



Providing the keys to success for every child

Whole School Policy on:

Equal Opportunities

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Kent County Council

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1 Introduction

Teacher with responsibility for this policy: Headteacher

The Whole-School Policy on *Equal Opportunities* embraces all who work in the school and includes the parents or carers of our children.

This policy cannot stand alone. It is an integral part of a number of other policies – *Special Educational Needs (SEN)*; *Behaviour and Discipline*; *Anti-Bullying and Anti-Social Behaviour*; *Staff Appraisal*, etc.

2 The Children

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by Kent County Council (1993) has as its basic principles:

- The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children.
- Children's views must be taken into account in all matters affecting them.
- The rights guaranteed by the convention must be available to all children whatever their race, religion, culture, social class, gender, disability or family background.

The Governors and staff of Palm Bay School subscribe to these principles.

Palm Bay Primary School aims to prepare children to live and work harmoniously in our multi-racial and culturally diverse society.

We are committed to the view that all children are of equal value and have equal rights to an effective education in a safe and untroubled environment irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, level of learning need, creed or religion. This is central to the school's philosophy and ethos.

The Whole-school Policy on *Equal Opportunities* is an expression of that commitment.

3 Equal Opportunity - The School's Interpretation

Equal Opportunity can mean many things.

We believe it to mean equality of opportunity to:

- a happy and effective education in a safe environment;
- play a full and active part in all classroom activities; and to
- achieve one's full potential.



4 Aims of the Policy

- To develop a commitment to working together for the good of all who are part of our school, irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, level of learning need, creed or religion.
- To ensure mutual respect for all pupils and staff and all concerned with the work of the school.
- To contribute to the overall ethos of the school which focuses on the development of positive self-images for all.
- To develop a positive attitude to the multi-cultural society in which we live.
- To ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity in all activities within the school both curricular and non-curricular.
- To ensure that all staff have equality of opportunity in all areas related to the fulfilment of their contractual duties, their professional development and their career development.
- To ensure that all parents/carers, irrespective of race, class, disability or religion, are provided with equal opportunity to play a full part in the parent/school partnership and all that it entails.
- To develop in all pupils and (as appropriate) in staff an awareness of racism, sexism and classism and the unacceptable nature of the associated beliefs.
- To nurture amongst all staff and pupils an awareness, understanding and tolerance of all cultural diversities reflected in the school community.

5 Strategies for Implementing the Policy

5.1 General

- All policies will pay due regard to the importance of equality of opportunity and contain appropriate statements on equal opportunity.
- The *Equal Opportunities Policy* will be clearly reflected in the work of the school in the community.
- It is made clear and apparent to all, through the day-to-day work of the school that every pupil, parent/carer, member of staff and visitor is equally valued.
- Every child will have full access to all areas of a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and all aspects relating to its effective delivery. Access for all will be achieved through careful planning, delivery, assessment and record-keeping.
- Equal opportunity within the classroom is carefully monitored on a regular basis by the teacher and in the playground by the staff on duty. Action will be taken as necessary.



- Stereotyping of any kind is regarded as totally unacceptable in the school.
- Any literature that can be considered racist, classist or sexist will not be used for any purpose and will be taken out of circulation.

5.2 Race

- All children will be helped to understand that there are many different races in the world and that all are equal; irrespective of race, colour or creed, all have feelings, rights and are worthy of respect.
- Children will be helped to understand that the world, our country, our town, our lives are richer for the diversity of race and culture. Diversity will be celebrated.
- Positive images of diverse cultural traditions and lifestyles are promoted.
- Reading material will have a strong multi-cultural element.
- Racist ideology, names and language are categorically rejected.

5.3 Language

- Multilingualism is regarded as an asset.
- Positive attitudes to learning different languages are developed in all children.
- Different languages (including home languages) are celebrated and encouraged.
- Support to facilitate access to the curriculum will be provided for children with EAL status according to the policy of the Local Authority (LA).
- All children will be helped to understand that there are differences in body language between different cultural traditions.
- Classroom organisation - pupils will be placed in ability groups according to ability and not their command of English.

