



**North Leamington
School**

**Equal Opportunities
Policy**

2013

Policy Name: Equal Opportunities Policy

Policy Details

Date of Policy: January 2013

Date of next Review: January 2016

Who the review will involve: school staff, students, parents, governors.

Senior member of staff responsible for overseeing that this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed: Member of SLT.

Introduction

Why We Need an Equal Opportunities Policy, Our Core Purpose

Commitment: NLS is committed to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice. We aim to equip students with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of diversity.

Opportunity: Every aspect of NLS activity has an equal opportunities dimension. This may be expressed explicitly in teaching materials and display, implicitly in classroom practice, or as part of the 'hidden curriculum' of social interaction amongst and between staff and students.

Respect: Every member of NLS is regarded as of equal worth and importance, irrespective of her/his religion, culture, class, race, gender, age, sexuality and/or disability. Every member of NLS will be encouraged to respect each other. NLS's environment influences the developing attitudes of the students and can be a powerful vehicle for promoting understanding and practice of equal opportunities.

Excellence: We live in a society where disability discrimination segregates and isolates people from their communities. Through its proactive approach to inclusion, NLS aims to enable its students to achieve equality of access to their communities. Addressing fundamental prejudices against disability in both students and adults is a core element of our inclusion work at NLS.

The Law and Discrimination

Equality Act 2010

1. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Our Aim

2. To ensure that students and staff recognise that discrimination on the basis of religion, colour, culture, origin, age, gender or ability is not acceptable.
3. To provide an environment in which all students and staff feel safe enough to express and question views.

4. To ensure that all staff feel valued and supported and have appropriate advice and encouragement for professional development.
5. To ensure that the principles and practice of equal opportunities apply to all members of the school community: students; teaching and non-teaching staff; parents; governors and visitors.
6. To ensure that Equal Opportunities practices are evident in:
 - the formal curriculum (the programme of lessons);
 - the informal curriculum (extra-curricular activities);
 - the 'hidden' curriculum (the ethos of the school, the quality of personal relationships, etc).
7. To educate, develop and prepare all our students for life whatever their colour, culture, origin, gender or ability.
8. To encourage all students and teachers to contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.
9. To ensure that students are seen as individuals and that each student's education and care is to be developed in direct relation to her/his needs and abilities. This approach is to be based upon sound knowledge and awareness of an appropriate range of teaching and learning styles, teaching interventions, behavioural methods, medical and diagnostic issues.

Policy into Practice

Admission

10. NLS follows the LA Admission Policies that do not permit gender, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission.

Registration

11. Students and staff names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

Discrimination

12. All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously: such behaviour is unacceptable.
13. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school.
14. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.
15. In all staff appointment processes, the best candidate will be appointed on strict professional criteria.
16. Parents should be made fully aware of the school's commitment to Equal Opportunities.

17. All cases of discrimination or prejudice should be taken seriously and dealt with, as appropriate, according to the school's existing sanctions procedures. All such incidents should be recorded and reported in the form recommended by the LA.

Language

18. The school views linguistic diversity positively. Students and staff must feel that their first language is valued.

Culture, Class and Race

19. NLS acknowledges that members of the school come from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and we endeavour to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is social, religious and racial harmony.
20. NLS recognises the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and is determined to take positive action to enable every individual to raise her/his self-esteem, expectations and performance so as to have wider choices in life.
21. We understand the need to be different without being excluded. We are happy for students to wear special forms of dress where these are an essential part of their religious or cultural background, e.g. Sikhs' turbans.
22. We value the history, experience and contribution of our multi-cultural community and seek to express this in the curriculum and life of our school.
23. We try to counter negative, patronising and stereotyped views: a prime cause of prejudice is ignorance and misunderstanding.
24. We make full use of the LA's Inter-Cultural Support Service for advice, for home-school liaison and for the teaching of both community languages and EAL.
25. We will not tolerate racist behaviour in any form

Gender

26. As a school, we accept that there are gender inequalities in our society which impose limits, particularly on girls' expectations and behaviour, so we constantly examine our curriculum, procedures and materials for gender bias or inequality.
27. We encourage students to be aware of the rigid gender stereotypes presented by, for example, the media.
28. We are committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary historical gender divisions: all students experience subjects previously considered to be suitable for a single gender.
29. We try to ensure:
 - that teachers allocate their time fairly between the genders;
 - that all students have opportunities for working with students and staff of both genders;
 - that we break down traditional gender stereotypes (for example by not asking boys to move furniture while girls tidy up);

- that students are encouraged to pursue less conventional subjects and interests;
- that we do not discriminate between the genders in respect of our school uniform.

Religion

30. We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith, others are committed to a greater or lesser extent to a variety of religions. We seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others.
31. With regard to the teaching of RE, we consider that the role of the teacher is that of educator and not that of evangelist. We do not seek to make students religious, but to teach them about religion and world religions.

Resources

32. NLS's aim is to provide for all students according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin. Resources should reflect the cultural and racial backgrounds of students in order to support positive self-imagery.
33. We try to ensure that our resources include non-sexist books which value the achievements of women as well as men. Displays will similarly reflect both genders and a range of cultures and races. All curriculum materials in use in NLS should be monitored continuously by Departmental staff.

Relationships

34. Relationships between staff, students, parents and governors should be such that any member of the school community acting in a manner contrary to the spirit of this policy is made aware of the unacceptable nature of his/her behaviour. This should be done in a supportive manner to encourage change and to reinforce the principles of this policy.
35. In particularly difficult or sensitive situations, staff should seek the advice or assistance of senior staff in order to address the issue concerned. In extreme circumstances, formal procedures may be taken by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher in line with NLS's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

Appointments

36. The Headteacher should ensure that, in all recruitment and appointment processes, any advertisements, short listing and interview procedures are without any hint of direct or indirect discrimination. Furthermore, it is clearly unlawful to discriminate in the way that opportunities for promotion, transfer or training are offered to staff during employment. The Headteacher should follow the procedures set out in the LA's Personnel Handbook on all such matters and should seek further advice from the LA's Personnel Officers when the need arises.

Awareness of Policy

37. Parents and students should know that NLS has an Equal Opportunities policy and that the school is committed to equality of opportunity for all students.

38. Both the Governing Body and the School Leadership Team are actively committed to promoting and implementing the Equal Opportunities policy for the benefit of all staff and students.
39. The Governing Body is required to publish information on the following arrangements regarding disabled students in its Annual Report:
- arrangements at the school for the admission of students with disabilities;
 - the steps to prevent those students being treated less favourably than other students;
 - the facilities to assist access to the school by students with disabilities.

Monitoring and Review

40. NLS staff should monitor the impact of the school's policies and procedures on different groups (by race, gender and disability) continuously, and the Community and Premises Committee of the Governing Body should evaluate the effectiveness of the overall Equal Opportunities policy annually.

Approval and Review

1. This Policy is reviewed in discussion with staff and governors.

Effective from: March 2013

Approved by:

Review date: March 2013

Review leader: Senior Assistant Headteacher