



# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (INCLUDING THE RACE EQUALITY) POLICY

## **Introduction**

At Featherstone Academy we value the individuality of all of our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy is intended to help to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background or other protected characteristics. We consider it important for the school to have an Equality of Opportunity Policy because we recognise that, oppression, disadvantage and discrimination still exists in society. This policy demonstrates our commitment to address these issues and take action to seek to put this imbalance right to ensure that all children in our school reach their potential.

## **What sort of school are we?**

Featherstone Academy is an average sized primary school (NOR 229) including a 26 place Nursery. In September 2014, Featherstone Primary School converted to an Academy with our sponsor, Education Central Multi-Academy Trust (ECMAT) which is part of Wolverhampton University. Approximately 42% of our pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a few pupils from range of minority ethnic. The proportion of our pupils at school action/plus is average (8%); the number of pupils who are at School Action Plus / Statement of special educational needs is significantly above average (15%). Currently, there are two pupils who are 'Looked After'.

At Featherstone Academy, every child is treated as an individual and valued as such. We treat all children and their families equally and value their support and contribution to the school family. In short, every child really does matter. High self-esteem is encouraged, high expectations, standards and values are demanded and progress and achievement are positively monitored and celebrated. We believe that all children can achieve and that no child should ever be left behind. Featherstone has many qualities, the most important of these being a dedicated and caring staff who share a wealth of experience and who are totally committed to ensuring that the children in our care get a good deal in all areas of learning. In addition we have excellent facilities and enjoy support from the community at large. These factors help us to provide the highest standards of education for each child. In partnership with parents, we strive to ensure continued academic success and develop personal qualities in pupils of which we can be proud.

## **Aims and objectives**

- Equality of opportunity at Featherstone Academy is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community - learners, staff, governors, parents and community members. We do not discriminate against anyone, be they staff or pupil or parent, on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.
- We promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.

- We ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- We challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- We value each pupil's worth, we celebrate the individuality and cultural diversity of the community centred on our school, and we show respect for all minority groups.
- We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping are caused by poor self-image and by ignorance. Through positive educational experiences, and support for each individual's legitimate point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes, and respect for all.
- Within the school, staff will ensure that the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) is embedded into the school ethos and curriculum. This means that they are aware that in order to thrive, all children need to survive as a fit and healthy person;
  - be protected from harm and abuse;
  - develop physically, mentally and socially;
  - participate as an active citizen.

### **The school's commitment to Race Equality**

As a school, we are wholeheartedly committed to Race Equality. We aim to:

- ensure that all learners and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential;
- respect and value differences between people;
- prepare learners for life in a diverse society;
- acknowledge the existence of racism and take steps to prevent it;
- make the school a place where everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin feels welcomed and valued;
- promote good relations between different racial groups within the school and within the wider community;
- ensuring that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- opposing all forms of racism, racial prejudice and racial harassment;
- being proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

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**This policy contains explicit and specific statements which reflect the school's commitment to promote race equality.**

### **Leadership and Management**

All school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities, including race equality. The governing body and school management set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.

The school promotes positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

The school management will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

All staff contribute to the development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and takes appropriate steps to enable the contribution of parents.

The evaluation of policies is used to identify specific actions to address equality issues.

Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all learners and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and the wider community.

Additional grants and resources (such as those provided for minority ethnic and Traveller learners) are appropriately targeted and monitored.

### **Staffing : Recruitment and Professional Development**

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and Local Authority guidelines.

Steps are taken to encourage people from under represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. New staff are familiar with it as part of their induction programme.

The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status, support and are encouraged to share their knowledge.

Regular professional learning activities are available for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

### **Curriculum**

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all learners. The curriculum builds on learners' starting points. Where appropriate it will be differentiated to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls;
- learners who receive pupil premium grant funding (Free School Meals/ Ever 6);
- learners learning English as an additional language;
- learners from minority ethnic groups;
- learners who are gifted and talented;
- learners with special educational needs;
- learners who are looked after by the local authority;
- learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion.

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for learners of all backgrounds.

Equal opportunities are an integral part of the whole curriculum. Our advocacy and promotion of the CRC throughout our school curriculum and beyond encourages the personal development of positive values and attitudes concerning equal opportunities. This should also value and support the cultural, linguistic, social, religious, personal and emotional experience of all children and adults.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all learners. Area of learning teams have a duty to ensure the curriculum reflects equal opportunities for all ages and at every level of ability.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages learners to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes. Awareness of equal opportunities in society are promoted through the articles of the CRC and the common language of the CRC.

Extra curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all learners and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which learners feel all their contributions are valued.

All learners have access to the mainstream curriculum.

Teaching is responsive to learners' different learning styles and takes account of learners' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Learner grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender and background.

Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that learners appreciate the value of working together.

All learners are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

Teachers encourage learners to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster learners' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of learners, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

### **Assessment, Learner Achievement and Progress**

All learners have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline and prior knowledge assessment is used appropriately for all learners. The school ensures that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid.

The school monitors and analyses learner performance by gender, ethnicity and background, Looked After Learners, those in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant and learners with Special Educational

Needs. Consequently, the school is able to identify groups of learners where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all learners and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment provides all learners with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

All learners have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment which summarises what they have learnt. Information from assessment is used to inform future learning.

Staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess learner progress.

### **School Ethos**

**The school vigorously opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.**

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among learners from all ethnic groups.

The school caters for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups.

The school enables learners and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all learners to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with all forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant LA policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school and local authority policies. *(See documentation used for recording and reporting any discriminatory incidents related to age, disability, gender (including transgender), religion/belief and sexuality).*

Learners, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice.

