

Equality and Diversity Policy

Introduction

Aims and objectives of the policy

The Blue Coat School is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for every adult and child regardless of sex (including gender reassignment), disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and race. For the purpose of this policy, child refers to any member of the student body, adult refers to any member of the school who is a member of staff, teaching and/or non teaching.

The School aims to provide an environment which respects and values the positive contribution of all its members, so enabling them to achieve their full potential and to gain benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the School.

Within a friendly, caring supportive and stimulating community the Blue Coat School will endeavour to educate and prepare its students from diverse backgrounds, cultures, faiths and communities for citizenship in a multiracial and multicultural society.

To achieve this aim, the school acknowledges the following basic rights for all its members and prospective members:

- To be treated with dignity and respect
- To be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- To receive encouragement to reach their full potential

The objectives are:

- To create a positive atmosphere where there is shared commitment to respect diversity and difference.
- To challenge in a positive way any form of prejudice which contradicts the school's equal opportunities policy.
- To regard all our students as being of equal value and to ensure that the needs of all students are identified and met, and that they are able to achieve their full potential, helping to raise standards across our school.
- To prepare students to be good citizens and to take the responsibility of participation and to treat all others as we would wish to be treated.
- To raise awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and ensure awareness of responsibilities.

This equality and diversity policy identifies key aims and objectives which this school is committed to and includes the following recognised areas of diversity: Disability, Gender, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Age, Class, Nationality.

The School Will:

- Comply with all relevant legislation and good practice and will not tolerate any individual receiving less favourable treatment on grounds

of religious or political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, race or ethnic origin, nationality, age, social or economic class, or disability, nor be disadvantaged by any other condition or requirement which is not relevant to good practice and cannot be shown to be justifiable.

- Implement established support systems for those who feel themselves subjected to discrimination and will work to ensure that all adults and children feel comfortable in school and confident to raise any issues or difficulties they have which may be as a result of an impairment, health condition or issue concerning actual or potential discrimination.
- Provide training to ensure all are informed of the equal opportunity principles and are given the opportunity to discuss and understand racism, sexism, homophobia as well as other forms of prejudice. It is important that everyone understands the hurt and harm caused by discrimination and prejudice of any kind.
- Ensure equality of access to the school will be monitored by reviewing the recruitment, selection, assessment and promotion criteria for staff and students.
- Ensure that the physical environment and buildings reflect the needs of the disabled.
- Ensure that matters of confidentiality are dealt with appropriately but equally the school will inform those necessary about any relevant information such as disability.

Points of note

- There is no legal obligation for disabled staff to disclose their disability, although disclosure is encouraged by the Blue Coat School to ensure the appropriate assistance is provided to those who fall within the definition of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- The Governing Body will monitor and keep under review its recruitment, appointments, promotions, staff training and other staff policies to ensure there is no overt or covert discrimination. However, the right is reserved, for specific appointments, to recruit either a male or female member of staff to comply with existing legislation (eg the supervision of students changing for PE).
- Individuals who feel discriminated against have the right to use the school's formal complaints procedure.
- Any incidents must be reported to a Form Tutor, Head of Year, Line Manager or member of the Senior Leadership Team as early as possible and no later than 3 months of the date it first arose or where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within 3 months of the last of these incidents. Alternatively, contact could be made with the Administration Manager, a Trade Union representative or the Headteacher.
- All nationalities will be included in and invited to contribute to the spiritual life of the school through their own faith.
- Positive attitudes towards gender, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds will be included in all curriculum, student welfare and staff policy statements.

- All members of the school community will be encouraged to be open-minded and to challenge prejudice.
- Anyone not adhering to this policy may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure as appropriate.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools Accessibility Policy.

The procedure

- Dealing with discriminatory behaviour (of any kind), abuse and intimidation is the responsibility of everyone, matters should first be identified to a Head of Year for students or a line manager for staff – all students and staff can expect to be listened to and have their complaints investigated but complaints must be raised within 3 months of the date on which it first arose or where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within 3 months of the last of these incidents.
- If an adult or child feels his/her complaint has not been properly dealt with he/she may take the matter to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors.
- Bullying and harassment of any kind will be dealt with swiftly and may lead to exclusion or dismissal where any allegation is proven with no extenuating circumstances. Such actions would be taken in line with staff and student disciplinary policies and procedures.

Responsibilities

- **The Governors** are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities
- **The Headteacher** is responsible to the Governing Body for ensuring the equality policies of the school and related procedures are implemented. The Headteacher ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and may initiate Disciplinary action against those found to be discriminative in any way.

