



# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

**Spring 2011**

**Review Date: Spring 2013**

# **Runnymede St Edward's School**

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been developed with regard to regulations concerning Equal Opportunities and in consultation with staff and Governors.

***Runnymede St Edward's School is a Catholic community which reflects the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice and aims to inspire, challenge and support all.***

### **OUR COMMITMENT**

At Runnymede St Edward's School, we seek to provide opportunities for all individuals to reach their potential and to value themselves and their place in society, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, or ability range.

All members of our school community are encouraged to respect others without prejudice and to develop sensitivity to and empathy with the needs of others. They are expected to develop this awareness and understanding in a Christian context and with an appreciation of cultural and social diversity within a local, national and global sphere.

We aim to prepare all pupils for life in our multicultural society, and celebrate the richness of cultural diversity.

We believe that equal opportunity approaches should underpin all aspects of school life and should not be seen as a subject only to be taught through curriculum areas. We seek to ensure that there are no barriers to pupils taking full advantage of their educational entitlement.

It is the responsibility of every individual to counter racism, sexism, negative attitudes towards disability and other discriminatory practices.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### A GOVERNING BODY

The governors are responsible for:

Making sure the school complies with the **DETAILS OF ACTS**; and  
Making sure the equal opportunities policy and its procedures are followed.

### B HEADTEACHER

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the equal opportunities policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils and their parents and guardians know about it;
- Making sure the equal opportunities policy and its procedures are followed;
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary;
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out; and
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination in any form.

### C ALL STAFF

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with cases of harassment and discrimination in any form, and being able to recognise and respond to cases of bias and stereotyping;
- Promoting equal opportunities and good race relations, and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins;
- Keeping up to date with the laws on discrimination, and taking up training and learning opportunities with the support and guidance from the co-ordinator.

## **D STAFF WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Non statutory guide to racial equality suggests a senior member of staff or a governor be responsible for overall co-ordination; at Runnymede the headteacher has overall responsibility but delegates responsibility to a named co-ordinator in line with subject co-ordinators for:**

- Co-ordinating work on equal opportunities; and
- Dealing with reports of incidents.

## **E VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS**

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following, our equal opportunities policy.

## **1 RACIAL EQUALITY**

At Runnymede St Edward's School we aim to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, and to promote equal opportunities and good race relationships in all areas of school life.

We have a form for logging racial incidents (Appendix 1). The Headteacher should be informed immediately of any such cases.

### **WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:**

- Acknowledging that members of the school understand different cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and endeavouring to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in everyday school life;
- Valuing the history, experience and contribution of our multi-cultural community and seeking to express this in the curriculum and life of our school;
- Acknowledging that while there is a need for pupils to learn and communicate in standard English, their home language should be celebrated and respected;
- Not tolerating racist behaviour in any form.

## 2 GENDER

As a school we aim to eliminate unlawful gender discrimination in any form and, wherever possible, to promote equal opportunities for all members of the school community. This is implemented with full regard of our commitments to traditional girls and boys sports which are influenced by our independent school status.

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Encouraging pupils to be aware of gender stereotypes presented by, for example, the media, and gender bias views in literature;
- Examining the curriculum, procedures and resources for gender bias inequality;
- Providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions;
- Ensuring that teachers allocate their time fairly between the sexes and that all pupils have opportunities to work with pupils of both sexes.

## 3 SEXUALITY

At Runnymede St Edward's School we aim to eliminate any unlawful sexual discrimination in any form.

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Making no assumptions about sexuality of any members of our school community;
- Sex Education for upper junior children – answering pupils' questions as they arise as honestly, factually and non-judgementally as possible;
- Not tolerating name calling of any sort.

## 4 RELIGIOUS

As a Catholic school we aim to uphold the Catholic faith while recognising and exploring other faiths.

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Implementing the opportunities presented in the Here I Am religious programme to explore other faiths once a term from Year 1 to Year 6;

- Promoting non-discriminatory attitudes among pupils;

## 5 CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

At Runnymede St Edward's School we apply the principles underlying the **National Curriculum as stated in Section 1 of the Education Reform Act of 1988**. These principles place a statutory responsibility on schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We aim to provide a curriculum that offers all children the chance to develop an extensive range of subjects, knowledge and skills.

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Assessing and meeting the needs of all our pupils;
- Creating a happy and educationally exciting environment in which all abilities can prosper;
- Implementing a wide range of teaching and learning strategies to allow children of different abilities the chance to achieve;
- Recognising that pupils with specific educational needs constitute a very diverse group; they include pupils with physical, emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties, those with impaired sight or hearing, and those who are especially able;
- Providing specific educational needs teaching for children who, for the reasons given above, may need extra support;
- Seeking assistance and advice from a range of agencies where appropriate: for example speech therapists, medical practitioners, psychologists, social workers and the staff of the Hearing Impaired Unit.
- Working in line with the Specific Educational Needs Policy;
- Working in line with the Early Years Equality guidelines
- Providing opportunities for discussion and exploration of prejudice, stereotyping and bias through the area of Education for Personal Relationships:
- Encouraging children to apply a discriminatory approach to all they hear and read; to be aware of authors' bias and to read critically (eg in the English curriculum);

- Allowing children to develop the skills necessary to distinguish between fact and opinion (eg in the History curriculum)
- Ensuring that pupils with physical disabilities are facilitated in participating in the school's curriculum to the fullest possible extent within the limitations of the building;
- Promoting high standards of good behaviour through the development of self-discipline and mutual respect for others;
- Implementing sanctions and rewards consistently throughout the school;

## **6 HARASSMENT AND BULLYING**

Harassment and bullying may be described as unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is found to be objectionable and offensive and that might threaten a child's security and employee's job security, or create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment. This may be based on sex, race, disability, sexual orientation or age. As a school we will not tolerate harassment, abuse or intimidation to other members of the school community.

### **WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:**

- Ensuring that all members of the school community are alert to all forms of bullying and harassment as outlined;
- Creating a safe and welcoming environment for all;
- Ensuring that all staff are confident to deal firmly, consistently, and effectively with bullying and harassment.

## **7 RECRUITMENT AND PUPIL ADMISSION**

We aim to reflect the make-up of the local community in the people employed, in the light of suitability of applicants for a post. We strive to ensure that the pupil admission policy is non-discriminatory.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- This policy will be communicated to staff through the circulation of the written policy statement and through staff meetings.

- The aims of the school regarding equality will be both explicitly and implicitly conveyed to all, through the example of the senior management of the school and all staff employed at Runnymede.
- The In-service training requirements of the equal opportunities policy will be considered within the School Development Plan.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The impact and effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy will be assessed by:

- Collecting and analysing relevant monitoring and other data;
- Talking to pupils, parents and staff to find out their needs and opinions;
- Carrying out surveys, one-to-one interviews, classroom discussions or special research.

## **REVIEW**

The results of these assessments will be used to:

- Review the Equal Opportunities Policy objectives (where necessary) in line with the MES Policy guidelines
- Establish how effective the policy is in tackling discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities and good race relations;
- Inform the school community about how the policy is working.

## **BREACHES OF THE POLICY**

The headteacher has ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with this document and will put into practice school disciplinary procedures as appropriate with the support of the SMT and all staff.

Summer 2011  
Review 2013