All children have an equal chance to be class helpers, assistants to staff at lunchtimes and playtimes together with members of the School Council.

### **Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions**

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all learners.

Any exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of learners.

The school's procedures for disciplining learners and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that cultural background may effect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline as stated within the school's Behaviour Policy.

Children are all treated equally and are rewarded according to their own efforts and behaviour.

Learners, staff and parents are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

(See also the *Behaviour Policy*).

### **Personal Development and Pastoral Care**

Pastoral support takes account of religious and ethnic differences.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

### **Admissions and Attendance**

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all learners, so that learners from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about learners' ethnicity, religion, physical needs, and medical needs is included in all admissions forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to learner attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for leave of absence requests for religious observance which includes staff as well as learners.

Provision is made for learners on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Attendance is monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of learners.

### **Partnership with Parents and the Community**

Progress reports to parents are accessible and appropriate, in order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents.

Information material for parents is easily accessible in user friendly language. Every effort would be made to provide information in languages and formats other than English as appropriate.

Meetings for parents are made accessible for all. Parental involvement is monitored to ensure the participation of all groups.

Informal events are designed to include the whole community.

The school's premises and facilities are equally available and accessible for use by all groups within the community.

### **Responsibilities**

The Headteacher is the member of staff responsible for co-ordinating work in equal opportunities. She is also responsible for recording and dealing with discriminatory incidents.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that:

- the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation;
- the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher will further:

- apply equal opportunities legislation and guidance in the school's appointment processes and general procedures;
- ensure the application of the admissions policy;
- ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

The Headteacher and members of the Lead Learning Team will:

- ensure equal opportunities issues are included in the Strategic Self Evaluation and Development Plan
- assess the impact of the Policy and communicate the outcomes to the Governing Body.

The Leader with responsibility for the Curriculum will:

- co-ordinate the curriculum in conjunction teaching staff to ensure equality of opportunity is represented in the core, foundation and extended curriculum.

Teaching staff will:

- ensure the implementation of this policy within the classroom and in their own dealings with staff, children and the school community;
- contribute to discussions about equal opportunity issues;
- reflect on their own procedures and routines to ensure that children are treated equitably
- refer incidents and concerns, where appropriate, to the headteacher – including all discriminatory incidents/suspected incidents.

All school staff will:

- **set an example in terms of their treatment of one another and display of tolerance and understanding towards the beliefs and cultures of others;**
- be vigilant for all types of discriminatory incidents and act upon them;
- proactively encourage learners to challenge stereotypical roles and prejudice.

### **The Learning Environment and Resources**

Resources are purchased, prepared and selected which are free from gender or cultural bias. Regular audits of resources help ensure appropriateness and relevance. Resources found to present bias may

be used as a starting point for discussion to raise issues. Such resources will be kept for this purpose only and others completely removed from use.

Displays in classrooms and around the school aim to reflect positive images and a diverse range of cultures.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated annually by the Senior Leadership Team and reported to the Governing Body through the termly Headteacher's Report.

Monitoring will involve:

- collecting and analysing data to measure the school's performance and effectiveness;
- monitoring attainment and progress by racial group if applicable, analysing it and using it to examine trends;
- monitoring other areas that could have an adverse impact on learners' attainment such as exclusions,
- rewards and sanctions, attendance, racial harassment and bullying, parental involvement and membership of the governing body.

In particular, monitoring data will help to:

- highlight any differences between learners of different racial groups;
- ask why these differences exist and test the explanations given from different ethnic groups;
- decide what further action needs to be taken to improve the performance of learners.

This will be informed by reviewing available evidence linked to the following questions:

1. Does the school help all its learners to achieve as much as they can, and get the most from what is on offer, based on their individual needs? Which groups of learners are not achieving as much as they can? Why not?
2. Is the school making sure that its policies, including its Equal Opportunities/Race Equality policy, are not having an adverse impact on learners, parents, staff or some racial groups?
3. How does the school explain any differences? Are the explanations justified?
4. What is the school doing to raise standards, and promote equality of opportunity for learners who seem to be under-achieving and who may need extra support?
5. What is the school doing to:
  - a. prevent or deal with racism?
  - b. prepare learners for life in a multi-ethnic society?
  - c. promote race equality and harmony?
6. What changes does the school need to make to relevant policies, their aims, and any related targets and strategies?

### **Development including Professional Learning**

As a school we aim to:

- Work with staff to ensure their continued professional learning in the understanding of the CRC to ensure they can apply the convention in real and meaningful social contexts, thus developing their understanding of equal opportunities.

- Ensure staff have access to INSET, resources and time to develop good equal opportunities practice. *An Equality and Diversity training day was undertaken in June 2011 which was also attended by several Governors. The outcome of which was an increase in participant knowledge and understanding of methods to ensure equality.*
- Ensure that governors are aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Build a bank of resources, literature and artefacts to support the equal opportunities curriculum and
- understanding of the CRC.
- Consider cross-curricular issues such as equal opportunities and children's rights throughout all areas of learning within the curriculum.

### **Published Equality Statement**

In line with statutory requirements, an Equality Statement is included on the school's website. This states:

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.

Guiding principles:

- We value all learners equally
- We recognise and respect difference
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
- We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development
- We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist
- We consult and involve widely
- All of Featherstone Academy policies are written with regard to and are compliant with the Equality Act 2010

### **Dissemination and review**

The Policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Policy reviewed: September 2014.

Date of next review: Autumn Term 2015.

The Policy is published for Governors, Parents and Carers on the school website:

<http://www.whitgreave.staffs.sch.uk/>.