The following nominated persons have important roles to play in racial equality procedures within the school:

- **The Deputy Head** (Children's Services and Personal Development) has responsibility to ensure that all formal complaints of a racist or homophobic nature are recorded and dealt with promptly.
- **The Head of Citizenship** is responsible for ensuring that issues of race and cultural diversity are addressed within the Citizenship framework. He/she is responsible for Schemes of Work which underline the value placed on diversity and equality. School assemblies are designed to ensure that all acts of collective worship are inclusive.
- **All teaching and non-teaching staff** have a responsibility to comply with the school's equality policy and will not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religious affiliation.

The school will maintain information about **ALL** school members whose ability may be affected by:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of the risk of physical danger

The school recognises all disabilities as defined by the DDA Act 1995 including:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- HIV
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Hearing or sight impairments
- Mobility difficulties
- Mental health or learning difficulties

Equality procedure specific to pupils/children

In order to ensure that the school is and continues to be a friendly, caring, supportive and stimulating community, the school will annually look at and ensure that the following is in place:

Ethnic and Cultural Issues

- Students are encouraged to contribute to their education and the education of others by bringing their cultural experience, values and perceptions to it.
- Choices of teaching, wherever possible, take account of students' previous experience and knowledge and recognise multi-cultural perspectives.
- Attention is given to the integration of students from different ethnic groups in the classroom and throughout the life of the school.

Gender

- Both boys and girls are encouraged to aim high and to utilise all the opportunities available to them in all areas of the curriculum and school life.
- Both boys and girls participate equally in physical and intellectual activities.
- Careers education makes both boys and girls aware of the full range of opportunities available to them in a modern society.

Physical Disability

- Every effort will be made to integrate students with disabilities into the normal life of the school and the classroom.
- Classroom strategies will be adopted to help students with disabilities.
- The school will continue to improve access for students with mobility disabilities as per the accessibility procedure.
- Risk assessments will be completed where appropriate.

Background

- It is recognised that students come from a range of backgrounds and action will be taken to ensure that the school offers materially disadvantaged students opportunities and facilities to compete equally with their peers.
- All parents will be made aware of financial help and concessions available in cases of hardship.

Intellectual Ability/Disability

- Each student will be encouraged to fulfil his/her potential in all areas of the curriculum.
- Each student will experience different teaching and learning styles in order to maximise achievement.
- Policies, displays, notices, meals, uniform in the school will all reflect the entire student population in terms of ethnicity, language, race, gender, sexuality and disability. Positive images of students will be used to illustrate the commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities.

Race Equality

Race equality is not about treating everybody the same. It is about meeting people's individual needs and appreciating their individual strengths and gifts. We are all different and will all be equally valued.

The school is committed to tackling racial discrimination in all its forms and is determined to promote race equality and good race relations across all areas of school activity. Particular areas of importance include:

- Progress, attainment and assessment
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Students personal development and pastoral care
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Admissions and attendance
- Curriculum provision
- Participation in all activities, physical and intellectual
- Religious faith
- Staff recruitment and professional development
- Partnerships with parents and communities

The policy in action

The equality procedure specific to students/children

- Students will be given the opportunity in the classroom to discuss and with which to identify and understand racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice.
- If students feel they have been abused racially or bullied they should report the matter immediately to their Form Tutor/Head of Year or a Deputy or Assistant Head Teacher. All students can expect to be listened to and have their complaints investigated.
- If a student feels their complaint has not been properly dealt with they may take the matter to the Headteacher.
- Anyone who has committed such offences will be appropriately dealt with. For students this may include exclusion from our school.
- Admissions will not be based on a student's disability, age, race, sex (including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, religion or belief. Tests are identical for boys and girls and the marks are treated in the same way.
- All school opportunities – academic, extracurricular, leadership, - will be equally available to all students, but may be on a 'first come, first served' basis where places are limited. To ensure these opportunities are offered in a fair and consistent way parents/students will be advised, in such circumstances, of the limited availability at the outset in writing.
- Day to day monitoring of a student's academic needs is carried out by all teaching staff. Should extra support be needed it is arranged between the Head of Department and Head of Year, with Key Stage Manager oversight reporting to SLT meetings as necessary.

The equality procedure specific to staff/adults

- Staff will examine the ideas and images in books and other resources, challenging negative images, giving all students positive images.
- Confidentiality of matters informed to the Blue Coat School such as disability, gender reassignment etc. will be respected at all times.
- Staff will be allowed to request leave of absence in accordance with their religious beliefs.
- Attendance at in-service training courses on equal opportunities will be encouraged. Staff will make every effort to understand the origins and nature of racism, sexism and disabilities and to recognise their own prejudice.
- Appointment and promotion of staff will be made and monitored on the basis that individuals will be considered according to their abilities and for disabled applicants the school will take account of reasonable adjustments (and for those staff who become disabled whilst in employment with the school). for staff selection, appointment and promotion. The governing body will monitor the balance at all levels of gender and ethnicity as well as membership of the governing body. At

all stages of the selection criteria including short listing and interviewing it will be free of assumptions based on sex, marital status, marital intentions, family responsibilities, and racial or religious background and the same questions will be asked of all candidates. At shortlisting stage all disabled applicants meeting the essential criteria will be interviewed.

