

Bethany School Equal Opportunities Policy

February 2022

Bethany School is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.

We believe God's word is very clear in telling us that all people are created equal and every single person can be a child of God, receiving the full inheritance of heaven. For example "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3v28. We look to the Bible to learn how to love and serve everyone no matter what their age, colour, ethnicity, gender or nationality as in James 2v8-9 "...You shall love your neighbour as yourself....and if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers".

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities. In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

Bethany School will carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation within this Act.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. Behaviour such as this will be dealt with under our existing "Good Behavior and Discipline Policy". We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's equal opportunities policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Pupils

Wherever possible we aim to give all pupils the chance to progress in any studies that they show ability and to achieve their full potential during their time with us. As such, we work to ensure that our expectations, attitudes, and practices - in particular those relating to gender - do not prevent any child from reaching their potential.

We recognise that a child's self-perception can be influenced by his/her environment and so we aim to enhance our children's self-esteem and self-confidence by positively working to reduce any gender bias and promoting equality of opportunity.

At the same time we are aware that as children mature and their relationships with peers of both sexes develop; their perception of sex roles alters. We also recognise that such perceptions are influenced by other factors including home, peer group and the media.

Strategies are employed to ensure that the cross-curricular dimension of equal opportunity permeates all of the life and work of the school.

Children of both sexes have equal opportunity within and equal access to, all areas of the whole school curriculum. Boys and girls are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

- Efforts are made to recognise and be aware of the possibility of gender bias in both our teaching and learning materials and our teaching styles
- Materials are carefully vetted for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid or explain the problems of sexual stereotypes and gender bias
- Teacher time, attention and all resources are given equally to boys and girls
- All children are encouraged to work and play freely with others of both sexes and all ages
- Opportunities are given for children to work with teaching and support staff of both sexes where possible

Teaching and other groupings, such as dining table arrangements and classroom seating are organised on the basis of criteria other than gender, for example, age, ability, friendship.

Equality between the sexes is recognised when giving / delegating responsibility and noting the achievements of both staff and children.

- Discipline procedures - notably rewards and corrective measures - are the same for both sexes
- Our school uniform code reflects equality of opportunity for all children
- Children and all staff are encouraged to value each other and build up and maintain cooperative working relationships both within school and in the community, such relationships being based on mutual respect for each other

Any differences involving gender, which arise inside or outside the classroom, are dealt with sensitively and are discussed with the children.

Staff

All teaching and support staff posts are not sex-specific. Both men and women are encouraged to work with all age groups. All staff have equal access to in-service training and posts of responsibility.

No one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of disability or special needs.

In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

Policy Adopted by Governors on: 7/02/2022

Policy Due for Review on: 2025