

Springfield Primary School

Equal Opportunities/Inclusion Policy 2014

Introduction

- 1 Equal opportunity is the responsibility of everyone in school because it is about the self esteem, aspirations and achievement of all pupils and staff. It permeates all aspects of school life.
2. Our school must educate, develop and prepare all children, regardless of class, race, gender or disability, for life in Multicultural Britain.
3. Each child should endeavour to contribute to a happy and caring environment by showing respect for and appreciation of each other, irrespective of class, race, gender or disability.
4. Discrimination on the basis of class, race, gender or disability is unacceptable in this school.
5. Our school is committed to emphasising the common elements and values of our multiple culture and to celebrating diversity rather than highlighting difference and conflict.
6. Our school will on every occasion demonstrate within the community its opposition to racism and sexism and foster positive attitudes towards our multicultural society.

AIMS:

1. To equip our children with an awareness of an increasingly diverse society and of presenting the world as it is and as we would like it to be.
2. To ensure that all our children have an equal chance to make good use of the educational facilities of the school regardless of class, race, gender or disability.

PRACTICE:

Admission

The school does not permit class, race, gender or disability to be used as criteria for admission. Children's names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced.

Pupils

Children should be encouraged to respect names from other cultures.

All forms of racial abuse by any person in the school should be treated seriously (see Anti-Racist policy). A verbal rebuke should be issued or a written note made in the Racist Incident Log whether incidents take place in the playground, corridors or classrooms. It should always be made clear to offenders that such behaviour is unacceptable. If there are subsequent incidents the Head should be informed and consideration should be given to the involvement of parents. Offensive symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and bags are forbidden in school. Graffiti should be immediately reported so that it can be removed. Through the school's commitment to continuing mutual respect by encouraging children to work collaboratively e.g. Circle Time, we hope to discourage such abuse.

Staff

Cultural and social diversity amongst the staff should always be viewed positively. Appointments should be advertised as widely as possible. For all appointments the best candidate will be appointed adopting strict professional criteria.

The Curriculum

All pupils should have equal access to the curriculum regardless of gender, race, disability, or A well balanced, objective and sensitive curriculum aimed at unity, rather than highlighting difference can help to avoid omission and misrepresentation of the historical, cultural, racial and sexual differences and experiences of children. Staff should be aware that their own expectations affect the achievements, behaviour and status of each child.

As ease of travel makes intercultural contact more likely the need for respect, understanding and communication becomes more important. Our curriculum should be designed to create a spirit of mutual co-operation, to remove prejudice, racist and sexist attitudes and support understanding by:

- a) avoiding stereotyped images,
- b) promoting the understanding of the beliefs and customs of others,
- c) positively promoting anti-racism and anti-sexism,
- d) presenting a factual and unbiased view of history, and
- e) helping each child to acquire the social skills to live and work anywhere in the U.K. and the rest of the world.

Language

The school views the diversity of language positively. All staff should be aware of the language, dialect and accent spoken by our children and their families. Staff should be aware of the racist connotations in the language they themselves use. All people should feel that their language or dialect is valued. Children should, therefore, be encouraged to use the correct name to describe it and be confident to speak, hear or read their home language in school. Children should never use their own language to exclude other children.

Language, Accent and Dialect

The school should be responsive to the issue on linguistic diversity and staff should be aware of the language and other dialect 'repertoires' of the children.

All children should feel that their home language is valued

They should be confident to speak, hear and read their home language in school.

Home language doesn't necessarily have to be a 'foreign' language, but includes local dialects, slang and street language etc.

Bilingualism should be regarded as advantageous. The school must work towards and positively support any initiative towards mother tongue teaching.

Resources

The school's aim is to provide for all children according to their needs, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender or class.

Wherever possible, staff should ensure that the resources used in all curriculum areas are multicultural and contain positive images of minority ethnic groups and women and girls.

A variety of cultural groups are contained in present British society. The variety should be apparent in the morals, stories, languages and information offered to children and should be evident in classrooms. Children should have access to accurate information about the similarities and differences between cultural groups.

All the resources children use should;

- a) reflect the multicultural society in which our children live,
- b) not present negative images and stereotypes,
- c) not misrepresent the history of countries or peoples,
- d) not present a biased view of the social and economic relations in the world.

Ethos, atmosphere and organisation

- Children learn from the school's hidden curriculum expressed by the attitudes individuals have towards life and living, and towards each other.
- The ethos and atmosphere should show the respect which is the entitlement of all persons entering the school. This should include public notices giving information in the major languages of the school community.

- Areas of graffiti should be cleared immediately. School rules and regulations should be sensitive to different cultural practices in the areas of diet, dress and interpersonal behaviour.
- School assembly should value the individuality of each child and include the opportunity for everyone to join in the celebration of other's values and beliefs.
- Everyone involved in the life of the school should be responsible for creating an atmosphere in which all our children are able to have the best chance possible in life, now and in the future.

POLICY IN ACTION

Names

All staff should ensure that pupil's names are spelt correctly and pronounced properly. Teachers need to be sensitive to different naming traditions and encourage children to respect names from cultures other than their own. Children and staff should use the name chosen by children and their parents. On admission, the child's parents/guardian's name must be correctly established and recorded with due regard to the appropriate ethnic or cultural origin.

