

Dharma Primary School

Equal Opportunities Policy

(replaces the ‘Embracing Diversity’ document)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES/ ETHOS

At the Dharma Primary School, we have a positive approach to diversity and difference as part of our ethos. Our aspiration is that every child is included, valued and supported and none are at a disadvantage. Through our Buddhist-inspired ethos, children learn from an early age to value diversity, accept and respect difference. We hope our students will go on to act in ways that benefit themselves, their community, society and the world at large.

We aim to be a School where everyone:

- is respected and respects others
- takes part in the life of the School
- achieves to their potential
- develops skills essential to life
- exercises choice

In our School, we recognise that it may include:

- people from a variety of backgrounds
- people from different faith backgrounds
- pupils who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- pupils with special and additional educational needs
- children in care (LAC)
- other children, such as sick children and children from families under stress

- pupils who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion
- people with disabilities

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND OTHER SUPPORTING POLICIES

The Equality Act 2010

The Dharma Primary School is committed to challenging all forms of discrimination as set out in the UK Equality Act (2010). This applies to all pupils (including those in our EYFS setting), the parents and staff members and includes inappropriate discrimination on the grounds of gender; age; religion or belief; physical ability or disability (including HIV status); learning ability; other special educational needs or academic or sporting ability; race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, family, cultural or linguistic background); marital status and civil partnership; sex; sexual orientation; trade union membership; part-time and fixed-term working; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity. These factors are taken into account in the care of our community members so that care is sensitive to different needs.

There is, however, often a distinction to be made between what a provider of education does as an employer of staff and what that same provider does in relation to its pupils and students. (Education Law concentrates on pupils and students in an educational environment rather than detailed information on discrimination in staff and employment.)

The following legislation informs our School Equal Opportunities Policy:

- **Sex Discrimination Act 1975**, which requires Schools to ensure that they do not discriminate against either sex in matters of admissions, standards of behaviour, dress and appearance, delivery of the curriculum and provision of all educational services;
- **The Race Relations Act 1976**, which describes direct and indirect discrimination and gives every Local Authority the duty to give due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups;
- **The Human Rights Act 2000**, which makes most of the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights enforceable in the English Courts;
- **The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**, which includes a positive duty of Schools to promote racial equality measures;
- **The Special Needs and Disability Act 2001**, which includes requirements on Schools to ensure there is no discrimination against disabled people, including staff and pupils, and to have available information about facilities for disabled people.

To help our School in its equal opportunities work, we have the following policies and guidelines:

- Special Educational Needs (including the Most Able) Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Prevent Strategy
- PSHE Policy
- Guidelines for Staff Conduct
- Accessibility Overview and Plan
- Staffing and Safer Recruitment Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions Policy

EMPLOYMENT

As an employer, our School is committed to implementing our employment policies and practices for every member of staff, including support staff. This also includes opportunities for professional development. We will ensure that all staff (including trustees) involved in recruitment are committed to equal opportunities practices and that our procedures follow the policies given above.

RACE EQUALITY

In line with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the School fully understands the need to promote racial harmony and to plan opportunities for combating racism in our procedures and curriculum. We believe that our School must be a safe place for everyone and we are committed to the principles of:

- tackling racial discrimination
- promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations

Tackling racial discrimination

We will tackle racial discrimination by monitoring the outcomes of opportunities at our School and by dealing with and reporting racist incidents.

We accept the definition of a racist incident:

A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on ethnicity will be investigated, using the School's usual disciplinary procedures and racism will be directly challenged. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence. In the event of a member of staff being implicated, disciplinary procedures will apply. If a child is implicated then a record will be taken of the events and the appropriate action taken. Records, in the form of

reports in either the Behaviour Log or the Safeguarding log, will be kept and data reported to the Trustees termly or sooner, if necessary.

Promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations

These aspects of our race equality work will largely be done through planning within the curriculum to reflect diversity and engage with teaching about discrimination and race equality.

GENDER

We believe that girls and boys should have equal access to all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, subject choices and extra-curricular activities. It may be necessary for children to receive different treatment in order to ensure equality of opportunity and the School will pursue strategies to ensure that both girls and boys achieve to their full potential.

