- It must be remembered that there are children in school who have relatives or friends who they know to be homosexual.
- When questions arise concerning homosexuality, these should be dealt with calmly, and by emphasising that our community is made up of different beliefs, preferences and lifestyles.

Disability

- Pupils, staff, parents and visitors will not be discriminated against on grounds of disability.
- As far as possible, resources will be made available to assist pupils, staff, parents and visitors who are disabled.
- The school where possible, will implement strategies for working with groups of pupils who are performing badly, or who are at risk of doing so.
- The school will identify gifted and talented pupils and where possible implement strategies and provision for their achievement.
- Recruitment procedures will not exclude applicants on grounds of disability and LA safer recruitment guidelines are adhered to at all times.
- We will emphasise that people have differing abilities and avoid portraying people with a disability as passive victims.

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Social Exclusion/Inclusion

The school identifies and adopts good practice strategies in order to reduce any differences in rates of exclusion between different groups, ensuring equality for all. We aim to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. This does not mean treating all pupils in the same way. We will take into account pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We will identify any pupil who may be missing out, difficult to engage, or feeling in some way to be apart from what the school seeks to provide. Identified groups are:

- girls and boys;
- minority ethnic and faith groups, travellers, asylum seekers and refugees;
- pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL);
- pupils with special educational needs;
- lower achievers;
- gifted and talented pupils;
- children “looked after” by the local authority;
- other children, such as sick children, young carers, those children from families under stress;
- any pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

Curriculum

The school will monitor the curriculum, resources and environment to ensure that they reflect the language and cultural needs of all its pupils. Irrespective of whether there are any ethnic minority pupils in the school, or in a particular group, cultural diversity will be represented and celebrated.

Planning

- Curriculum planning will take account of the ethnicity, background and language needs of all pupils and first languages and dialects will be supported across all areas of the curriculum.

Assessment

The school recognises that pastoral care and the assessment of special educational needs might be made more complex by cultural and linguistic factors. By ensuring that assessment is culturally sensitive, we will attempt to avoid inappropriate responses to special needs, and we will use all necessary measures to ensure that parents understand the purpose and implications of pastoral and special needs provision.

- Assessment methods will be regularly checked by co-ordinators for cultural bias and all efforts will be taken to remove any bias that is identified.

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- Assessment outcomes are used to identify the specific needs of all pupils and to inform policies, planning and the allocation of resources.

Teaching Methods

- Teaching styles are adapted to suit pupils' various learning styles.
- Teaching methods and styles take into account the needs of all pupils from different cultures
- The language and learning needs of bilingual pupils are acknowledged in all subject areas.
- Teachers work closely with support teachers and outside agencies to support the needs of individual pupils.
- Teaching methods encourage positive attitudes to ethnic difference, cultural diversity and racial equality.
- Classroom management includes taking positive action to ensure mutual respect and trust between all pupils.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups are actively encouraged to work together in the classroom.

Curriculum Content

- Steps are taken to ensure that the curriculum draws on areas of interest to pupils from all ethnic and multicultural groups.
- The school values, supports and promotes the study of community languages.
- Racial equality and ethnic diversity are promoted and racism and discrimination challenged in all areas of the curriculum.

Resources

- The school takes active steps to ensure that resources in all areas of the curriculum are accessible to all children.
- All books and other media are checked by staff for their suitability for different groups of pupils.
- Resources that promote a greater understanding of cultural diversity, racial equality and disability are used in all areas of the curriculum.
- Resources are available to meet the specific needs of a child and are used as necessary.
- The school will try to provide the teaching resources needed for pupils from different ethnic groups, cultures, faiths and background, and ensure that these resources are used fully and effectively in all subject areas.
- The school will use resources available within its local communities to broaden pupil's multicultural experiences, e.g. skills and experiences of parents and local ethnic minority groups.
- The school will enable contact and first hand experiences of other cultures, e.g. visiting multicultural schools/communities, visitors to the school.

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Pupils

Attainment and Progress

- Pupils' attainment and progress in individual subjects are monitored by ethnic group, gender, language and disability.
- The attainment and progress of individual pupils are tracked as they move through the school.
- The school values the achievements and progress of pupils from all cultural groups and pupil's reports recognise pupil's achievements both inside and outside the school.

Support and Personal Development

- All pupils have equal access to extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils' cultural and religious backgrounds, experiences and needs are taken into account when planning a range of extra-curricular activities.
- Every child is offered the support and guidance they need.
- Individual support and guidance takes account of personal and cultural needs specific to particular ethnic groups.
- The school actively involves all parents in matters involving support and guidance for their child e.g. discipline and transfer to another school.

Admission, Attendance, Discipline and Exclusion

Active steps are taken to ensure that the admission process and attendance process is fair and equitable to pupils for all.

Race will not be a determinant in admission criteria or a factor in transfer procedure. Where an existing procedure is found to be unintentionally discriminatory in practice, an attempt will be made to remove the disadvantage.

The school requires the highest standards of behaviour from all its pupils, and will manage its disciplinary procedures fairly, without prejudice and it will be applied equally to all pupils. For more details please refer to the individual policies.

Staffing

The Governors and their employees will ensure that all procedures are in relation to:

- Staff recruitment procedures will encourage the appointment and retention of the best candidates, irrespective of ethnic background.
- Training and professional development will be provided without racial discrimination.

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- Promotion
- Performance Management
- Grievances
- Discipline
- Selection for redundancy will operate in accordance with provisions of the Code of Practice
- Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the promotion of Equality of Opportunity in Employment
- The Code of Good Practice on the Employment of the Disabled People
- The code of Practice for the Elimination of Discrimination on the ground of sex and marriage
- The promotion of Equality of Opportunity in Employment

South Hylton Primary Schools follows the guidelines set down by the Local Authority.

Parents, Governors and Community

Parents, Governors and the Community work together to ensure that:

- All parents are regularly informed of their child's progress.
- Information on a child's progress is given in clear, jargon free language.
- The school is aware of languages spoken by pupils' parents.
- Where needed, the school makes use of translation and interpreting services.
- Parents are made aware that these services are available.
- Active steps are taken to communicate with parents who have little or no contact with the school.
- Steps are taken to encourage all parents to become school governors.
- The school encourages and supports training to meet any specific needs.
- The school's premises and facilities are equally available for use by all groups.
- The school encourages community groups to use its facilities for after-school activities and for holiday schemes.
- The school has active links with all community groups and encourages the community their contribution to the curriculum.

All reasonable attempts will be made to ensure that the governing body matches the ethnic composition of the area the school serves.

Monitoring

The effects of this policy will be monitored constantly, and reviewed annually, on or before September. The Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator will be responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the policy and keep the Head teacher informed through meetings to be held every half term.

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Failure to comply with the policy will result in disciplinary procedures if the person involved is employed by the school. If the person involved is a member of the school community, but not employed by the school, appropriate action will be taken as deemed to be appropriate by the Governing Body, who will be guided by the principles of this document.

A significant measure of the success of this policy will be attainment and progress of pupils of all ethnic backgrounds. In order to monitor this, the following information will be gathered and reviewed, taking into account the ethnic background of the pupils;

- Enrolment
- Attendance
- Attainment, both on enrolment and subsequently
- Special educational needs

Where apparent disparities are identified, the school will attempt to remedy the situation by raising the standards of the under-achieving group.