- Risk assessments should be completed where appropriate.
- The Blue Coat School acknowledges the rights of all female staff to retain their career prospects whilst pregnant and on maternity leave.
- In circumstances where a member of staff can no longer undertake the full range of duties relating to their substantive post as a result of a medical condition which involves a disability as defined in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the manager must arrange a Health and Safety risk assessment and implement reasonable adjustments where necessary.
- Medical redeployment should be considered but if this is impracticable to redeploy an individual to a suitable alternative post, then ill health retirement or termination of employment on the grounds of capability, will be considered.
- If staff feel they have been discriminated against in any way they should report the matter immediately to their line manager and should follow the guidelines set out in the grievance procedure. Alternatively staff should report the matter to the Administration Manager, Trade Union Representative or the Headteacher. Staff can expect to be listened to and have their complaints investigated.
- All contraventions of this policy will be treated as disciplinary matters, in line with staff disciplinary procedures, as previously stated.

Evaluation and Monitoring

- This policy is to be monitored by the designated personnel to ensure its effectiveness through our school's self-review processes.
- The effectiveness of the policy will be confirmed by its impact upon the raising of all students' level of attainment, together with inclusive and supportive atmosphere for all adults and children.
- Staff appointments will be monitored through equal opportunities data that will be collected during the recruitment process and appropriate action will be taken where concern is noted.
- The revision of the policy will be ongoing, ensuring the involvement and commitment of the whole school community. The policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is current, relevant and effective.

Reasonable adjustments

Some examples of reasonable adjustments would include:

Specialist chair, footrest, specialist headphones, adapted keyboard, accessible toilets, ramp, re-allocation of staff due to disability or change of work area such as from first floor to ground floor.

Please note: This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

Useful Contact Details

Access to Work Team

Access to Work Operational Support Unit
Anniesland JCP
Baird Street
Glasgow
G90 8AN
Tel: 0141 950 5327
Textphone: 0845 602 5850
Fax: 0141 950 5265
E-mail: atwosu.Glasgow@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk

Direct Government Information from

www.direct.gov.uk

Disability Employment Advisers

Job Centre Plus
92 High Street
Liverpool
Merseyside
L15 8HQ
Tel: 0845 604 3719
Textphone: 0151 801 8067

Employers Forum on Disability

Nutmeg House
60 Gainsford Street
London
SE1 2NY
Tel: 020 7403 3020
Minicom: 020 7403 0040
Fax: 020 7403 0404;
Web-site: www.employers-forum.co.uk

Equality & Human Rights Commission

Freepost RRL-GHUX-CTR
Arndale House
The Arndale Centre
Manchester
M4 3EQ
Tel: 0845 604 6610
Textphone: 0845 604 6620
Fax: 0845 604 6630
E-mail: info@equalityhumanrights.com
Web-site: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Quick Guide to the Equality and Diversity Policy

If any matter of discriminatory behaviour occurs this should be identified to:
a Head of Year for students or a Line Manager for staff or
alternatively the Admin Manager/Trade Union Rep/Headteacher
and must be within 3 months of the incident.

If the matter is not thought to have been dealt with properly, it will
be forwarded to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

Any such behaviour may lead to exclusion or dismissal where an allegation
is proven with no extenuating circumstances. The school's disciplinary
policies and procedures would be followed in such circumstances.

In day to day activities in school, staff must ensure that a balanced
education of students is provided with regards to ethnicity, gender,
disabilities and race.

During the recruitment and selection process of staff and
students, ensure fair treatment for all.

If you are notified that DDA applies to an individual check that:

- A risk assessment need to be carried out if needed.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to the job or work area if needed.
- Medical redeployment is considered if applicable.
- Ill health retirement or termination of employment on the grounds of capability is considered if applicable.

List of Responsibilities:

Governors – To ensure the school fulfils its legal responsibilities

Headteacher – To ensure policy is implemented, staff are aware and
may initiate disciplinary action where necessary.

Deputy Head – To ensure all formal complaints are dealt with promptly.

Head of Citizenship – To ensure all issues of race and cultural diversity
are addressed.

All teaching and non teaching staff – To comply with the policy and not to
discriminate on grounds of race,
gender, sexual orientation, disability or
religious affiliation.

At all times confidentiality of information relating to all areas of this policy
should be considered and adhered to. Note: there may be information
such as a disability that needs to be shared with relevant parties.