

EQUALITY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

At Oldfields Hall Middle School we:

- **respect others**
- **enrich lives**
- **make a difference**

Staff and Governors at this school are committed to giving every member of the school community the opportunity to achieve to the highest of standards.

2. WHAT SORT OF SCHOOL ARE WE?

Oldfields Hall Middle School, Uttoxeter was formerly a private residence built in 1867 which was converted into school and Youth and Community premises by Staffordshire County Council in 1959. The school admits all pupils aged 9 -13 from its catchment area, which comprises southern Uttoxeter and nearby villages to the south, as well as some pupils whose parents live outside the catchment area in line with the Local Authority's Admissions Policy. Uttoxeter is a market town which traditionally was mainly agricultural, but significant house building since 1990 in the southern part of the town (Balance Hill, etc.) has changed the overall character of the district. Oldfields Hall Middle School's catchment area houses many commuting families as well as farming families.

The school site has several staircases and steps. Some improvements have been made to make the site more accessible e.g. a disabled toilet in the office block and handrails on outside steps. However, it remains very difficult for staff or pupils with mobility difficulties to move around the site.

From an ethnic perspective the school's staff and pupils are predominantly "White British".

3. AIMS OF THE EQUALITY POLICY

Equality of opportunity at Oldfields Hall Middle School is about providing equality for all in order to promote high standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity should apply to all members of the school community, i.e. pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members.

Through our core aims of respecting others, enriching lives and making a difference, the school focuses on meeting the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. At Oldfields Hall Middle School we endeavour to meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all so that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a diverse society.

4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

All school policies should reflect a commitment to equality for all and have due regard for the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The governing body and school management will set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.

The school will promote positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity.

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School leaders 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 steps to enable the contribution of a range 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 pupils, to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all and that there is appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and the wider community.

5. STAFFING: RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

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

Staff handbooks and regular professional development 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.

6. CURRICULUM

Curriculum planning should take account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all pupils.

A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students and staff to maximise their potential regardless of:

- Disability
- Gender
- Gender identity/reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

The school should use pupil and parent voice periodically to monitor and evaluate its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum should be planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects should contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils.

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The content of the curriculum should reflect and value diversity. It should encourage pupils to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

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

7. TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

All pupils should have access to the mainstream curriculum.

Teaching should be responsive to pupils' different learning needs and should take account of pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers should take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Pupil grouping in the classroom should be planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups should be kept under review and analysed by ethnicity, gender, special educational need and background by heads of department and reported to line managers.

Teaching styles should include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils should be encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

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

Teachers should sensitively challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, aiding them to detect bias and to challenge inequalities.

Resources and displays should reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, and should promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They should be reviewed regularly by heads of department reporting regularly to departmental line managers to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

8. ASSESSMENT, PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS

All pupils should have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment should be used appropriately for all pupils. The school should aim to ensure that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid.

Heads of departments and Progress Managers should monitor and analyse pupil performance by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and therefore identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. They should ensure that action is taken to

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counter this.

Staff should have high expectations of all pupils and they should continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school should recognise and value all forms of achievement.

Self-assessment and peer-assessment should be used to provide all pupils with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through regular reflection and feedback on their progress.

All pupils should have 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 should be used to inform future learning.

All staff should use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress.

9. SCHOOL ETHOS

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

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

Staff should foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among all pupils regardless of background.

The school endeavours to cater for the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups.

The school enables pupils and staff to celebrate festivals and other events relevant to their particular faiths and encourages all pupils to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with all forms of bullying, discrimination and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently in line with the school's Behaviour, Attendance and Anti-Bullying Policies.

Pupils and staff should be aware of procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is unacceptable.

9. BEHAVIOUR, DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSIONS

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all pupils.

The strategies used to reintegrate long term truants and excluded pupils should address the needs of all pupils.

Exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and if necessary action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

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The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour should be fair and applied equally to all. However, reasonable adjustments will also be made for pupils with particular special educational needs (for example autism, ADHD).

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

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

Pupils and staff know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable. Mechanisms for reporting this are clear and staff and pupils are reminded about them regularly.

10. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral support should take account of all differences including those related to culture, ethnicity, gender and educational need, and the experiences and needs of refugee and asylum seeker children.

The school should provide appropriate support for pupils learning English as an additional language and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

The school should take account of and meets the needs of Traveller pupils.

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

11. ADMISSIONS AND ATTENDANCE

The admissions process should be administered fairly and consistently to all pupils so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, special educational needs/disabilities, diet etc. is included in admissions forms.

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

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

Attendance is monitored by the Administrative Officer, working with the Education Welfare Worker who highlights to senior staff when action needs to be taken to reduce any disparities between different groups of pupils.

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12. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

Progress reports to parents should be 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 takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under-represented groups of parents and sections of the community.

Informal events are designed to include the whole community and at times may target minority or marginalised groups.

13. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with relevant equalities legislation and that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

14. MONITORING AND REVIEW

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

Date of next review: January 2020

Policy reviewed	November 2019
Adopted by the OHMS Governing Body	November 2019
Date of next review	November 2020
Chair of Governors	Mr S Clarke