



# Benson Community School

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## Equal Opportunities Policy

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### Definition

There is no single definition of the term, however, in the context of our school, 'equal opportunities' can be taken to mean:

- Providing for all pupils, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability etc
- Being mindful of the difficulties that some groups can face and ensuring that any obstacles to them are removed
- Being aware of personal prejudices and stereotypical views and avoiding labels related to these
- Valuing each pupil's worth.

### 1 Aims and objectives

- 1.1 We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil, on the grounds of their sex, race, colour, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability, nationality, ethnic or national origins. This policy accords with legislation: Equality Act 2012
- 1.2 We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- 1.3 We ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- 1.4 We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning.
- 1.5 We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- 1.6 We challenge stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs.
- 1.7 We celebrate the cultural diversity of our community and show respect for all minority groups.



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**1.8 We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.**

## **2 Racial Equality**

### **2.1 Introduction**

**2.1.1 We aim to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society and ensure that the education we offer fosters positive attitudes to all people.**

**2.1.2 The General Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:**

- **eliminate racial discrimination;**
- **promote equality of opportunity;**
- **promote good relations between people of different racial groups.**

**2.1.3 The specific duties require us to:**

- **prepare a written policy on racial equality;**
- **assess the impact of our policies, including this policy, on pupils, staff and parents of different racial groups including, in particular, the impact on attainment levels of these pupils;**
- **monitor the operation of our policies through the impact they have on such pupils, staff and parents, with particular reference to their impact on the attainment levels of such pupils.**

### **2.2 Racial Equality Aims and objectives**

**2.2.1 In our school we aim to tackle racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations across all aspects of school life. We do this by:**

- **creating an ethos in which pupils and staff feel valued and secure;**



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- **building self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, so that they can then use these qualities to influence their own relationships with others;**
- **having consistent expectations of pupils and their learning;**
- **removing or minimizing barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve;**
- **ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs of all pupils through our schemes of work and lesson planning;**
- **actively tackling racial discrimination and promoting racial equality through our School Prospectus, Governors' Annual Report to Parents, newsletters to parents and displays of work;**
- **regular consultation with parents/carers and members of the local community, so that they are well informed of our policy and procedures;**
- **making clear to our pupils what constitutes aggressive and racist behaviour;**
- **identifying clear procedures for dealing quickly with incidents of racist behaviour;**
- **making pupils and staff confident to challenge racist and aggressive behaviour.**

## **2.3 Tackling racial harassment**

**2.3.1 Any incident of racial harassment is unacceptable in our school. Incidents could take the form of physical assault, verbal abuse, damage to a pupil's property or lack of co-operation in a lesson, due to the ethnicity of a pupil. Any adult witnessing an incident or being informed about an incident must follow these agreed procedures:**

- **stop the incident and comfort the pupil who is the victim;**
- **reprimand the aggressor and inform the victim what action has been taken;**
- **if the incident is witnessed by other pupils, tell them why it is wrong;**
- **report the incident to the headteacher or deputy headteacher and inform him/her of the action taken;**
- **inform the class teacher(s) of both the victim and the aggressor, then record what happened in the incident book (kept in the main office);**
- **inform both sets of parents, if appropriate.**

**2.3.2 The school has implemented the recommendations of *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: MacPherson Report (1999)*. The diversity of our society is addressed through our schemes of work that reflect the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Teachers are flexible in their planning and offer**



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**appropriate challenges to all pupils, regardless of ethnicity. All racist incidents are recorded and reported to the governing body and LEA by the headteacher.**

## **3 Disability non-discrimination**

**3.1 Some children in our school may have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school.**

**3.2 The school fully meets the requirements of the amended Disability Discrimination Act that came into effect in September 2002. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled children.**

**3.3 The school is committed to endeavouring to provide an environment that allows disabled children full access to all areas of learning.**

**3.4 In some circumstances teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, or modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.**

## **4 Gender equality**

**4.1 We recognise that in some subject areas the achievement of one gender is greater than the other. We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress possible at Benson by eliminating gender biased resources and purchasing materials that interest and stimulate all.**

**4.2 We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social class, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to performance. We also seek to ensure that policies designed to improve one gender's attainment do not do so at the expense of the other.**



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## 5 Teaching and learning style

**5.1 We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:**

- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- use materials that reflect a range of cultural, social and physical backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge behaviour that discriminates on the grounds of race, gender, disability.
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that reflect all pupil groupings;
- take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils.

## 6 Policy impact

**6.1 We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies. We regularly review the impact of our policies on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for pupils, staff and parents from different racial groups. We pay specific reference to the impact that our policies have on the attainment of pupils from different racial groups.**

**6.2 We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress, as they move through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different racial groups, to**



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ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

**6.3 School performance information is compared to national data and LEA data, to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.**

**6.4 As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also regularly monitor a range of other information. This relates to:**

- **exclusions;**
- **incidents of racism, racial harassment and bullying;**
- **parental involvement;**
- **community involvement.**

**6.5 We consult with staff, parents and pupils about their opinions on the impact of our policies. Parents receive an annual questionnaire about the school and this now includes some questions about the success of our policies in promoting their involvement in their children's learning.**

**6.6 Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups and to set targets in our strategic plan, in order to make the necessary improvements.**

## **7 Staff development**

**7.1 All members of staff are entitled to appropriate training, in order that they can play their full part in ensuring that our school promotes racial equality. Training is linked to priorities within the school's strategic plan. Funding for professional development is identified within the Standards Fund. Induction for new staff includes an element on racial equality.**

**7.2 The school is required to supply the LEA with employment data related to racial groups employed by the school.**



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## **8 The role of governors**

**8.1 The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy statement, and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.**

**8.2 The governing body seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities.**

**8.3 The governing body will, in its annual report, make reference to arrangements for disabled pupils.**

**8.4 The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever background or disability a child may have.**

**8.5 The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their sex, religion or race. So, for example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum, and regulations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.**

## **9 The role of the headteacher**

**9.1 It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy and s/he is supported by the governing body in so doing.**

**9.2 It is the headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.**

**9.3 The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.**



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**9.4** The headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.

**9.5** The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

## **10 The role of the class teacher**

**10.1** The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.

**10.2** When selecting classroom material, teachers pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups.

**10.3** When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions women have made to developments in this country's history. In geography topics the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

**10.4** All our teachers challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents in the school log book, and draw them to the attention of the headteacher. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

## **11 Monitoring and review**

**11.1** It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Equal Opportunities policy. The governing body does this by:

- monitoring the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school;
- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against;



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- **requiring the headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy;**
- **taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or pupils;**
- **monitoring the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.**

**Signed:**

**Date:**