



COBHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caring, Proud, Successful!

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Equality Act (2010) was introduced to combine the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Previously public bodies were bound by these three sets of duties to promote disability, race and gender equality. In April 2011 these were replaced by a single public sector equality duty (known as the PSED or the equality duty).

This new duty extends to all the aspects of a person's identity that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are known as protected characteristics and are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

At Cobham Primary School we wish to create and maintain a trusting, secure and happy environment where everyone can work in a community of mutual respect.

Our values of TRUST which stand for Tolerance, Respect, Unity, Strength and Truth all ensure that every stakeholder associated with Cobham Primary School have an equality of opportunity.

All members of the school community have responsibilities to promote equality of opportunity, experience and treatment, and to challenge stereotypes. Our school community consists of a diverse range of people – employees, visitors, students and parents. We need to celebrate our differences, by understanding them and enjoying the diversity this brings.

Aim: We want to foster mutual tolerance and our aim is for everyone to feel valued within the school.

By actively promoting equal opportunities and not discriminating either directly or indirectly against anyone on the grounds of colour, race, nationality, beliefs, sexuality, disability or gender the school can ensure that:

- All students have opportunities to achieve their potential
- Expectations of all students are incredibly high both academically and socially
- All students have access to and can make full use of, the school's facilities and resources
- The school reflects the community it serves and responds to its needs
- All students are prepared for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic society
- All students understand the meaning of prejudice, how discrimination occurs and how to take a stand against these
- It has a positive ethos and environment
- Racist and discriminatory incidents are dealt with effectively
- Inclusion issues are taken seriously and are considered in all aspects of school life

All students and adults within the school have a right to be treated with respect. This includes a right to:

- Study, learn and work
- Physical, emotional and verbal respect, free from violence, bullying and abusive language.
- Respect for their gender, race and age
- Freedom from sexual comments or harassment and inappropriate use of humour
- The safety of their property
- Equal opportunities in relation to curriculum access, recruitment, and access to extra-curricular activities

Students and adults within school are encouraged to challenge any inappropriate behaviour or comments. In the case of comments/incidents witnessed by others, silence and non-intervention will be viewed as agreement.

Culture, class, religion and race

We acknowledge 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.

We recognise 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 and staff to wear special forms of dress where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background – e.g. Sikhs' turbans, Muslim girls' hijab as far as health and safety allows.

We value the history, experience and contribution of our multicultural community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school: all members should feel that their language or dialect is valued and that

bilingualism is regarded as advantageous. 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.

We actively seek the involvement of our pupils' parents and inform them of our commitment to developing mutual respect.

Religious Observance:

We respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, students and their parents, and will comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Gender

As a school, we accept that there are gender inequalities in our society which impose limits, particularly on girls' expectations and behaviour, so we constantly examine our curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality.

We encourage pupils to be aware of the rigid sex stereotypes presented by, for example, the media.

We try to ensure that our resources include non-sexist books which value the achievements of women as well as men and emphasise caring and leadership roles for both sexes.

We are committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions.

All pupils experience subjects previously considered to be suitable for a single sex e.g. rugby, netball, cooking, woodwork etc.

We try to ensure

- that teachers allocate their time fairly between the sexes,
- that all pupils have opportunities for working with pupils of both sexes,
- that we break down traditional sex stereotypes (for example by not asking boys to move furniture while girls tidy up),
- that pupils have opportunities for examining their own pre-conceived ideas of gender-roles,

- that pupils are encouraged to pursue less conventional subjects and interests (for example, girls to read more non-fiction and boys more fiction; girls to develop mechanical interests, boys creative skills),

We do not differentiate between the sexes in respect of our school uniform.

We acknowledge the importance of effective links with first and upper schools in monitoring and furthering the progress of this policy.

Sexuality

As a school, we make no assumptions about the sexuality of any of our members.

Derogatory name-calling (of any sort) is unacceptable.

Special educational needs

We welcome pupils with special needs. We undertake to assess and meet the needs of all our pupils as far as we are able. We aim to create a happy and educationally exciting environment in which all pupils can prosper.

We try to avoid stereotyped assumptions about the behaviour of boys and girls as these can often influence identification and assessment procedures.

Because pupils develop at different rates for different activities, we adopt a child-centred approach to learning which is based on each pupil's needs.

We acknowledge that especially able pupils have special needs, too.

Disability

Pupils with special educational needs constitute a very diverse group: they include pupils with physical, emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties, those with impaired sight or hearing.

We try to ensure that pupils with physical disabilities are facilitated in participating in the school's curriculum and facilities to the fullest possible extent.

We seek assistance from a wide range of agencies where appropriate: for example speech therapists, occupational therapists, medical practitioners, psychologists and social workers.

The school takes a pro-active approach to involve disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school.

(See also SEN Policy)

Availability of this Policy:

This policy will be available to parents on request and will be published on the school website.

Review date: November 19

This policy will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis.

Policy Links:

Confidentiality

Positive Behaviour Policy

Anti-bullying