5.4 Gender

- No privileges will be reserved for pupils on the basis of their gender.
- Every effort will be made to ensure that children are helped to dispel gender attitudes and expectations that may still linger in society.
- Attention will be paid to issues relating to under-performance of either gender.
- The school will carry out its own monitoring of the children's performance with particular regard to any gender differences through Progress Meetings.

5.5 Class/Culture

- Assumptions will not be made about any pupil, his/her home circumstances or potential based on their social class.



- Pupils will be allowed to talk in their natural dialect as and when they need to. This is not to deny our statutory obligations to educate all children in Standard English.

5.6 Disability

The school's *Special Educational Needs Policy* makes clear the strategies for ensuring that children with additional needs have every opportunity to succeed. These include carefully differentiated work, the provision of resources and additional support in the form of Teaching Assistants.

5.7 Religion

- The school respects the rights of parents/carers with respect to the religious education of their child.
- The school aims to develop amongst all children an understanding of a number of differing religions and the right of all to follow a religion of their choice.
- The school recognises the need for flexibility in 'accommodating a number of religions, e.g. religious holidays, withdrawal from RE lessons and acts of worship etc.

6 Monitoring the Performance of Children

The school monitors carefully the performance of all children in its endeavours to ensure that children are achieving their potential.

Ensuring equality of opportunity alone will not ensure optimum performance levels on the part of all children. Performance is governed by a diversity of factors of which equal opportunity is just one.

7 Responsibilities

7.1 The Role of the Class Teacher

Class teachers will be aware of the need to ensure that all children within their care are given every opportunity to succeed. This will involve the following:

- careful assessment of each child's ability, needs and potential;
- appropriate levels of differentiation to ensure that work provides achievable challenge;
- careful monitoring of performance; and
- creating opportunities for all to play their part in the full range of class activities.



7.2 The Rights of the Individual

The school recognises the rights of **all** children to an effective and efficient education in a safe and untroubled environment. Principal among these is the right to equal opportunity. The school feels strongly that no one individual has the right to deny any other child or group of children their rights as set out above. Such a circumstance can occur through disruptive behaviour, anti-social behaviour or uncooperative behaviour on the part of one or a small number of children. In this event, the school will have no hesitation in protecting the rights of those who choose to conform and who wish to make the most of their time in school. Those whose behaviour threatens the rights of the majority will, if necessary, be removed from the class and have their rights withdrawn temporarily. The offenders will receive the appropriate support and guidance needed to help them to reform as quickly as possible.

7.3 The Staff

The principles of Equal Opportunity embodied in the above apply equally to the staff of the school. There will be no discrimination whatsoever on the grounds of race, religion, gender, language, disability, or family background in any aspect of the running of the school and the professional development of any member of staff. (The term staff applies to all employed within the school).

Any breaches of this policy will be reported without delay to the Head teacher or to the Governing Body, whichever is more appropriate.

7.4 Parents/Carers

The school endeavours to treat all parents/carers equally. In this respect all parents/carers are encouraged to play an active role in the life of the school and in the education of their child.

8 Sanctions

Children

The school's *Behaviour and Discipline Policy* details the course of action taken for all transgressions. Transgressions rooted in any of the areas are dealt with fairly, firmly and with a minimum of delay. Persecution on racist grounds is no exception and is invariably dealt with, with a considerable degree of severity. Parents/carers are informed, as appropriate, of the school's condemnation of racist attitude and behaviour and any other form of prejudiced behaviour.

Racist incidents are reported and logged.

Staff

Any transgressions by staff will result in disciplinary action if necessary.



9 Admissions Policy

The school's *Admissions Policy* indicates the admissions criteria used when considering an application for a place. No child is refused a place on the grounds of race, religion, class or gender.

10 Review Date

This policy is to be reviewed annually during Term 5.

The next review of this policy is due: Spring Term 5, 2015.