

Equal Opportunities Policy



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1. SCHOOL STATEMENT

At Brixham Church of England School, we are committed to tackling the barriers which may lead to unequal outcomes so that there is equality of access for all, according to the principles of Equality Act 2010.

We treat all people the same irrespective of:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religious beliefs /faith traditions
- Sex orientation
- Age

We recognise our fundamental similarities, whilst celebrating and valuing diversity within our school community.

Equality at the school is the responsibility of all, and should permeate all aspects of school life.

2. AIMS

To act positively and have due regard to the need to challenge and eliminate unlawful discrimination within school and the community

To provide a positive and caring environment within the whole school, reflecting the ethos and the overall aims based on Christian values

To promote equality of opportunity in the admission of children to the school

To promote for the whole community

To admit children regardless of gender, race, religion, social group, disability or special needs while ensuring a high standard of educational support for all children on the school roll

To promote values and attitudes that relate to equal opportunities

3. PRINCIPLES

We recognise the need to encourage children to develop:

3.1 Respect for self:

- A positive self-image
- A confident sense of their own identity
- A willingness to express their own thoughts, feelings and ideas
- Recognition of their own achievements
- Knowledge of the achievements of their own gender/culture/social group

3.2 Respect for others:

- A respect for the equal rights of others
- A sympathetic understanding of others ideas, feelings and points of view
- An appreciation of the achievements of other individuals regardless of social or ethnic group
- A recognition of the damaging effects on rejected individuals and groups of prejudice and discrimination
- An understanding of the dangers of stereotyping individuals and groups

Brixham Church of England Primary School recognises that all individuals have fundamental human rights and therefore adopts a rights based approach to equality. We shall develop practices that promote the right for everyone to participate in all aspects of life within school by promoting initiatives that remove barriers to participation and by actively promoting equality and social inclusion.

All children share the right to a broad and balanced curriculum, to be treated with the same concern for their education and overall development and to have the same chance to benefit from the resources available to the nursery and school, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, and level of ability, physical capacity or social circumstances.

At Brixham Church of England Primary we recognise that issues of equality opportunity can easily arise and we work hard to ensure that these are addressed in the school curriculum and in every day school life.

We aim to celebrate the differences between individuals and value the contributions they can make when sharing their experiences with us. We address equality of opportunities as a whole community issue, which is reflected through our ethos as well as the formal and informal curriculum. The children learn by example and we hope to provide them with positive role models. Through our schools Acts of Collective Worship we encourage equal opportunities and try to discourage stereotypes. We hope to promote a healthy environment combating prejudice and discrimination in every aspect of our curriculum.

We offer a curriculum which is engaging and encourages all children to participate in a full range of intellectual and social pursuits.

4. PRACTICE:

4.1 Curriculum and Learning

The school ensures that each child has equal access to all areas of the curriculum. Children with special needs are occasionally withdrawn from class at appropriate times and careful attention is paid to the balance between individually-supported work and integrated work with the remainder of the class.

We strive to ensure that there is no gender bias in the school day.

For core curriculum subjects pupils are, at appropriate times, seated according to ability. Groupings are always mixed gender in the classroom; opportunities for collaboration between girls and boys are always encouraged.

There is no gender discrimination in the allocation of equipment and tools for technology and other practical sessions. Boys and girls alike participate in occasional Sewing, Cookery and PE lessons.

Play times are organised to ensure that, for example boys are not allowed to monopolise areas of the playground for exclusive games of football. Comments based on sex-stereotyping (e.g. "Boys are brave and don't cry" or "Nice girls don't play rough games") are discouraged.

Pupils of both sexes participate equally in all sporting activities, including football, netball, rounders, touch rugby and quick cricket. All extra-curricular clubs and activities are open to both sexes, and where both boys and girls have elected to participate in such clubs, mixed gender teams may and have represented the school.

Whilst there are a few people in the local community from minority ethnic, cultural or religious groups, we are sensitive to the different needs of pupils from such a background, for example in opting out of our Anglican acts of worship. Our RE Policy reflects our desire to teach a positive understanding of other religions and more generally we are proactive in promoting the multi-cultural dimensions of education through stories, other texts, music, art and other activities and resources.

We promote positive attitudes towards disability and pupils are encouraged to be understanding of and supportive towards those with such difficulties. We are keen to work closely and flexibly with other professionals when the need arises such as Speech Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, to help disabled pupils overcome or minimise the problems caused by their incapacity.

4.2 Extra-Curricular Activities

All children are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities such as ICT, drama, music (including choir, recorders, drums & guitar- including bass & electric), textiles and sport (including tag rugby, basketball, netball, yoga, cycling & football). All children have an equal chance to join these clubs.

We aim to prepare the children for the world in which they have to live. We aim to make them aware of the differences in society and we hope that their education in this community helps them to deal effectively with situations they meet both inside and outside school.

4.3 English as an Additional Language

Recognition and help is given to children whose mother tongue is not English. Children are given individual learning programmes and help is sought from specialist teachers. Children are encouraged to integrate straight away as well as to share their experiences with the other children.

4.4 Assessment

Identical forms of assessment are used for all children although children with SEN will be assessed on a more regular basis if required (see SEN Policy). Relevant data regarding gender, performance, etc is analysed to determine Equal Opportunities targets.

4.5 Early Years

Our Nursery is available to all eligible children, including young children with specific SEN difficulties. We extend our Equal Opportunity Policy to accommodate the needs of very young children and their families, ensuring a range of multi-agency opportunities to address family play and learning, parenting skills and socially disadvantaged children.

5. BEHAVIOUR

When incidents take place that, whilst not necessarily being sexist, racist or otherwise based on overt discrimination, include an element of bullying, name-calling, insult or rejection, these are dealt with appropriately by staff under the provisions of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy. In all such cases, it is made clear that it is the behaviour rather than the child that is unacceptable.

6. STAFF, GOVERNORS, PARENTS AND OTHER VISITORS

The School's personnel practices, including recruitment, retention and remuneration are carried out in accordance with the LA's Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy.

We operate an open school policy and all governors, parents and other members of the community are encouraged to become involved in school activities. The school building has been modernised to allow wheel chair access to disabled people, and toilet facilities suitable for a wheel chair have also been installed, and through our Health and Safety Policy we endeavour to minimise hazards for the less able bodied by keeping routes through the building clear of obstructions.

7. HUMANITIES AND RE (see RE Policy)

Through our topic work and RE the children are made aware of the contribution made by people from a wide range of cultures. They see that famous people from the past and in the present can come from either sex and from a variety of cultures.

8. SEN CHILDREN

Children with special educational needs must have equal opportunities to receive a broad, balanced and relevant education and have access to the National Curriculum. These educational needs include physical and intellectual and include gifted children. The school is aware that the special needs resources require to be equally distributed between those who require them. We also aim to integrate these special children totally in the school environment and they are given equal opportunities to participate in all school activities. (See SEN Policy)

9. DEFINITIONS

Institutional racism: The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic groups.

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

Victimisation: is where a person is treated less favourably than another because she/he has brought proceedings, given evidence, or raised a complaint by the Disability Discrimination, Race Relations or Sex Discrimination Acts.

Harassment: is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Direct discrimination: consists of treating a person less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race (etc), than others would be treated in the same or similar circumstances.

Indirect discrimination: consists of applying a provision, criterion or practice, which although applied equally to both sexes or all racial groups (etc) has the effect of excluding, penalising or treating less favourably a particular group, causing a detriment to those unable to comply and which cannot be justified.

10. MONITORING

This Policy will be reviewed, and revised if necessary, at regular intervals, in consultation with the pupils, parents, whole staff and governors.