



Whiston Junior and Infant School

Part of White Woods Primary Academy Trust



Engaging Minds Developing Lives

Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed by SLT: May 2018

Approved by the Governing Body: July 2018

Review Date: May 2019

Equal Opportunities Policy adapted for Whiston Junior and Infant School

School Aims

The school aims to provide quality education for children between four and eleven years of age. Our aim is to provide high standards of teaching and learning through:

- A rich, broad, balanced and creative curriculum which sustains the engagement of all learners.
- Operating an environment which is safe, healthy, caring and supportive for everyone.
- Encouraging self-reliance and pride in all achievements.
- Developing learning skills and a love of learning, including the ability to question, enquire and be independent in their approach to learning.
- Promoting the development of tolerance and respect for others, regardless of race, creed or gender and ensure that all learners have equality of opportunity.

Introduction

Whiston Junior and Infant School welcomes the breadth and diversity of tradition, belief and culture of its educational communities in and surrounding Whiston . It seeks to create, maintain and promote a school that reflects this.

Whiston J & I School is opposed to discrimination in all its forms. It is committed, therefore, to:

- promoting and understanding the principles and practices of equality and justice throughout the education service;
- identifying and removing practices and procedures which may result in direct or indirect discrimination;
- providing fair access to key resources and opportunities throughout the education service;
- encouraging active participation and involvement in decisions about educational priorities by all members of the community;
- ensuring that recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems provide equality of access throughout the education service;
- securing compliance with all relevant legislation
- monitoring and evaluating the implementation of Borough Council policies and making changes and corrections where necessary.

Whiston J & I School is committed to the following core values, which apply irrespective of gender, race, disability, belief, sexual

orientation or background:

- equality of opportunity and access with the highest possible standards for all;
- the promotion of a “learning community” which values participation, partnership and collegiate responsibility; and
- the promotion of personal, professional, social, cultural and economic growth.

Whiston J & I School encourages the following core values through:

People by:

- welcoming the contributions and ideas of everyone;
- releasing the talents of all;
- challenging discrimination and harassment in all their forms;
- devolving responsibility wherever possible;
- supporting colleagues and pupils in their work;
- enabling everyone to take advantage of schooling, training and development opportunities; and
- recognising and valuing the cultural heritages of all.

Partnerships by:

- respecting the contribution that others make;
- working more effectively with them;
- involving, consulting and listening;
- working closely with local communities to meet their needs;
- engaging in appropriate training and development activities; and
- acknowledging that those we serve depend upon our working together.

The attainment of high standards by:

- demonstrating a shared commitment to excellence across a wide range of activities and for all members of the learning community;
- focusing on learning, and doing all that can be done to improve learning;
- demonstrating our commitment to objectivity, fairness, propriety and integrity; and
- respecting the commitment of the school to impartiality.

The achievement of desirable outcomes by:

- delivering results and adding value;
- getting things right first time wherever possible;
- seeking continuously to improve the way we work and the quality of the service we offer;
- securing maximum economy, efficiency and effectiveness; and
- creating a climate of innovation.

Guidance on implementation

The Governing Body, in conjunction with the Headteacher, is responsible for formulating the values and aims of the school. A clear and unambiguous statement outlining a commitment to equal opportunities, including a statement that discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, belief, sexual orientation or background are unacceptable and will not be tolerated, clarifies the position for pupils and parents and sets the tone for the whole school.

Such a statement gives a point of reference for other important policies including those that relate to the employment of staff and those that relate to pupils such as special educational needs, sex education, behaviour and discipline, all of which are statutory policies.

Employment

School is committed to providing equality of opportunity to all in recruitment and career development as in other areas of its activity. The aim is to treat all employees and applicants with integrity, respect and consideration.

Whiston J & I School aims to ensure that individuals are recruited, selected, trained and promoted on the basis of ability, job requirements, skills, aptitudes and other objective criteria.

Gender

Whiston J & I School has arrangements in place for monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils of both sexes, both within the individual school and in relation to the national situation. Where there is evidence of underachievement on the part of either group, in a specific subject or across the curriculum, action will be taken to address the problem and to track the effectiveness over time of what has been done. At times where pupils are taught in sets according to their abilities, where there is a gender imbalance, staff are asked to ensure that the minority gender group in such classes is not disadvantaged.