Race (See Anti-racism policy)

It is important that we:

- Ensure that all children find their own culture and ethnic group accurately and sufficiently represented in the curriculum,
- Ensure that History taught, should feature the contributions that non-European women and men have made to the knowledge of life on earth,
- Enable children to discuss racism and to understand the damage this does to other children and to their own views and perceptions, and
- Enable and equip children to question biased opinions and distorted representation and information.

Curriculum

In studying the lives of peoples we should affirm the equal value and beauty of different racial features. Ensure there are paints available for painting a variety of skin tones.

Use materials, pictures, dolls which show children and adults from minority groups.

Muslim parents and others are sensitive about sex education.

Beware of over-simplification involved in equating black skins with climate.

Invite speakers and representatives of different cultural background to share their experiences.

When studying ethnic minority history we should use non-

European views to avoid an ethnocentric view point. Use the terms minorities use themselves.

Make positive use of ideas and knowledge from other cultures e.g. Islamic patterns, Arabic numbers and place value, Chinese inventions, Batik.

Values and Beliefs

People have different views about what is important in life.

Learning about different views and beliefs comes about by studying;

- Celebrations and festivals,
- Stories from different cultural traditions,
- Places of worship,
- Religious ceremonies and prayers, and the
- Lives of religious leaders.

We should be aware of the importance that after-school Koranic study has for Muslim families. Look at common moral beliefs rather than exotic practices.

The World

Beware of over-simplification when studying whole countries.

When using artefacts, use everyday objects rather than exotic ones; avoid those produced expressly for the tourist trade.

Avoid stereotyping such as: quaint; curious; emphases on the exotic; that people overseas exist to grow cotton, tea, sugar; that everything is absolutely desperate; that people everywhere are dying of starvation, from floods, that all people in a country live in huts, etc.

Cooking

Beware of the use of recipes from different countries as the 'norm'

Rasta children are not allowed to eat food prepared in school.

Muslim children can only eat halal meat and cannot eat anything containing lard or gelatine.

Clothing

A sympathetic understanding of cultural clothing requirements is positively encouraged. E.g. in P.E.

Muslim girls cover their legs; Rastafari girls cover their heads with a wrap; Sikh boys wear bangles.

Expression

Children should be able to explain and describe their ideas using Mother Tongue and dialect.

Drama, poetry, puppetry and writing should show an acceptance and encouragement of mother tongue/dialect, street language, accent, etc.

Above all second language should have status e.g. through language teaching and dual language books.

Social Skills

Children should be encouraged to express their views and feelings clearly and considerately in their relationships with others. Children should be able to co-operate effectively and sensibly in groups.

Empathy

Children should be encouraged to imagine the feelings and views of others.

What does it feel like to be one of a minority group?

Put yourself in the other's place.

Self Respect

Children should have a sense of their own worth as individuals and the worth of their social, cultural and family background.

There is a need to build up a more positive set of associations with blackness, darkness, etc. Avoid use of phrases such as 'black as sin'.

Respect for others

Children should be ready to appreciate and value people from different cultural backgrounds. There should be no discrimination based on gender. Do we intentionally/unintentionally promote certain attitudes and assumptions?

Open-Mindedness: Children should be made aware of their own biases and be willing to change their ideas and judgements as they learn more. Can we look at our own attitudes and how they are formed?

Critical approaches to information: Children should be encouraged and helped to adopt a constructively critical approach to all sources of information and to the mass media, in particular stereotypes and racial myths should be challenged.

Resources

The schools resources can be prejudiced if they do not reflect the fact that the children are living in a multicultural society:

- a) They may present negative images or stereotypes of ethnic minority groups, of girls/women and of boys/men,
- b) There may be omission of positive images,
- c) They may misrepresent the history of countries,
- d) They may present a biased view of social and economic relations in the world, and
- e) They may be used exclusively for the benefit of anyone group to the detriment of any other groups.

Teachers should ensure that resources are multicultural and contain positive images of people from ethnic minority groups.

They should also ensure that resources do not present negative images of either boys or girls. All children, regardless of class, colour or gender, should be given a fair share of the schools resources and care should be taken to ensure resources such as lego or computers are not dominated by boys and that boys, in turn, are given an equal chance to play in the Home corner, dress up or play with dolls.

Ethos, atmosphere and organisation

The ethos and atmosphere should show respect for everyone.

This includes public notices giving directions in the major languages of the school community.

Areas of graffiti should be cleaned immediately.

School rules and regulations should be sensitive to different cultural practices in aspects of diet, dress and interpersonal behaviour. The administering of procedures should not take traditional British values as the only basis for decisions.

The recording of information should reflect the 'rights' of individuals and if judgements of a non-factual nature are included, the record should be destroyed.

In school assemblies the knowledge of religions and forms of worship can be important. No more or less importance should be attached to any faith. Children should not be encouraged nor expect to practice another form of worship other than their own. In assembly, children should be encouraged to respect the right to be different. They should also be encouraged to develop their self esteem in terms of the local community.

Visitors should reflect the nature of the community we teach and the diverse roles people play within it.

Racism and/or sexism can be reflected in the composition of governing bodies, e.g. the failure to include people that reflect the community of the school; the total exclusion of men/women; or one particular group holding all the important positions.

Representative Governors should reflect the plural society of Britain. At Governors meetings conclusions reached should clearly reflect the Equal Opportunity Policy of the school.

Parents and Teacher governors should encourage participation of all governors in the life of the school. Governors should show concern and care for the daily needs of the children in the school. They will also need to be aware of the personal and institutional aspects of racism and sexism, in order to challenge it.