We will promote approaches which provide equality of opportunity, including:

- taking account of the interests and concerns of boys and girls by using a range of activities and contexts for work and allowing a variety of interpretations and outcomes, particularly in English, Science, Art and Design, Music and PE;

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

The Dharma Primary School is fully committed to combating discrimination faced by lesbians, gay men and bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ) people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGBTQ people. We recognise there should be equality for pupils and staff irrespective of their sexual orientation. We will take all necessary measures to prevent and tackle discrimination and assist our pupils and staff to live free from harassment and to feel safe as they enjoy and achieve throughout their time at our school.

DISABILITY

The School is fully committed to the duties placed on Schools in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and accepts its definition of a disabled person as someone who has,

a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

We will consider the needs of all people in School including:

- pupils who may be disabled but not have a statement of special educational need (EHCP)
- teachers and other School staff;
- trustees;
- all visitors to School.

The School will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to working conditions for disabled pupils and staff and to the curriculum for disabled pupils. In addition the School will ensure that discrimination does not occur and that disabled people will not be placed at substantial disadvantage compared to others who are not disabled. In particular, our policies relating to the education and related services we provide and our admissions policy will ensure there is no substantial disadvantage. Teachers will take specific action to enable the effective participation of pupils with disabilities by:

- planning appropriate amounts of time to allow for satisfactory completion of tasks;
- planning opportunities, when necessary, for the development of skills in practical aspects of the curriculum; and
- identifying aspects of their programmes of study and learning objectives that may present specific difficulties for individuals.

We undertake to work with the school community, with parents and with other relevant agencies to ensure that any form of discriminatory behaviour is treated seriously and action is taken to prevent any repetition.

Disability – Inclusion

From 1st October 2004 it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises.

Our Accessibility Plan details the changes required to our buildings and to other aspects of our school, so that we fulfil our legal requirements, and remove barriers to inclusion for all pupils and staff with disabilities. However, given the age and the nature of the building, it is not possible to change the physical access to the first and second floors.

We seek to ensure that the individual needs of all our pupils, including those who are disabled or have special education needs, are met and pupils are included, valued and supported, and that reasonable adjustments are made for them.

We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children, and this of course includes pupils with disabilities. Nevertheless, given that we are a very small school with a small staff, there may be occasions where we cannot provide an education for pupils that enables them to fulfil their potential. Should this become apparent at any time, we aim to involve the parents in discussions about the way ahead and how to find more appropriate

provision for their child.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The board of trustees and school, through its Equal Opportunities Policy, aims to:

- carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (including The Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Employment Equality Regulations);
- reinforce the school's position as a provider of high quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities; and
- promote the principles and practices of equality and justice throughout the School by:
 - ensuring that all children receive their entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which is differentiated to meet identified individual needs through flexible and varied provision;
 - promoting racial harmony, preparing pupils for living in a diverse and increasingly interdependent society;
 - specifically addressing racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination;
 - complying with Equal Opportunities legislation and meeting ISI criteria for inclusion;
 - identifying and removing practices that may result in direct or indirect discrimination; and
 - developing the support and training available for all staff, including trustees, to develop their practice in Equal Opportunities work.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff, trustees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that everyone is treated equally and not discriminated against for any reason.

The body of proprietors, the trustees, will:

- ensure that job applicants are deemed to be medically fit to perform the job for which they are employed;
- ensure that the policy on recruitment is rigorously followed; and
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity.

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception and have read this policy;

- ensuring that training in equal opportunities work is available to all members of staff;
- monitoring aspects of the School, including attainment and exclusions;
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this Policy;
- monitoring and evaluating annual data on the number and type of racist incidents in School;
- ensuring that the Admissions Policy is objective, clearly set out and does not disadvantage certain groups; and
- ensuring that there is planning in the curriculum and life of the School for promoting equal opportunities and preparing pupils for living in a diverse and increasingly interdependent society.

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect; and
- when selecting classroom material, striving to provide resources which give positive images of equality.

All staff members need to challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism and record any incidents in the appropriate log book. Additionally, these need to be drawn to the attention of the Head teacher.

