

23. EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY



The British Muslim School

You are the best nation raised up for humankind. You enjoy righteousness, forbid corruption and you believe in Allah. Al- Quran, Surah Al-Imran, ayah 110

Title	EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
Document Type	Approved
Subject	Equal opportunities
Created	September 2022
Approved by	Board of Governors
Review Date	September 2023 or earlier where there is a change in the applicable law affecting this Policy Guidance
Responsible person:	Principal/DSL/Governing body

AIMS

The aims of this policy are:

- to promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference
- to ensure that every child is included and not disadvantaged
- to ensure that children learn to value diversity in others
- to provide a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination
- to promote freedom from discrimination and to promote equality of access and opportunity for all members of the school community

POLICY STATEMENTS

Equal opportunities underpin the value system of The British Muslim School. The ethos of the school is one of tolerance, understanding and striving for excellence in all. All members of the school community are encouraged to understand, appreciate and value the differences between us and to challenge negative labels and attitudes.

The School recognises its responsibility to avoid discrimination and to promote equality for students, staff and others using the school facilities. It is acknowledged that discrimination may be direct or indirect and includes victimisation and harassment. Promotion of equality must exist in our employment procedures and in our dealings with students, parents and other members of the community. This includes equal opportunity issues for the children, parents and staff, in for example resources, building, admissions, information and recruitment.

Staff

We shall not discriminate in the recruitment or employment of staff on grounds of any of the following “Protected Characteristics” as identified in the Equality Act 2010 and its Schedules: disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and transgender, faith, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, age; except in areas where the School is exempted as a faith school and a boys’ school.

With regards to disability, we shall make every reasonable adjustment so that a disabled person is not at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled. We shall not discriminate in relation to terms and conditions, promotions, disciplinary procedures, and training opportunities. However, as a faith school, we have a dress code to which all Muslim staff are expected to adhere. Non-Muslim staff are expected to wear trousers or long skirts and long-sleeved tops.

Staff are required, through their behaviour towards each other and towards the children, to foster an awareness of the importance of equal opportunities and respect for others.

Students

We will not discriminate against children seeking admission to the school or with regard to how current students are treated, on grounds of race, disability, or belief; however, the law exempts the school in matters of religion and gender, The British Muslim School being a boys' Muslim school. All students will have equal access to the curriculum.

With regard to children with disabilities, this may mean treating them more favourably so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage when compared to children who are not disabled. The School has regard to the SEND Code of Practice (within admission policy criteria) and strives to put its recommendations into practice in all aspects of provision (see SEND policy). Children with special educational needs (ie those who have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provisions to be made for them) have equality of access to the curriculum and have their needs met through inclusion.

Promoting Equality

The schools' aims and ethos will be effectively communicated to all members of the community and our Code of Conduct, policies and procedures will underpin the promotion of equal opportunities. Any incident of discrimination or intolerance will be dealt with promptly and sensitively.

Race

The School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to promoting good relations between people of different race and nationality. An annual review will assess:

- the success of the school in recruiting staff and students' representative of our society in race and nationality
- the promotion of race equality through the curriculum
- attainment levels of students from different ethnic groups.

All racist incidents will be recorded and will be subject to sanctions as set out in each school's Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies.

Disability

The British Muslim School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity between disabled and other people. A disability is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. To be disabled, a person must fulfil each and every criterion listed in this definition. A disabled person is a person with a disability.

While the School's physical facilities for the disabled are limited, we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's culture, policies and procedures are made

accessible to children who have disabilities and to comply with our legal and moral responsibilities under 'The Equality Act' (2010) and the 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice' (2015) to accommodate the needs of applicants, students and members of the staff who have disabilities for which, after reasonable adjustments, we can cater adequately.

In line with the 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice' (2015) the School will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with disabilities are not disadvantaged in their access to:

- the physical environment
- the programme of learning and development offered
- the information provided to children and parents
- high aspirations and outcomes

The Curriculum

The curriculum must demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunities

The British Muslim School undertakes to:

- have regard to the outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' held within the Children Act 2004 i.e. being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing
- encourage everyone to value the contributions of others regardless of cultural and religious differences
- provide opportunities for all members of the school community to understand roles in society free from prejudice based on race, gender and religion
- provide the children with the opportunity to experience aspects of different cultures at first hand
- promote the needs and rights of others
- encourage the development of personal, social and professional relationships
- acknowledge individuals' rights and roles in the world of work and the work environment
- provide equal educational opportunity regardless of physical ability
- fulfil its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010

The curriculum will achieve these aims by:

- using positive images to combat negative stereotypes
- being aware of different types of learning and developing and encouraging different teaching methods to take account of these
- ensuring that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have access to the curriculum through the implementation of the special educational needs policy.

- screening the reading and audio-visual resources to ensure that positive images of women, people of different races and cultural backgrounds and people with disabilities are promoted
- using assemblies as a forum where the children are encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate individual differences
- staging events and visits with the aim of promoting equal opportunities using display materials which promote the positive contribution of women to society, racial equality, cultural diversity and awareness of disability, and
- involving students, staff and parents in welcoming the cultural and ethnic diversity of our community.

The role of the Principal

- It is the Principal's role to implement the school's equal opportunities and anti-racist policy. He is supported by the senior management and body of staff in so doing.
- It is the Principal's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy on equal opportunities, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Principal ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- He promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.
- The Principal treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness.

The role of the teacher, form tutor, Boarding and other staff

- The staff ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.
- When selecting classroom material, teachers' pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of ethnic minorities and that challenges stereotypical images of minority groups or gender.
- When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues. So, for example, history topics in our school include examples of the significant contributions Muslims have made to developments in world history. In geography topics the teacher attempts to counter stereotypical images of

Africa and Asia and to show the true diversity of development in different parts of the world.

- All our teachers and boarding staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents in the student incident form, and draw them to the attention of the Principal. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

Parents

We shall ensure that parents are informed of the principles and philosophies that lie behind our Equal Opportunities Policy. Parents will be made to feel welcome and all reasonable efforts will be made to ensure physical access to the school. Through the Code of Conduct and in all dealings with parents, the school will demonstrate and encourage respect. If a parent or carer believes that our practices or procedures are not meeting the aims of this policy or that they or their children have been treated less favourably because of their ethnicity, religion, culture, gender, disability or special educated needs they may make a formal complaint under our complaints procedure.

This is a whole school policy. In this and in all our policies it should be noted that any reference to a “parent” applies not only to a student’s birth parents, but to adoptive, step or foster parents, or other persons who have parental responsibility for or care of a student.

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually, as part of our safeguarding audit and part of our on-going assessment of students’ academic achievement, welfare and well-being. We adjust as appropriate. Our evaluation involves students, staff, governors and parents and carers. Our monitoring activities include:

- monitoring the progress of students of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other students in the school
- monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at this school is discriminated against
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents, staff or students
- monitoring the school behaviour and exclusions policy, so those students from minority groups are not unfairly treated.

REFERENCES

This Policy has been informed by:

DfE Statutory guidance 'SEND Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years' (January 2015)
DfE Departmental advice 'The Equality Act 2010 and Schools' (May 2014)
HM Gov 'Every Child Matters' (2004)
See also: Admissions Policy, SEND Policy, Accessibility plan, Safeguarding and child protection policy

Print Name (Chair of Governors): Mr. Misbah Rahman

Signature (Chair of Governors):

Reviewed: September 2022

Next Review Date: September 2023

Responsibility for review: Principal / Governors