The school curriculum offers an entitlement to all pupils. The curricular provision for both girls and boys challenges stereotypes associated with all subjects in the curriculum and in society as a whole. Subjects traditionally associated with boys or girls are actively open to both, to ensure that all pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement. When planning the curriculum, and the school culture more widely, staff are encouraged to develop pupils' perception of their own abilities, ambitions and outlook on the world to ensure that achievement is not restricted by gender.

Allegations of harassment and expressions of prejudice based on gender, whether on the part of adults in school or of pupils, will be investigated and where proven will be directly challenged and action must be taken to prevent their recurrence.

Ethnicity

Whiston J & I School expects all staff to create, maintain and promote racial equality and justice.

Parents and carers need to feel sure about their role in partnership with school to educate their children. Whiston J & I School encourages parents from all cultural groups to participate in the education of pupils. Information in additional languages and a translator service can be accessed in partnership with borough services when appropriate and through personal contact.

All parents are encouraged to visit schools at set times formally and informally as appropriate and take a full part in the community life of the school, including Parent/Teacher Associations, school governing bodies and classroom support.

In Whiston J & I School, the percentage of families from ethnic minority backgrounds is fairly low. The school plans systematically to ensure that pupils are prepared for adult life in a wider and more culturally diverse society than may be experienced locally. Developments in communications and technology and changing patterns of work mean that, in the course of their lives, young people are likely to meet and interact with people from many different communities, cultures and backgrounds.

The curriculum is there to serve the needs of all pupils. In the same way as for gender, the school has arrangements in place for monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils of different ethnic groups, both within the individual school and in relation to the national situation. Teachers ensure that steps are taken where necessary to ensure that achievement is matched to potential, especially for young people with English as an additional language. Where there is evidence of underachievement on the part of particular groups, in a specific subject or across the curriculum, action should be taken to address the problem and to track the effectiveness over time of what has been done. Whiston J & I School ensures that extra-curricular provision also takes account of the interests and needs of all pupils and that all are encouraged to participate. The school recognises the breadth of experience brought by all pupils to their classroom and use it as a resource.

Racial harassment of any kind will be tackled immediately and effectively with the aim of preventing its recurrence. The definition of a racist incident that should be adopted is '*any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person*' The purpose of this

definition is **not** to prejudge whether or not the motive was racist (that may have to be considered as part of any investigation into the incident) but to take full account of the possibility of a racist dimension to the incident.

All incidents are recorded and parents and governors informed of its nature and the action taken to deal with it. Governing Bodies then inform the LA, on an annual basis, of the pattern and frequency of such incidents.

Clear guidance for schools in dealing with these events is given in the

Education Department booklet '*Guidelines for challenging and dealing with racial harassment*'.

Guidelines for dealing with racial harassment

In developing a curriculum for equal opportunities, Whiston J & I School is aware of the importance of positive relationships between all individuals, adults and pupils. Relationships are directed towards fostering good race relations and the countering of prejudice and discrimination.

Whiston J & I School works hard to nurture a climate in which anyone suffering racial harassment or bullying is able to seek prompt help and support from adults in authority.

Special Educational Needs and Disability

Whiston J & I School embraces the following principles and understandings when meeting SEN:

- the entitlement of all pupils and students to a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes the National Curriculum and provides educational experiences of a high quality – this entitlement they hold in common with all pupils and students;
- a commitment to involve and support parents and pupils as active partners of equal value in the education process;
- setting high expectations for children with SEN and the development of the full potential of individual pupils, to prepare them for their roles as adult members of society;
- the achievements of children with SEN – in common with those of all children - will be recognised, celebrated and encouraged;
- recognition that SEN lie on a continuum that includes mild or temporary difficulties as well as profound and multiple difficulties that are likely to be present throughout life;
- promotion of the inclusion of children with SEN within mainstream schooling wherever possible, recognising the paramount importance of meeting individual children's needs;
- commitment to informed, consistent decision-making based on secure evidence; it will only require documentation that contributes to sound decision-making; it will seek to identify and eliminate redundant paperwork requirements.

