



HAYDON SCHOOL

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STUDENT ISSUES

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

Within the same borough schools may vary greatly according to geographical, historical and other influences. This is a policy for Haydon School, and whilst sharing many aims and objectives with other schools, it is written assuming a particular relevance to this school.

This is a policy for the whole school and, therefore, incorporates not just teachers and pupils but parents, governors and non-teaching staff also. All contribute to the ethos and atmosphere within the school community and have the potential to transmit certain messages to pupils.

Haydon School needs an equal opportunities policy in order to properly fulfil its function as an education establishment serving the needs of **all** pupils. Many pupils suffer disadvantage and discrimination due to structural inequalities within our society.

Through the conscious or unconscious transmission of some of the beliefs, values and norms of our society, education may seem to reinforce these inequalities, but it also has the potential to question and challenge. The aim of this policy is to ensure that at Haydon School the latter is achieved.

All pupils are legally and morally entitled to equality of opportunity in education. It is our belief that many pupils' preferences, abilities and aspirations may be severely limited by their experience of inequality. It is, therefore, the aim of this policy to ensure that all pupils realise their full potential, socially and academically, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or class. Equal opportunities is not a topic but a fundamental approach to education and needs to be incorporated into all aspects of school life, but good practice in the classroom in particular is likely to promote an atmosphere conducive to both teaching and learning.

Anti-sexism Policy Statement

It is our aim to develop a policy and practices that promote genuine equal opportunities for all our pupils.

We regard sexism as a set of discriminatory practices and structures of power that are a barrier to equal opportunity. Further, sexism is based on negative beliefs and attitudes that damage people, men as well as women, by giving them a distorted view of their identity. We believe that sex stereotyping encourages people to conform to the gender roles which can inhibit choice, restrict ambitions and limit horizons. This impoverishes the lives of both sexes.

This policy recognises that the process of acquiring and practising sexist attitudes is subtle and largely unconscious. Such attitudes and assumptions are acquired and passed on by society in general and more specifically social justice is not enough. Education may be the vehicle for transmitting sexism but it can also be powerful in challenging it.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

HAYDON SCHOOL ANTI-SEXIST POLICY

The objectives are:-

1. TEACHING STAFF

To raise staff awareness of issues involved in anti-sexist education:

- i) Whole school in-service training;
- ii) encouraging staff to attend appropriate courses and conferences;
- iii) providing a library of relevant literature and support materials;
- iv) continued monitoring of key issues.

To be aware that the staffing structure indicates to pupils much about the relative status and position of men and women. We must take account of :-

- i) the role models presented in key areas of responsibilities and skills;
- ii) the duties assigned to both sexes
- iii) career structuring for women.

2. CURRICULUM

All staff should review the relevance of their curriculum and teaching method to anti-sexist education. This particularly applies to those subjects which are less attractive to either boys or girls or where either sex traditionally fails.

To ensure that the curriculum is free from sex bias by:

- i) ensuring topics are relevant to both boys and girls;
- ii) avoiding sex stereotyping;
- iii) ensuring attention is given to the experience and achievements of women as well as men, including women of different cultures.

3. OPTIONS

To challenge the sexism that underlines some of the pupils selection of optional subjects by:

- i) reviewing the guidance Year 9 are given when deciding options;
- ii) altering the option pattern to encourage less sex stereotyping of choice;
- iii) by 'recruiting' both boys and girls into non-traditional subject choices;
- iv) scrutinising individual choice and resulting set lists for sex bias.

4. PASTORAL

To create a Pastoral Programme that fosters gender equality by:

- i) developing materials that will enable pupils to confront and challenge gender bias in various aspects of everyday life;
- ii) giving the opportunity to consider and discuss their behaviour and attitude to each other, including their use of space. That mutual respect, regardless of gender, is encouraged.
- iii) celebrating the achievements of both boys and girls.

5. RESOURCES

To ensure that the resources used by pupils and the way they are used are free from sexism. This includes a regular review of:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

- A.
 - i) books, worksheets, audio-visual etc., resources for learning;
 - ii) the school libraries;
 - iii) display materials;
 - iv) use of sports facilities;
 - v) extra curricular facilities/mini bus/coaches/holidays
 - vi) computers
 - vii) the allocation of funding resources.
- B. To make available resources which demonstrate and highlight sexism so stereotypical assumptions can be challenged.
- C. Students should have equal access to resources/facilities regardless of social class.

6. CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

To organise the classroom to ensure equal participation in the lesson by both boys and girls, considering:

- i) seating arrangements;
- ii) that more attractive areas of the room are not dominated by one sex;
- iii) that mixed gender group work and collaborative learning and pupil interactions are encouraged;
- iv) that more attention is not paid to pupils of one gender at the expense of the other;
- v) developing a climate of mutual respect regardless of sex within the classroom;
- vi) distribution of praise and censure for both sexes.

7. PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

To develop an atmosphere, an ethos of mutual respect and understanding by:

- i) challenging offensive sexist language;
- ii) dealing promptly and effectively with incidents of sexist behaviour and sexual harassment (see Appendix 1)
- iii) dealing promptly and effectively with incidents of bullying, dominating equipment or space, 'borrowing' belongings, malicious gossip etc.
- iv) supporting and helping the less assertive pupils of either sex;
- v) avoiding sex stereotyping when dealing with transgressors.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

ANTI-RACISM POLICY

This school is multi-cultural and values the individual, his or her culture, language and religion. We are opposed to racist behaviour and attitudes in any form.

It is on these two tenets that the school's multi-ethnic policy rests.

Although, for the convenience of the Policy Document, aspects of the policy have been arranged under various headings, multi-cultural education is a whole school policy. It encompasses and permeates every aspect of the life of school. It is not simply a block that can be cemented on to the existing structure. It follows that it cannot be the approach of a few staff or departments. It is a policy that affects us all and one which each of us must effect.

However, we should also realise that emphasising and valuing cultural diversity is, in itself, not adequate to secure equal opportunity for all our pupils. A vital part of our approach must be a curriculum that enables everyone to have real understanding of the part played by racism throughout history and in contemporary society. Pupils and staff need to learn to identify and combat racism within their own sphere of influence.

1. CURRICULUM

- i) That opportunities be created to present subjects from a world viewpoint rather than a European viewpoint;
- ii) that each department be asked to review the curriculum to ensure that contributions to world knowledge and development are credited to the culture in which they arose;
- iii) that pupils be encouraged to recognise that each society has its own values, traditions and styles of everyday living appropriate to the climatic and historical conditions under which that have developed, which should be considered in the context of that society, as well as compared with their own;
- iv) that information about other cultures be presented in a way which does not devalue the experience of anyone from that culture;
- v) that pupils be encouraged to understand racial similarities and differences, and the nature of prejudice;
- vi) that the movement of people (and thus cultural diversity) be presented as underlying themes throughout history and the modern world;
- vii) that students be encouraged to understand the dangers of racial, cultural and sex stereotyping.

2. RESOURCES

The resources for learning should reflect the fact that pupils are living and learning in a multi-cultural society. They should take into account of the different ethnic backgrounds and the pupils who use them. Further, we must recognise that resources that ignore or deny the validity of the experiences, perspectives and culture of our pupils, discriminating against them and their families. Thus the objectives are:-

A.

- i) to regularly review all texts, reference and library books; worksheets, aural and visual and display material and take appropriate action.
- ii) to seek our resources that reflect cultural diversity and resources that reflect involvement of the ethnic minorities communities.

B.

To make available resources which demonstrate and highlight racism so stereotypical assumptions can be challenged.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

3. CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

- i) That strategies be devised to encourage collaborative learning;
- ii) that students be encouraged to develop a critical understanding of why they may hold negative views of different cultural groups and of the effect such negative views have themselves and others;
- iii) that students from all cultures be encouraged to give information and express opinions for the viewpoint of their culture;
- iv) that consideration be given as to whether classroom policy/practice conflicts with the customs and beliefs of different students.

4. LANGUAGE

In order to lay the foundations for a genuinely pluralist society the curriculum must cater for the language needs of all pupils. We need to broaden language horizons of all pupils, ensuring they acquire a real understanding of role, range and richness of language in all its forms. To do this we should put a positive value on bilingualism. The provision for mother tongues, valuing and using bilingualism should be enhanced.

5. PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

- i) Haydon, in common with all schools, is likely to have students who hold racist views. These students may be further exploited by extreme right-wing organisations outside school. Therefore, the school must teach appropriate strategies to confront racist attitudes and racial discrimination.
- ii) Every member of staff (teaching and non-teaching) must deal promptly and effectively with racist behaviour. (See Appendix 1).
- iii) Students and parents must feel confident that they can report any racist incident to a member of staff. This includes any racist incident which involves a member of staff.
- iv) There must no ambiguity in the way Haydon reacts to racist behaviour. Staff are responsible for transmitting school policy and they must do this consistently. As with other forms of unacceptable behaviour, the school will exclude any students for racist behaviour if it is considered necessary. Parents will be invited into school to discuss the problem.
- v) Our aim in discussing racism with students and parents should be to positively influence them through discussion and not to suppress racism by 'driving it underground'.
- vi) Teachers, student and parent should be vigilant in looking for 'hidden' and overt racism in our curriculum and resources.

6. ETHOS AND ATMOSPHERE

- i) The school has a duty to promote positive attitudes towards our multi-cultural society;
- ii) that students should be encouraged to have more contact with people from other cultures;
- iii) that student groups e.g. tutor groups, school council, be asked to consider the best ways of supporting other students in the school, especially those who are new;
- iv) that consideration be given to the ways in which the rules about uniform, meals and behaviour relate to the beliefs, customs and practices of students;
- v) that wall displays should reflect the wealth of cultural experience within the student body, and that the use of other languages should be encouraged;
- vi) that assemblies should reflect the cultural diversity of the student body.

