

9/27/2018

# **Blossom Lower School and Upper House**



## **Equal Opportunities Policy and Accessibility Plan**

**Foundation stage, Primary, Secondary, Post 16**

**Last reviewed September 2018 James Stavert  
Next review September 2019**

## **Aims**

Blossom House School is committed to equal opportunities for all, irrespective of disability, as stated in the Equality Act 2010. This policy statement and associated procedures are a statement of intent by the school. It is unlawful to discriminate against pupils and persons being employed because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, who are pregnant or on maternity leave, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. This also applies to the provision of goods, facilities and services or the disposal or management of premises, and in the employment and education of disabled persons. Blossom House School is a school for children with speech, language and communication difficulties involved in the provision of early years, primary, secondary and Post 16 education and it therefore has responsibilities not to discriminate against disabled people or students and to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs. Within the legislation, disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The school aims are to improve access for all persons and to ensure whenever possible the best standards are incorporated in all new, reconstructed or altered buildings.

## **Pupils**

Admission to the School depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the appropriate criteria. The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the School regardless sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, who are pregnant or on maternity leave, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which the school is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put a disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability. The School asks parents to complete a medical questionnaire in respect of a prospective pupil at the time of application. Within the Acceptance Form, parents are asked to determine any known medical conditions or special circumstances pertaining to their child. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil, the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by his/her environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-

confidence by positively working to reduce any gender bias and promoting equality of opportunity.

At the same time we are aware that as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop, their perception of sex roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer group and the media.

As a school we work to incorporate guidelines for Equal Opportunity into our primary practice. Certain strategies are employed to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all of the life and work of the school.

Children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to all areas of the whole school curriculum. This includes both the Programmes of Study and Attainment Targets for the National Curriculum subjects; other subject areas currently outside the National Curriculum and areas such as extra-curricular activities. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

- Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles
- Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid sexual stereotypes and gender bias
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and non-teaching staff of both sexes

Teaching and other groupings, such as assembly seating, lines for dismissal, classroom seating and playground areas are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship.

At Blossom House School the ratio of boys to girls is higher than in many mainstream schools. We need to acknowledge this and be aware that this may have an impact across the curriculum.

Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving/delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.

- Discipline procedures - notably rewards and sanctions - are the same for both sexes
- Our school uniform policy reflects equality of opportunity for all children

- Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other

Any differences involving gender which arise inside or outside the classroom are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Within the early years foundation stage the aim is to ensure;

- Difference and diversity whether this relate to a child's special educational needs, ethnicity, gender or religion are valued within the group
- Inappropriate attitudes or practices towards differences relating to special educational needs, ethnicity, gender or religion are challenged accordingly
- Children are encouraged to value and respect others

### **How this is put into practice?**

We strive to achieve the above aims by;

- Offering a range of multicultural resources for the children to explore during adult directed and child led activities i.e. books, toys, equipment etc...
- The children regularly have the opportunity to learn about a variety of religious festivals and in particular those that represent the cohort present within the foundation stage at any one time
- Displays reflect the different religious festivals the children learn about
- All children's accomplishments are celebrated and valued within the group through the positive behaviour reinforcement system that is adopted at Blossom House
- All children are taught to be respectful and accepting of each child's individual special educational needs and this is fostered through the caring and patient nature of all adults who work with the children within the provision
- The adults that work with the children understand that they are a role model for behaviour and so only model desirable and non-discriminatory behaviour

- All staff working with the children treat them equally and fairly regardless of their; gender, ethnicity, religion or special educational needs
- All families religious festivals and beliefs are respected and provision is made when children require time off school during term time
- Parents views are respected if they request that their child should not participate in various religious activities throughout the term
- Children are taught to accept and embrace difference through the regular opportunity to listen to books that reflect characters in a positive light who are from different ethnic backgrounds, religion, gender and with special educational needs
- Any discriminatory behaviour that is demonstrated by the children is tackled accordingly in relation to the situation. For example, social reasoning strategies that use visuals to explain why certain behaviours are not acceptable or offensive to others may be used
- Any discriminatory behaviour demonstrated by a member of staff in relation to a peer or child is immediately reported to the Head of the Foundation Stage, Ruth Lo, who will then report this onto the school principal, Joanna Burgess. Please refer to the policy for 'Education for ethnic diversity' for further detail relating to this.

## **Employment**

The legislation makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate unjustifiably/unreasonably against a person because of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, who are pregnant or on maternity leave, sexual orientation or gender reassignment in the field of employment. It also places a duty on employers to make reasonable adjustments to prevent any substantial disadvantage which a job applicant or disabled employee may experience in comparison with non-disabled people. These adjustments may include where economic; alterations to the premises, equipment, training, work procedures, etc. Blossom House School is under an obligation to make such adjustments if it has knowledge of an employee's disability, or could reasonably be expected to know of it. It is the school's intention to appoint the best person for the job, and to do so legally. Equally it is committed to ensuring that disabled people receive full and proper consideration throughout the whole recruitment process.

The school will: -

- Consider areas of under-representation within the workforce, and any positive measures, which can be adopted to redress this.

- Welcome applications from all people regardless sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, who are pregnant or on maternity leave, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership or gender reassignment. Monitor all aspects of the recruitment process and workforce statistics in order to identify action required to implement this policy successfully.
- Ensure that disabled employees have equality of opportunity with regard to career development.
- Retain, wherever possible, employees who become disabled in post. Appropriate retraining and rehabilitation will be considered.
- Work closely with the individual and, if required specialist agencies in implementing the policy.
- Send copies of the relevant job vacancy (in the preferred medium where possible) to all people with disabilities who request these.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

Blossom House School was previously an office block and was designed to have good wheelchair access. All the buildings conform to the latest DDA requirements 2015. Everywhere has wheel chair access. Christopher Place has good disabled access with lifts to enable wheel chair access to all parts of the school. The food technology kitchen has an adjustable bench for cooking. The main school has 7 disabled toilets and 4 disabled showers. Christopher place one disabled toilet. The main school has a series of refuges on each main core in the event of a fire. These all have call stations which can be picked up from the entrance. The disabled toilets all have pull cords linked to the school reception.

The main school has a designated disabled parking bay and dropped curbs to allow access to all parts of the school. There is no parking on site at Christopher Place although disabled parking can be found on the main road.

### **Disability three year action plan:**

- To get a costs for induction loops
- To put up braille signs
- To ensure the lifts are DDA compliant approx. £10,000