In due course, Whiston J & I School will encompass the principles of the Disability Rights legislation.

Gifted and Talented Children

Government has set the following expectation - *“We want every school and every LA to plan how it will help gifted children. All schools should seek to create an atmosphere in which to excel is not only acceptable but desirable.”*

Very gifted and talented pupils have particular needs. For these needs to be met at each stage, we have in place accurate assessment systems, flexible planning and provision, responsive pastoral support and monitoring strategies. While many very high attainers stand out because of their all-round ability and performance in tests, some of these

individuals may be passed over because they deliberately underachieve and so avoid drawing attention to themselves negative as well as positive. Identification of children with high ability comes from a successful amalgamation of evidence from a variety of sources, including observations, checklists, tests, pupils' work and 'nominations' from others.

Equality of opportunity must include gifted and talented children.

The school policy, once agreed, will reflect in subject schemes of work and assessment practice.

Faith

Opportunities for pupils' spiritual development present themselves in religious education and in other subjects across the curriculum as well as in daily acts of collective worship. The provision and the school environment is being developed to promote understanding of and respect for different religions, beliefs and cultures. By promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils we work hard to nurture an ethos in which heritage and faiths are equally acknowledged and valued.

Religious Education promotes respect, understanding and tolerance for those who adhere to different faiths and those not following a religious faith. Pupils are encouraged to recognise, understand and respect diversity of values in order to determine and justify their own religious or secular position.

Sexual Orientation

Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationships education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs.

Guidance from the DfEE8 indicates that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer questions and offer appropriate support. There should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation.

Whiston J & I School has a relationship and sexual health education policy (RSHE).

Whiston J & I School work hard to nurture an environment which clearly states the unacceptability of and emotional distress and harm caused by bullying in whatever form including as a result of a young person's developing sexual orientation.

Socio-economic circumstances

Whiston J & I School works hard to reach out and involve all parents in the education of their children, regardless of their background or social class. The school serves a deprived and socially isolated community and works hard to nurture the community it serves.

When receiving children from Traveller families who may need extra support to enable them to attend school and access the curriculum, Whiston J & I School responds flexibly to the needs of these children when accommodating them. Traveller children often have to adapt frequently to different schools with different routines and this is taken in to account when inducting the children and their families in to the school. Liaison with parents is important as parents are generally worried about their children when outside the Traveller community i.e. at school or when on a school trip.

The school works hard to ensure that this group of children is included and not marginalised in any way, even though they may be in the school for only a short time because of their nomadic lifestyle.

Children who have English as an additional language (EAL) have particular needs in terms of pastoral and academic support. When a child with EAL is admitted to the school, contact is made with the parents to help to identify and assess the type of support needed to enable the child to access the curriculum.

Looked after children (children in public care) may have particular needs in terms of pastoral and academic support. Whiston J & I School has a designated teacher [Mrs Tina Angell – Head Teacher] to act as a resource and advocate for young people in public care. The progress of these children and young people should be monitored carefully to ensure appropriate early intervention where concerns arise. Whiston J & I School ensures that each young person in public care has a Personal Education Plan (PEP). Regular and systematic contact with carers and with any external agencies involved occurs in order to meet the needs of these pupils and in taking steps to prevent underachievement over time. The booklet jointly published by the Education Department and the Social Services & Housing

Department, *'The Education of Children Looked after by the Local Authority'* gives further guidance.

Wherever possible, it is important to ensure that pupils are not excluded from extra-curricular activities because of their parents' or carers' inability to meet costs. School staff are aware of individual circumstances and are sensitive to them in arranging support in case of need.(See our Pupil Premium Policy)

Appearance

Whiston J & I School works hard to guard against assumptions about pupils based on their appearance. This pertains to physical characteristics, as well as clothing or other aspects of appearance. Where pupils differ from most of their peers in terms of height or weight, care should be taken to avoid attention being drawn to this difference and school staff are regularly reminded that bullying or excessive attention is often directed at pupils who differ from others in their appearance.