

Netherfield Primary and Pre-School

Equal Opportunities Policy

October 2016

Nurturing the potential of all, striving to be the best we can be.

Enjoy, Learn, Achieve

All staff accept that Equal Opportunities is a collective responsibility that we share both within our personal lives and in our day to day teaching duties and communication with children.

Our Governors' statement of school aims embraces all areas of equality of opportunity. We have high expectations of all our pupils and aim to enable them to fulfil their potential. We prepare them to live in a multi-ethnic society and challenge prejudice wherever it occurs.

There are several aspects of our practice that are examined in detail:

- The Curriculum
- The care and support of pupils and staff
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Resources
- English as an Additional Language

The Curriculum

There are several areas under this heading which have been considered:

The Curriculum itself

- Subject Lead Innovators have devised programmes of study for each curriculum area in line with The National Curriculum. This is scope within these programmes for class teachers to ensure a positive and authentic portrayal of people with disabilities, of both genders or different race or religion.
- Staff will look and plan for opportunities within the curriculum to focus on and discuss equal opportunity issues and monitor this work.
- Staff will provide the most balanced, accessible curriculum possible to ensure that each child's needs are catered for.
- Extra curricular activities and outdoor pursuits are equally available to boys and girls and pupils of different races or religions and pupils that have disabilities.

Groupings

When organising children we need to encourage them to work co-operatively and collaboratively. In doing this we should be aware of variable groupings and allow for flexibility;

- Friendship groups
- Mixed gender groups
- Mixed ability groups
- Single gender groups to break a stereotype (e.g. a group of girls demonstrate a football skill)
- The fact that there are few groups in school reflecting cultural diversity.

Teachers will praise naturally chosen friendship groups of mixed gender, ability or race.

Displays

Displays in the classroom and around school should:

- Show children from different cultural backgrounds.
- Sometimes show images that challenge stereotypes of gender, race and disability.
- Show a range of children's work in respect of ability, race, gender and curriculum subject.

The Care and Support of Staff and Pupils

Pupils

- A sense of fairness is fostered in our school; staff will always listen sympathetically to children's problems. Specific incidents of bullying, teasing or other inappropriate behaviours are acknowledged and dealt with immediately.
- The Personal, Social and Health Education, SEAL and R.E. syllabus involve direct teaching of some issues concerning the care and support of the children, such as making sensible decisions and tolerance.
- We recognise support and promote the diversity of family life.
- School Parliament gives children an opportunity to voice their opinions. These opinions are acted upon wherever possible.

Staff

- Staff are actively encouraged and given the opportunity to;
 - Give opinions and take responsibilities
 - Take turns to chair and minute staff meetings
 - To lead INSET/training days
 - To take assemblies.
- Our school is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in the areas of recruitment and selection. We aim for fair and equal treatment of all members of staff; there is no discrimination by race, gender or disability and promotion and recruitment will always be by merit and ability.
- A member of staff is chosen to be Equal Opportunities Lead and has the responsibility of raising awareness and dealing with issues in school and with staff.

Parents

- Parents are encouraged to keep in contact with their child's teacher and maintain communication throughout the year.
- Parental support is valued at Netherfield with many parents helping in class or trips. They are also welcomed to class assemblies and other school productions and are encouraged to join Adult Education classes.
- Parents are kept in regular contact with what is happening at school through newsletters and parents' evenings.
- Staff endeavour to be available to parents before school and after school or appointments can be made at a more convenient time.

Governors

There is a governor representative for Equal Opportunities. The relationship between the governor and teacher representative is a supportive one and they meet regularly to review equal opportunity issues within school.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children who have learning difficulties or behavioural problems are given extra support. Our aim is to ensure that they have equal access to the curriculum. Staff will endeavour to provide work that is differentiated so that each child has an equal opportunity to succeed.

Children from racial minority groups will be monitored to ensure that they do not underachieve. Equality of access is a reality in our school for all disabled pupils. There is a new Access Policy.

Our Resources

Curriculum Lead Innovator are responsible for ordering resources for their curriculum area. They should assess resources for;

- Bias (e.g. gender stereotyping, race stereotyping)
- Positive portrayal of black or Asian people and the disabled
- Portrayal of males/females in non-stereotypical roles

Staff may find some existing resources to be sexist or racist and in some cases these resources can be used to enable some direct anti-sexist or anti-racist teaching.

Our Language

As adults we must set an example in the language we use whilst teaching. We need to be seen to promote equal opportunities through our comments.

There are two appendices to their policy.

NETHERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy Appendix 1

Our Governors Accept the County Council's Equality Policy

Why does Equality Matter?

- Nottinghamshire County Council welcomes diversity and recognises that it has a positive responsibility to provide a working environment in which all employees can develop to their full potential and deliver appropriate, quality services to the community of Nottinghamshire
- Equality is an essential consideration for everyone within the LA as we strive to continually improve our capacity to deliver efficient and effective services, through a workforce that is representative of the community we serve
- However, some groups and communities suffer direct or indirect discrimination. This can become obvious where service and facilities are inappropriate, insensitive or inaccessible
- Promotion equality through effective policies will help the school to ensure that
 - All pupils achieve their potential
 - Expectations of all pupils are equally high
 - All pupils are prepared for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic society
 - The school challenges and deals effectively with racist incidents

Principles

The County Council recognises that;

- Equality in service delivery means adopting working practices that ensure everyone has access to those resources and facilities that the County Council provides
- Not everyone's needs are the same and their service requirements are determined by factors such as age, disability, ethnicity and gender. Therefore it is important that there should be wide involvement and consultation in the design of services. Good practice in equalities includes taking full account of people's views and expectations of services
- Different people have different experiences of inequality and discrimination as service users. Training and staff development programmes must support staff in understanding the different and common needs of the people who use our services
- Resources should be distributed in such a way as to ensure that equality of access and opportunity is maintained as a priority and a right

