

Equal Opportunities Policy

The John Harrox Primary School



Approved by:	[Governing Body]	Date: [22/05/2023]
Last reviewed on:	[22/05/2023]	
Next review due by:	[May 2025]	

Rationale

At The John Harrox Primary School we aim to provide equality of opportunity for all children, staff, parents and carers. We want all our pupils, whatever their age, ability, gender, race or background, to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, and practices do not prevent any child from reaching their potential.

We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by their environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence by positively working to reduce any bias and promoting equality of opportunity.

The John Harrox Primary School recognises the benefits of having a diverse school community, with individuals who value one another, and the different contributions everyone can make. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the school community and to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice. In the provision of equal opportunities, we recognise and accept our responsibilities under the law and oppose discrimination on the basis of:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Age

These are referred to as the protected characteristics. We also oppose unlawful discrimination and bullying on the basis that a person has a special educational need or learning difficulty, or because English is an additional language.

We aim to ensure that all policies and practices conform with the principle of equal opportunity and comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Aims of the policy

Through the application of the policy we aim to:

- Communicate the commitment of the school to the promotion of equal opportunities and ensure that staff and children understand that discrimination against any person on any grounds in the protected characteristics list is unacceptable.
- Ensure the principles and practices of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community.
- Create and maintain an open and supportive environment which is free from discrimination.
- Foster mutual tolerance and positive attitudes so that everyone feels valued and supported.
- Ensure that all pupils reach their full potential
- Remove, or help to overcome barriers to pupils where they exist.
- Educate, develop and prepare children for life whatever their sex, colour, culture, gender or ability.
- Provide an environment in which children/staff feel safe to express/question views.
- Evidence equal opportunities in:
 - The formal curriculum (lessons)
 - The informal curriculum (extra-curricular)
 - The hidden curriculum (ethos and relationships)

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Admissions
- Safer Recruitment
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Anti-Bullying
- SEND
- Accessibility Plan
- Whistleblowing Policy

In accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty we will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those without
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

As part of its duty, the school has committed to the following objectives:

- Promoting cultural understanding, awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs within our school community.
- Promoting and monitoring the involvement of all groups of students in the extra-curricular life of the school.
- Monitoring and preventing any behaviour which may constitute prejudice or discrimination towards those with protected characteristics.

Forms of discrimination

Discrimination may be direct or indirect, or arising from disability and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

Direct Discrimination:

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic as detailed. It also occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic.

For example, refusing a student's admission to the school due to their religious views or sexual orientation.

Indirect Discrimination:

This is when a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone, but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring that no students wear any headwear may disproportionately affect female Muslim students who wear a hijab. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.

Harassment:

This includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Victimisation:

When retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment occurs.

Disability Discrimination:

This includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

Policy and Practice

Discrimination

All forms of discrimination by any person at The John Harrox Primary School will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable and unlawful. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

Parents should be aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities. All cases of discrimination or prejudice will be taken seriously and dealt with, as appropriate, according to existing sanction procedures. A record of incidents will be kept.

Adults

If in the case of a discrimination / harassment complaint is brought against a staff member (by another staff member, parent or child) the Headteacher will investigate the allegation fully with the support of Lincolnshire HR service after notifying the Chair of Governors. In the case of the Headteacher being named, the Chair of Governors will take on this responsibility, working with Human Resources.

Admission

The school follows Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) admissions policy and no pupil is discriminated against on the grounds of their protected characteristics.

Gender

As a School we constantly examine our curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality. All children have equal opportunity within, and equal access to, all areas of the curriculum.

All children are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles.

Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias.

Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls.

All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes.

Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and non-teaching staff of both sexes.

Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.

Discipline procedures – notably rewards and sanctions – are the same for both sexes

Our school uniform policy reflects equality of opportunity for all children. Should any reasonable adjustments need to be made for example in the case of pupils with a disability, these should be referred to the Headteacher who will give due consideration to safety and welfare and the school's existing uniform policy. If parents/carers are unhappy with any decision they should make reference to the school's complaints policy.