7. A POSITIVE PLACE FOR PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

In general the school needs to develop means for liaising and collaborating successfully with parents over the education of their children. We need to be far more active in seeking views and perceptions of parents about their children, about the school and about education, and conversely we need to be equally active in sharing our views and perceptions with parents. The objectives are:-

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

- i) To build on the formal and informal contacts already made e.g. parent evenings;
- ii) to endeavour to attend more events organised by community groups;
- iii) to inform parents about our policies and practices far more than we do;
- iv) to involve parents and the community for more in the life of the school;
- v) to pay particular attention to communication with parents whose mother tongue is not English.

PROVISION FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL - TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING**1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DECLARATION**

The school is unreservedly opposed to any form of direct or indirect discrimination being applied against employees of the school or those who seek employment with the school because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, domestic circumstances, age, sexual orientation, disability, trade union activity or religious or political beliefs. The school recognises its responsibility for:-

- i) The promotion and fostering of equality of opportunity within the school;
- ii) the elimination of discrimination, in accordance with the equal opportunity declaration;
- iii) positive action to further equality of opportunity;
- iv) providing a work force with the knowledge, skills and commitment to serve all members of the community.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMITMENT

The school recognises its obligation and responsibilities under the employment of disabled persons, sex discrimination and race relations legislation and fully supports the spirit and intent of such legislation and related codes of practice. Specifically the school is committed to ensure that:-

- i) The wording of advertisements, person specifications and job descriptions will be scrutinised for potential direct or indirect discrimination;
- ii) in accordance with the equal opportunity declaration, no applicant or employee will be treated less favourably than any other;
- iii) no applicant or employee will be placed at a disadvantage, contrary to the equal opportunity declaration, by requirements or conditions which have a disproportionately adverse effect and which cannot be shown to be necessary to the satisfactory completion of the job;
- iv) entry into the school's employment and progression within it are determined solely by the application of objective criteria and personal performance and merit;
- v) employment decisions are not based on preconceived notions about any particular group and that no-one is segregated at work on the basis of a racial, sexual or other similar category;
- vi) thus each applicant will be assessed according to his or her relevant qualifications, relevant experience, and professional competence. These factors and not those of gender, race or marital status will form the criteria for appointment and promotion;

CODE OF PRACTICE

Unacceptable behaviour relating to race, gender, disability and class is defined as follows:

Any hostile or offensive act which may be non-verbal, verbal or physical, including attacks on property as well as people. This can be because of race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnic origin or disability and which interferes with the peace, comfort and safety of that person.

DEALING WITH INCIDENTS**1. Verbal Abuse -** Including name calling, racist jokes and mimicry

No members of either teaching or non-teaching staff should ignore any form of verbal abuse, anywhere in the school. It is totally unacceptable behaviour. Steps should be taken to explain to all parties involved that it will not be tolerated. If you are uncomfortable about these, please refer to the Head of Year. Persistent verbal abuse should be referred to the Head of Year, Head or Deputy Head and dealt with in the same manner as intimidation. There should be relevant and immediate support for the child who is the victim.

2. Verbal Abuse or Intimidation - By a member of staff or other adult

This should be discussed with the adult concerned as soon as possible, and their attention drawn to both school and borough policy. In the case of further incidents the Head or Deputy Head should be informed. Persistent incidents with those employed by the school or LEA will be treated as unprofessional conduct, and dealt with accordingly. Those employed by external agencies will be reported to their line manager.

3. Graffiti

This should be reported to the Head of Year, Head or Deputy Head. Graffiti should be removed immediately.

4. Physical Attack or Intimidation

This should be reported to the Head of Year, Head or Deputy Head. A full report of the incident should be kept. The report should be discussed with the child's parent or guardian and followed up to prevent recurrence.

5. Refusal to Co-operate with others because of Ethnic Origin, Gender, Disability etc.

The importance of working collaboratively should be explained. Every child has the right to be included, no child should be excluded on the grounds of ethnic origin, gender, etc. Persistent offenders should be referred as previously. Incidents should be recorded. Persistent unacceptable behaviour should be reported to the child's parent or guardian.

SUPPORTING VICTIMS

Clear support should be given immediately and the unacceptable behaviour criticised to prevent long-term shock or distress. The Head of Year, Head or Deputy Head should explain the action taken and the views of the school towards such behaviour. The victim should be helped to realise that negative responses to appearance, gender, ability or language are due to shortcomings in our society not themselves. It may be appropriate in some circumstances to plan and carry out curricular activities with pupils to illustrate and resolve problem, particularly if incidents are frequent, widespread or especially serious. In serious cases the Head of Year, Head or Deputy Head should discuss the incident and support offered, to the parent or guardian.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – STUDENT ISSUES

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