

Horizons Independent School

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Procedure/Guidance

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Statement of intent

We will ensure that our school is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, special educational needs, ability or disability.

Our school is committed to anti-discriminatory practice to promote equality of opportunity and valuing diversity for all children and families.

Aim

We aim to:

- Champion and promote the protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Provide a secure and accessible environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are considered and valued.
- Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- Provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and disabled people.
- Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity.
- Make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the school

The legal framework for this policy is:

- The Equality Act 2006
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, 2005
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1976, 1986
- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Method

All our staff are responsible for Equality, Inclusion and Diversity and should, in order to meet our legal duties, promote equality and inclusion throughout our school and value diversity. Members of staff are also responsible for monitoring the protected characteristics.

We follow these procedures:

- We provide information in clear, concise language, whether in spoken or written form. • We provide information in as many languages as possible where necessary and upon request. • We base our admissions policy on a fair system.
- We ensure that all parents are made aware of our equality and diversity policy and all other relevant policies.
- We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our school, on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background, such as being a member of a Travelling community or an asylum seeker.
- We do not discriminate against disabled children. Consideration needs to be given to any reasonable adjustments required to include any child who may have a disability or special educational need.
- We ensure that all individuals can participate successfully in the activities offered by the school and in the curriculum offered.
- We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents.
- Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable on or around the premises and will be dealt with in the strongest manner.

Employment:

- Posts are advertised and all applicants are judged against criteria required.
- Applicants are welcome from all backgrounds and cultures. Posts are open to all, subject to appropriate experience and qualifications.
- The applicant who best meets the criteria is offered the post, subject to references and checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This ensures fairness in the selection process. • All job descriptions include a commitment to valuing equality, inclusion and respecting diversity as part of their specifications.
- We monitor our application process to ensure that it is fair and accessible.

Training:

- We seek out training opportunities for staff and volunteers to enable them to develop anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices, which enable all our children to flourish.
- We review our practices to ensure that we are fully implementing our policy for promoting equality, valuing diversity and inclusion.

Curriculum and environment

The curriculum offered in our school encourages children to develop positive attitudes about themselves as well as to people who are different from themselves. It encourages children to empathise with others and to begin to develop the skills of critical thinking.

We do this by:

- Making children and young people feel valued and good about themselves.
- Making adjustments to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairments.
- Making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities; e.g. recognising the different learning styles of girls and boys.
- Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in the selection of books or other visual materials.
- Celebrating a wide range of festivals.
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance.
- Differentiating the curriculum to meet children's special educational needs.
- Helping children to understand that discriminatory behaviour and remarks are hurtful and unacceptable.
- Ensuring that children learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are supported in their learning.
- Ensuring that children speaking languages other than English are supported in the maintenance and development of their home languages.

Valuing diversity in families:

- We welcome the diversity of family lifestyles and work closely with all our families.
- We encourage children to contribute stories of their everyday life to the school.
- We encourage parents/carers to take part in the life of the school and to contribute fully.
- For families who speak languages in addition to English, we will develop means to ensure their full inclusion.

Food:

- We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the medical, cultural and dietary needs of children and young people are met.
- We help children to learn about a range of food, and of cultural approaches to mealtimes and eating, and to respect the differences among them.

Monitoring and reviewing:

To ensure our policy and procedures remain effective we follow statutory guidance and review our policies annually to ensure our strategies meet the overall aims to promote equality, inclusion and valuing diversity.

We provide a complaints procedure.