Culture, Class and Race

The John Harrox Primary School acknowledges that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony.

The John Harrox Primary School recognises the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and are determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise his/her self-esteem, expectations and performance so as to have wider choices in life.

We understand the need to be different without being excluded.

We are happy for pupils to wear special forms of dress where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background.

We value the history, experience and contribution of our multi-cultural community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school.

We try to counter negative, patronising and stereotyped views: a prime cause of prejudice is ignorance and misunderstanding.

We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form.

Religion

We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith; others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.

We teach about a range of religions at the school.

Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Pupils with EAL will receive additional learning support if necessary. Linguistic diversity is positively recognised, and staff and children should feel their natural language is valued.

Resources

The John Harrox Primary School's aim is to provide for all children according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability or ethnic origin. Resources should reflect cultural and racial backgrounds of children to support positive self-imagery. Efforts are made to recognise, and be aware of, the possibility of bias, so that this can be eliminated in both teaching and learning materials and teaching styles. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotype and bias.

Relationships

Relationships between staff and children should be such that any member of the school acting in a manner contrary to the spirit of this policy is made aware of the unacceptable nature of their behaviour. This should be done in a supportive manner to encourage change and reinforce the principles of this policy.

When it is uncomfortable or inappropriate to address the issue between staff then the Leadership Team must be made aware of the incident and supervisors address the incident with the staff or child involved through supervision. In extreme circumstances formal procedures may be taken by the Head Teacher of the school in line with School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Positive action

We may afford pupils of a particular racial group or pupils with a disability or special educational need access to additional education or training to meet their needs e.g. additional language activities for pupils whose first language is not English.

Bullying

We will not tolerate bullying or cyberbullying for any reason.

Pupils with SEND

Refer to SEND Policy

Suspensions and Exclusions

We will not discriminate against any pupil by suspending or excluding them from school or by subjecting them to any other detriment on the grounds of their Protected Characteristics.

Equal opportunities employer

Employment

This policy applies to all aspects of employment from the advertisement of jobs, recruitment, career development, counselling, training, promotion, grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Applicants

We accept applications from, and recruit staff irrespective of their Protected Characteristics and will not discriminate on these grounds. Every application will be treated in a fair, open-minded way.

Equal access

We will afford all staff equal access to all benefits, services, facilities and opportunities for development irrespective of their Protected Characteristics, subject to considerations of safety and welfare.

Disabilities and reasonable adjustments

We have an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustments for individuals with a disability in respect of both employment and the education and associated services provided to ensure that such staff and pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with other staff and pupils.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Making arrangements for a wheelchair user to attend an interview
- Allowing children with specific SEND requirements additional time to complete a test
- Providing test papers in larger print for a child with visual impairment
- Arranging a variety of accessible sports activities

The Headteacher should be notified if you are aware, or suspect, that you or your child has a disability. Written reports and all relevant information should be shared with the school so appropriate support and adjustments can be made. Confidential information of this kind will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis. We will have due regard to any request to treat the nature or existence of the person's disability as confidential.

Access

We will monitor the physical features of the premises to consider whether users of the premises with a disability are placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other users. Where possible, and proportionate, we will take steps to improve access for disabled users of the premises. The school has an Accessibility Plan.

Responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to comply with this policy.

The Governing Body has responsibility for the effective operation of the policy. The Headteacher has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

Those working at a management level have a responsibility to set an appropriate standard of behaviour, to lead by example and to promote the aims and objectives of the school with regard to equal opportunities

Monitoring

We monitor achievement, exclusions and bullying incidents against gender, race, disability and special educational need.

We also monitor staff appointments to ensure no-one applying for a post is discriminated against.

Review

The policy will be reviewed bi-annually, or earlier if considered necessary.

Reporting Incidents of discrimination

Complaints

If you feel that your child has received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, or you feel this policy has been breached in any way to your detriment you are encouraged to raise the matter through the school's Complaints Procedure, available on the school website.

We will treat seriously and investigate every complaint and report and disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the School Community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.