



Equality of Opportunities Policy (to be read in conjunction with our equality scheme)

Formally adopted by:-	The Clare School
On:-	18th January 2021
Headteacher:-	Rebecca Wicks
Last updated:-	Spring Term 2021
To be reviewed:-	Spring Term 2022

Legal Framework

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding Principles

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:
 - Principle 1: All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners and their parents and carers as of equal value.

Therefore:

- We believe that all pupils are entitled to equality of opportunity and equality of regard
 - whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
 - whatever their gender and gender identity
 - whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background or social background
 - whatever their sexual identity
 - whatever their age, physical or sensory ability
- Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised

- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity
- age, physical or sensory ability.

Therefore:

We are committed to offering equality of access to all opportunities which the school offers except where medical or psychological advice prevents an activity for a particular pupil.

- All pupils are entitled to have access to a broad balanced, and relevant curriculum, appropriately differentiated to meet their needs
- Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents.
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Therefore:

- We will, at all times by our words and actions, endeavour to dispel prejudice and discrimination and in doing so, encourage our pupils to develop a similar attitude.
- We will work together as a team to create and sustain a mutually satisfying environment for staff and pupils in which all are able to develop and work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- whatever their age.

Therefore:

- All applicants are entitled to the school's recruitment and selection process without discrimination.
- All members of staff are entitled to have access to inservice training, in accordance with the School Development Plan and their Performance Management to help to develop their professional skills.
- Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds or social background
- girls and boys, women and men
- age differences
- Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled

- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds or social backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys
- people of different sexual orientation
- people of all age groups
- Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds or social backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people of different sexual orientation
- people of all age groups
- Principle 8: we base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender
- Principle 9: Objectives

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (Principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (Principle 7), in relation to:

- disability
- ethnicity, religion and culture
- gender

From the above Guiding Principles we aim to:

- Prepare pupils for life in a diverse society.
- Promote good relations between people, regardless of their differences; to avoid prejudice, discrimination and racism

- Provide equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum for all pupils.
- Recognise each pupil as an individual; this includes paying particular attention to needs such as language, ability/disability, religion, food and culture.

To achieve these aims we are committed to the following:

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- Give every pupil/student in a school a chance to communicate what they want, knowing that they will be listened to and that their views will be seriously considered.
 - Sharing and exchanging ideas with pupils/students across the school.
 - Involve pupils and students in making decisions about how aspects of the school are run.
 - Give pupils/students direct experience of creating new initiatives, solving problems and achieving their goal.
 - Respecting pupils/students as partners in their own education and in improving the school community.
 - Involving the whole school community in developing shared standards of behaviour and maintaining them.
 - Ensure all pupils/students have the right to express their views, and to have their views taken into account, on matters that concern their life in school, as called for in Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
5. We recognize that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference.
 6. Every three years, accordingly, we draw up an Equality Scheme within the framework of the overall School Development Plan and processes of self-evaluation, setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.
 7. We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them through our Impact Assessment Forms.

The curriculum

8. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles set out in Section 4 above.

Ethos and organisation

9. We ensure the principles listed in Section 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:
 - pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
 - pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
 - teaching styles and strategies
 - admissions and attendance
 - staff recruitment, retention and professional development
 - care, guidance and support
 - behaviour, discipline and exclusions
 - working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
 - working with the wider community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

10. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in Sections 1-3:
 - prejudices around disability and special educational needs
 - prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia
 11. There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.
 12. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.
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Roles and responsibilities

13. The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
14. A member of the Governing Body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
15. The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
16. A senior member of staff has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.
17. All staff are expected to:
 - promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
 - deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
 - plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in Section 4 above
 - support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
 - keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

Information and resources

18. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.
19. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

Religious observance

20. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Staff development and training

21. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Breaches of the policy

22. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Monitoring and evaluation

The promotion, monitoring, and review of this policy is a continuous process and is the responsibility of all governors and staff. Therefore:

23. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.
24. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special education needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

This policy is to be reviewed by Spring Term 2022 or earlier if there is a change in statutory legislation.

Annex I

Recruitment, Selection, Pay and Conditions of Staff

1. The Governing Body at The Clare School is committed to the development and positive application of procedures aimed at promoting equality of opportunity in employment so that potential and existing employees are not disadvantaged because of sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.
2. It is the prime concern of the Governing Body at The Clare School to ensure that its statutory responsibilities are fully met in such matters. Within that, it is the policy of the Governing Body at The Clare School to ensure that all staff are selected, trained, and promoted on the basis of the requirements of their post, individual capabilities, and other similar objective and relevant criteria. The sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation of an application or employee shall not affect the employment opportunities made available to them except as permitted within the terms of paragraphs 3, 4, 5.3 and 5.5 below.
3. It is recognised that the Governing Body at The Clare School may properly discriminate on grounds of sex by virtue of legislation and conditions of employment:
 - a in providing special rights for women in respect of their pregnancy confinement;
 - b with regard to death or retirement (in the terms of pensions);
 - c in relation to permitted "positive action" for in-service training.
4. It is further recognised that (as expressly permitted by legislation) it shall be proper for the Governing Body at The Clare School to discriminate on the grounds of sex in the selection of employees for any post where there is a genuine occupational qualification that necessitates the employee being of a specific sex.

5. To ensure disabled people have the same opportunities as others to lead satisfying working lives and to make their full potential contribution to the school, the Governing Body at The Clare School will adopt the following principles:
 - 5.1 Full and fair consideration will be given to disabled people in recruitment.
 - 5.2 Equal opportunities for training, career development and promotion to suitable posts will be made available to disabled staff in the same way as they are to other employees.
 - 5.3 Within its capacity the Governing Body at The Clare School will take steps so far as reasonably practicable to provide a suitable working environment for disabled employees.
 - 5.4 All employees will be encouraged to do all within their capabilities to accept disabled colleagues into their working group.
 - 5.5 Wherever possible and subject to the requirements of the job/service, existing employees who become disabled or whose disability increases will be retained. Where that proves impracticable, consideration will be given to ill-health, retirement, redeployment, or through the Director of Children's Services reference to the Disablement Resettlement Service with a view to resettlement in some other employment.
 - 5.6 With regard to redundancy, disabled staff will neither be discriminated against unfavourably nor treated differently from other staff by reason of their disability.
6. All existing staff and applicants for vacant posts will be made aware of the Governing Body at The Clare School's policy and procedures on equal opportunities and will be encouraged to co-operate in ensuring its effective implementation. New staff will receive this information with their particulars of employment.
7. All Governors at The Clare School and staff having a responsibility for recruitment shall receive appropriate training and advice on the implementation of the equal opportunities policy and statutory responsibilities in this area.
8. The Director of Children's Services has overall responsibility for developing and reviewing the necessary model equal opportunities policy and procedures for schools in consultation with the Teachers' Associations and the non-teaching staff unions, and for prompting their adoption and implementation by Governing Bodies.

9. If any employee considers that he or she is suffering from unequal treatment on grounds of sex, marital status, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation, and unless the alleged discrimination is in relation to a matter listed in paragraphs 4, 5 and 6.5 of the policy, then he or she may make a complaint which will be dealt with through the school's Grievance Procedure.

