



TO BE RATIFIED

Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy (MS010)

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Signed	<i>M Delaney</i>

Equality and Equal Opportunities Policy

At Meath school we continuously seek to ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity. We are a Gold award Rights respecting School and ensure that equality and equality opportunities are taught and respected throughout our school.

Every individual will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality, disability or special educational needs and ability.

At Meath, we advance equality of opportunities Under the Equalities Act (2010).

The characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Our School Mission

Our Mission at Meath outlines the vision of the school and is followed by the whole school community.

A nurturing community with communication at its heart

Meath School helps children aged 4 - 11 with complex speech, language and communication needs build the foundations they need to thrive. We have been rated Ofsted 'Outstanding' since 2007.

We are part of the children's communication charity, Speech and Language UK, whose mission is to give children and young people the skills they need so they aren't left behind, waiting to be understood.

Through a combination of specialised education, therapy and care, we aim to create a community of happy, independent, and confident communicators.

Speech and Language UK's mission is to give children and young people the skills they need so they aren't left behind, waiting to be understood.

*Meath School achieve this by supporting children with complex speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) to **Talk, Learn & Grow:***

- *Enabling each child to **talk**, understand and connect with the world through a combination of communication methods*
 - *Integrating specialist teaching, therapy and care to help children **learn***
 - *Creating a nurturing environment where children **grow** up safe and happy'*

At Meath School our mission guides our thinking and commitment to ensuring that we remain free of racial discrimination and to promoting good race relations and equality of opportunity.

The school will work actively to promote race equality and oppose racism in all its forms, and to foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

We will do this by:

- Treating all those within the school community [i.e. pupils, staff, governors, parents/carers, visitors] as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, backgrounds and experience.
- Creating and maintaining a school ethos which promotes race equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices.
- Encouraging everyone within the school to gain a positive self-image and high self-esteem.
- Having realistically high, challenging expectations of everyone within the school community.
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing each other's similarities and differences and facing equality issues openly and honestly.
- Identifying, challenging and removing all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory and replacing them, if necessary, with those that are fair to all.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing all the above in order to secure continuous improvement in all that we do.
- Adhering to the schools PSHCE curriculum and policy including SEMH.

Pupil Admissions

Ethnic data is requested on the school admissions form. The Education Leadership Group [ELG] are responsible for using and analysing this data to monitor patterns and identify issues.

[Whilst the majority of parents/carers provide this data, it is not compulsory for them to do so. For this reason, the school will need to consider how to address any information gaps.]

Pupils' attainments and progress

All data monitored via the Assessment Procedures and the Monitoring, Review and Evaluation Policy will include consideration of racial groups within the school.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning is carried out in accordance with the Teaching and Learning Policy, and monitored through the Assessment Procedures and the Monitoring, Review and Evaluation Policy.

Through classroom observations and work sampling we will ensure that there is an appropriate focus on racial equality. In particular, we will focus upon ensuring that we include positive images of all racial groups in all areas of the curriculum and activities of the school [teaching and learning materials; schemes of work; displays]

Assessment

We recognise that many assessment tools can be racially, culturally or gender biased. We are committed to ensuring that we use assessment tools which are free from known bias.

Promoting positive behaviour

Meath School's code of conduct is inclusive and promotes positive behaviour [see Behaviour Policy]. All pupils will be made aware of racial issues, particularly should they ever arise at the school. Our policy is one of zero tolerance of racism. All racist incidents are recorded as required by the DfE and a summary will be made available annually as required.

A Behaviour Record is kept in school, in which all incidents of serious misbehaviour are recorded. Racist issues will be dealt with immediately and additionally recorded as above. All racial incidents will be dealt with through a combination of education and appropriate sanctions. The Behaviour Record is monitored regularly by the Residential Service Manager.

Guidance and support

The PSHE curriculum provides the focus for guidance and support.

We are a Gold award Rights Respecting School – UNICEF Rights of the Child where children's rights are at the heart of everything we do.

There are four key areas of impact for children at a Rights Respecting school; wellbeing, participation, relationships and self-esteem.

The difference that a Rights Respecting School makes goes beyond the school gates, making a positive impact on the whole community.

- Children are healthier and happier
- Children feel safe
- Children have better relationships
- Children become active and involved in school life and the wider world

Staff recruitment and selection

We will work in partnership with Speech and Language UK, Human Resources department in collecting data and taking positive action to address any evidence of inequality.

Staff training and development

Whole staff training and development will regularly reinforce the importance we attach to promoting racial equality. Additionally, this Race Equality Policy will be incorporated into the Meath staff induction programme.

Action to ensure the policy is followed by all staff and Breaches of Policy

Should there be evidence, in line with Speech and Language UK's Disciplinary Policy that anyone within the school is not following the Equality policy, immediate action will be taken. Additional training, development and support will be given to achieve commitment. If there is not a marked improvement, this will then be considered a disciplinary matter and dealt with through Speech and Language UK's disciplinary procedures.

Monitoring and evaluation

Results of monitoring and evaluation are shared with the EMG. These evaluations will advise and inform any necessary review and amendment of the policy

Policy development and approval – responsibilities

Governors

- ✓ Ensure that the school complies with all equality's legislation and Race Relations legislation
- ✓ Ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented
- ✓ Ensure that Speech and Language UK's supplies and maintains up-to-date support for the school
- ✓ Ensure available data is used to consider equalities issues and consider equalities issues and update policies and adjust practises.

Senior Leadership Team

- ✓ Demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of this policy and related practice. The head teacher will ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and understand their role and responsibilities in relationship to it.
- ✓ Lead, through the head teacher, in assessing and monitoring the impact of the policy
- ✓ Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities to support the policy

All staff

- ✓ Deal firmly, fairly and appropriately with prejudice related incidents and know how to challenge racial bias and stereotyping
- ✓ Promote racial equality and do not discriminate on racial grounds
- ✓ Keep up to date with equality relations through attendance at training opportunities and information sharing
- ✓ Attend necessary training sessions
- ✓ Make reasonable adjustments to ensure no pupil or staff member do not experience discrimination

Visitors to school

- ✓ Are expected to comply with the school's race equality policy
- ✓ Do not engage in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.

Assessing the impact of policies

We will continuously assess the impact of this, and our other policies and practices, on pupils, their parents/carers and staff from different ethnic groups. We will determine whether the policies have, or could have, a positive impact on the performance and attainment levels of pupils from all racial groups.

Meath's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is reflected in school policies and procedures, including:

- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- Recruitment policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Assessment policy

Questions such as the following will inform our assessments:

- Do we help all our pupils to achieve as much as they can, and gain optimal benefit from what is on offer, based on their individual needs?
- Are any individuals or groups of pupils not achieving as much as they should? If not, why not?
- Are we confident in the knowledge that our policies and practices are having a positive impact on pupils, parents/carers and staff from all racial groups?