Staff members and the school as a whole seeks to implement this policy statement effectively through the following actions:

- Provision of our policy statement for equal opportunities to all pupils, staff and parents, including those of prospective pupils.
- Working with outside agencies such as educational psychologists, occupational therapists, family/pupil medical practitioners and mental health agencies (CAMHS) to support the endeavour of the school in serving the needs of all pupils, parents and staff.
- Discussing, where appropriate, equal opportunities and the special needs of individuals at staff meetings
- Dedicating whole school pujas/assemblies, puja circle time to the importance of kindness, care and unconditional respect for members of the school and the wider community and to promoting and valuing diversity and differences.
- Ensuring different faiths and cultures are studied and the Science curriculum celebrates physical differences in the human race.
- Meeting the individual needs of pupils, as detailed by parents and by the pupil's previous setting, through teacher, assistant and outside agencies working together with the pupil and the pupil's parents.
- Monitoring the needs of all pupils as they progress through the school through discussion at meetings, and written information circulated confidentially, relating to specific support for learning or emotional, social, mental, physical or other difficulties.
- Ensuring that the PSHE and wider curriculum includes discussion of Equal Opportunities.
- Ensuring school documents demonstrate a commitment to Equal Opportunities

and avoid inappropriate discrimination of all forms.

- Challenging inappropriate attitudes and practices by using role play in drama and circle time, by speaking with those involved and using the School behaviour procedures.
- Ensuring pupils are made fully aware of the school's behaviour process.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues so that we can work towards resolving them.

Appendix A: Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is illegal. However, for the school community, discrimination is also unacceptable on any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement.

Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures.

There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

1. **Direct discrimination:** This means treating someone less favourably than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex etc.
2. **Indirect discrimination:** This means applying a requirement or condition which cannot be justified to all groups but which has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of that group which can comply is smaller than the proportion of the group(s) which can comply with it.
3. **Victimisation:** This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act or Employment Equality Regulations, for example, by bringing forward proceedings or giving evidence or information.
4. **Harassment:** Harassment can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it.

Harassment may involve any of the following:

- physical contact or violence;
- offensive humiliating and intimidating remarks or actions;
- exclusion from participation in job-related or classroom-related discussions, training or social or other events;
- unfair work allocation;
- unjust or excessive or humiliating criticism of performance;
- offensive signs or notices;
- graffiti;
- repeated demands or requests for sexual favours.

These are merely examples and not an exhaustive list. Whatever the form, the school will provide support for any member of the school community, pupil or staff member who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

Appendix 2: Additional Procedures for Members of Staff

(to ensure the elimination and prevention of discrimination and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment.)

1. Sex Discrimination

Unless the job is covered by a statutory exception, we will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of sex, gender assignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status or civil partnership.

2. Race Discrimination

Our equal opportunity policy statement aims to ensure that:

- No job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment than another on racial grounds.
- No applicant or employee is placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which have a disproportionately adverse effect on his/her racial group and which cannot be shown to be justifiable on other than racial grounds.
- Individuals who have made allegations or complaints of racial discrimination or provided information about such discrimination will not be victimised.

3. Disability Discrimination

In connection with dealings in relation to persons with a disability within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act we will:

- Not discriminate against disabled people or those who have been disabled

- Make any reasonable adjustments of our employment arrangements or premises which place disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people
- Not treat a disabled employee or disabled job applicant less favourably for a reason relating to the disability than others to whom that reason does not apply unless the reason is material to the particular circumstances and substantial
- Not discriminate against an employee who becomes disabled or has a disability that worsens

Age Discrimination

In connection with any dealing in relation to age as described in the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, we will not discriminate:

- In the arrangements made for deciding who should be offered a job
- In any terms of employment, including pay
- By refusing or omitting to offer a person employment
- In the way we afford access to opportunities for promotion or training
- By victimising an individual for a complaint made in good faith about discrimination on the grounds of age or for giving evidence about such a complaint

Person Responsible for reviewing this policy	CE/Head
Date of last review	03/13
Date of this review	05/17
Date of next review	05/20