Poplar Primary School

Equal Opportunities Policy

At Poplar we aim to value all individuals and their achievements equally and to ensure that no one is disadvantaged because of their gender, race, religion, educational ability, social class, disability or personality. We need to be aware of any of our own prejudices or lack of knowledge that may deny others their natural rights.

We work towards achieving these aims through the following practice:

Administration and procedures

1. Staff make every effort to acquaint themselves with the social/religious/ethnic/racial background of the pupils in their care. Such information is available from school records and can be discussed with colleagues at annual transfer meetings during the second half of the Summer term and with parents at consultation evenings throughout the year.

2. Staff undertake to develop their understanding about the background of countries, religions, cultures etc of the pupils in their care, in order to support them in school.

3. Every effort is made to ensure that any information regarding school is accessible to parents. This may include making documents available in various languages, teachers speaking personally to some families and parents/colleagues acting as interpreters.

4. Any form of stereotyping is always challenged and discussed where it occurs. A challenge does not have to be aggressive/angry but must always firmly point out that a stereotype is based on assumption and tradition rather than fact.

5. Any incident involving racism, sexism or other prejudice is challenged, discussed and reported to the Deputy/Headteacher. This form of abuse is the use of power by an individual or group to hurt and/or undermine another individual or group. It is always important to offer support to any injured party before dealing with the abuser. Abuse can include name calling, ‘jokes’, mimicry of accent or language, ridicule of culture, exclusion from a group etc.

Curriculum; overt and covert

1. Classroom management and organisation is adaptable, to allow for individual work programmes and flexible grouping, enabling a wide range of appropriate approaches and support to be used and ensuring that no group of pupils is marginalised. This might include positive discrimination where it serves to redress an imbalance. Staff take time to discuss with the class/individuals why this is necessary.

2. Each pupil is expected to work in all areas of the curriculum, without the limitation of traditional expectations, giving them common experiences from which future choices can be made. Staff monitor their interactions with pupils to ensure they are fair and evenly divided and that one group/individual does not dominate by being louder or more demanding and we refute stereotypes that define certain groups as ‘naturally’ good/bad, quiet/lively etc.

3. All levels of curricular planning show evidence of the importance we place on equal opportunities by defining differentiated provision, expected outcomes and teacher
support and of a broad range of artefacts, topics, displays, resources and approaches used. Our planning reflects a global perspective to encourage our pupils to understand that each society has its own values, traditions and living patterns.

4. Assessments are undertaken bearing in mind the differing ‘out of school' experiences and stages of development of individual pupils.

5. We recognise the importance of self esteem in enabling achievement and praise positive behaviour and attitudes, focusing mostly on what has been achieved rather than any failure. At the same time we do not accept poor standards of behaviour or work and believe that, with support, behaviour and attitudes can be changed.

6. We have high expectations of all pupils, believing that our expectations whether of behaviour, attitude or learning development, are crucial to a child’s performance in school.

7. All school policy documents must have reference to ways of ensuring equal opportunities in their particular aspect of school life.

Resources and Display

1. The school is developing varied cross curricular resources to give information about and to reflect the wide range of cultures that make up society.

2. Display should include positive reflections of the multi-cultural world in which we live, using artefacts, styles, languages and images that mirror this as well as offering strong representations to challenge traditional stereotypes.

3. All resources should be monitored to ensure that positive images of a wide range of ethnic/cultural/social groups are frequently used and seen by all pupils (eg books, work sheets, art, posters, fabric, apparatus, TV programmes).

Community, Ethos and Atmosphere

1. Pupils are actively encouraged to work and play with a wide range of their peers and all members of the school community are expected to respond to one another with care, understanding and respect.

2. Any visitors/performers coming to school or outings from school must all be considered and selected bearing in mind equal opportunities criteria.

3. All members of, and visitors to the school community should be made aware of the LEA and school equal opportunities policy and know that it applies to them and that they have a responsibility to implement the policy.

4. All members of the school community are encouraged to reflect regularly on and discuss their attitudes towards all issues of equal opportunities in such a way as to enable the development of a positive, understanding community that supports the right of all individuals to experience similar advantages and to access the school curriculum with confidence and equality.