Equality in Service Delivery and in Employment

- The County Council is committed to the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunities in employment, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, creed, disability, sex, marital status, age or sexual orientation. The County Council aims to work actively against discrimination and to create equal access to and opportunities to use services by everyone

- The County Council will ensure that all of its own staff, the organisations that it supports and its partners in service delivery, are aware of this policy and that appropriate steps are taken to put it into practice in the day-to-day delivery of services
- The Education Department is committed to improving its policies and procedures in relation to equality issues. An equality action plan has been produced that schools can download from 'Wired', the Education Department website. The County Council has a corporate plan for addressing issues raised through a recent equality audit. This is available through Maggie Else, Corporate Equalities Officer (See LA Contact points)

The Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000

- There is now a general duty on public authorities, including school governing bodies, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups, including Travellers
- This duty is not meant to be a weighty new burden but a better and more effective way of carrying out existing functions. 'To have due regard' means that doing nothing is not an option and the LEA and governing bodies have to take steps to seek to avoid unlawful discrimination before it occurs
- Where unlawful discrimination occurs through the acts or omissions of a public authority, complaints can be taken to employment tribunals or county or sheriff courts. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) has the power to conduct investigations into any of the functions of public authorities
- Where racial discrimination is alleged to have taken place, one of the questions that will be asked is 'What steps have you taken to prevent discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations?' Where there are sufficient pupils, the attendance, behaviour and examination results of ethnic minority groups should be considered to see if there are disparities that need to be addressed. All schools, including those with no ethnic minority pupils, should use **Learning for All** (see below) and recording **racist incidents** (see below)
- Promoting racial equality is an issue that has no quick fix solution. Dismantling institutional racism and ensuring equality of educational opportunity for all is our long-term aim. Our progress towards these goals will be measured by improvements in educational attainment, reductions in ethnic minority exclusions, how racist incidents are dealt with and our efforts to obtain a workforce that is more representative of the general population. The responsibilities of Governing Bodies under the Race Relations Amendment Act mean that this is an area that cannot be ignored

Using 'Learning for All' to develop/review the school's Race Equality Policy and in school development planning

- In 2011 the CRE sent all schools a copy of its guidance on standards for racial equality in school, **Learning for All**. Further copies can be ordered from the CRE Website (www.cre.gov.uk) or it can be downloaded.
- The document not only provides a framework for schools to evaluate their current performance with regard to race issues, but it also promotes good practice across all areas of school work. It can be used to address equality issues with respect to disability, age, gender and sexual orientation as well as race. Easy to use audit material is provided to help schools identify areas for action. However, the whole document is rather daunting and it may be difficult to know where to start, especially with the other pressures on staff time. It is suggested that **Learning for All** is used as a resource for existing activities and for delivering the school development plan.
- The County Council used a similar CRE framework to conduct an equality audit in 2000. Rather than looking solely at ethnicity, the framework was used to assess five perceived areas of inequality: disability, race, age,

gender and sexual orientation. Schools are encouraged to adopt the same approach with **Learning for All** where it is appropriate

- It is suggested that a racial equality policy should be a separate section within the school's equal opportunities policy. The checklists on pages 19-23 of **Learning for All** are an excellent starting point for writing or reviewing the policy. Schools without
- A racial equality policy will be at a considerable disadvantage if they have to defend themselves against allegations of racism. It would also be more difficult to demonstrate that the school was complying with the Race Relations Amendment Act

Recording Racist Incidents

- Guidelines for dealing with racist incidents have been revised and are available on Nottinghamshire's intranet (open the 'LA and 'Publications' boxes). Further copies are being sent to schools and should be available for a committee of governors
- The LA has adopted the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report definition

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

- Head teachers are asked to provide an annual report to governing bodies and to the LA on the number of racist incidents, including nil returns. This is one piece of positive action to demonstrate that the promotion of good race relations is being taken seriously.
- Currently 135 Nottinghamshire schools are signed up to the Common Monitoring Project for recording racist incidents. Between July 1998 and June 2000, 1690 racist incidents were reported to the common Monitoring Project. Young people (under 16) account for 20% of the victims and 31% of the alleged perpetrators. However, only 7 incidents were reported by schools in this period. The LA recommends that all schools record and report racist incidents to the Common Monitoring Project. Individual schools are not identified in any public report. This information will help the school to take positive steps to address the problems of racism. Schools that wish to sign up to the Common Monitoring Project should contact Alan Evans (see LA Contact points)

NETHERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

RACIAL EQUALITY POLICY

Appendix 2

- Our school is committed to working towards racial equality and combating racial discrimination and racial harassment. It is particularly important for us to state this as we are a predominately white school
- Our school Equal Opportunities Policy demonstrates areas of our practice where staff are expected to challenge racist attitudes and promote cultural diversity
- As a matter of policy our Governors have agreed to record all racist incidents and they have adopted the LA's racial harassment policy
- Although there are very few ethnic minority pupils in our school their attainment will be monitored in the same way as other significant groups, e.g. boys in English, girls in Science or higher attaining Year 4 pupils in foundation subjects
- A race equality action plan will be produced annually and become a section within the School Development Plan. The working party of staff and Governors will take responsibility for this. All staff will be involved in the review of this plan
- All school policies will be reviewed to check that racial equality is clearly stated as an explicit aim
- The Racial Equality Policy is reviewed annually to assess its effectiveness, reminds staff of their responsibilities and check for training needs or resource implications. Any failure by staff to follow the policy will involve the appropriate Disciplinary Procedures
- The CRE document 'Learning for All' which was used to produce this policy statement will be used in the review process

This Policy was written in October 2014: it will be reviewed in October 2017.