
Policy for Equal Opportunities

March 2021

Pardes House Primary
School

Headteacher: Rabbi J Sager

POLICY FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Rationale

Pardes House Primary School ensures that equal opportunities are available for everyone, regardless of sex, class and ethnic group or ability range. We have a strong commitment to fairness and equality in everything that we do.

At Pardes House,

- We try to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect.
- We want to make sure that our school is a safe, secure and stimulating place for everyone.
- We work hard to make sure that the school is a safe and secure environment for everyone.
- We recognise that people have different needs, and we understand that treating people equally does not always involve treating them all exactly the same.
- We recognise that for some pupils extra support is needed to help them to achieve and be successful.
- We try to make sure that people from different groups are consulted and involved in our decisions, for example through talking to pupils and parents/carers, and through our School Council.
- We aim to make sure that no-one experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age; any disability they may have; their ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender; their gender identity or reassignment; their marital or civil partnership status; being pregnant or having recently had a baby; their religion or beliefs; their sexual identity and orientation.

We welcome the emphasis in the Ofsted inspection framework on the importance of narrowing gaps in achievement which affect, amongst others:

- Pupils from certain ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
- Pupils who are supported by the Pupil Premium;
- Pupils who are disabled;
- Pupils who have special educational needs;
- Boys in certain subjects.

We recognise the importance of encouraging all our families to participate in school life and enjoy the benefits that the school offers. We aim to ensure that our facilities and procedures are welcoming and accessible to all. To facilitate this, the school has an entry ramp for those in wheelchairs and an internal platform lift for access to the school's second floor.

For our pupils, we aim to set high expectations for all regardless of intellectual or physical ability, gender, race, life choice or religion. Each individual is unique and can succeed in different ways. We respect the differing aspirations and expectations that different cultures might endorse. However, it is our role to enable all our pupils to understand their strengths and put them in a position to make the most of them.

Our pupils and families may have unequal starting points and need special attention and provision in order to work with others on a more equal basis. We seek to provide these opportunities and raise awareness within the community of the needs they have. We consider that ensuring equal opportunities for all is a key factor in developing community cohesion.

We encourage the active involvement of our learners and help them to understand their rights as well as respecting the rights of others. We actively challenge prejudice, discrimination, racism and stereotyping and aim to ensure that our curriculum provides opportunities to discuss historical and current issues as well as Fundamental British Values. We aim for our school to be a harmonious working environment in which everyone feels valued – pupils, staff, parents and governors alike.

Aims

1. That every member of the school community experiences equal chances irrespective of ethnic origin, race, religion, colour, nationality, political beliefs, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation.
2. That every member of the school community is valued as an individual and that everyone understands that stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice and racism will not be tolerated.
3. To promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
4. We seek to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school.
5. We aim to ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
6. We aim to challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.

Objectives

- Achieve the highest standards for all irrespective of ethnicity, religious belief, age, gender, ability and disability or social background.
- Make the most of the diversity present in our school, sharing experiences and examples in an ethos of mutual respect.
- Encourage all our families to participate fully in school life and to be able to take advantage of the facilities and resources here.
- Work closely with our community in order to develop community cohesion and raise awareness of needs and ambitions.
- Involve, as far as possible, representatives from the different groups within our catchment area.
- Work with other schools - both Jewish and non-Jewish, in order to share strengths and seek ideas for improvement.
- Enable pupils to develop as independent individuals who respect the rights of others and can work together cooperatively.
- Seek to promote the welfare in school of individuals who have specific physical, emotional, learning and religious needs.
- Challenge all examples of prejudice, discrimination, racism and stereotyping.
- Ensure that our curriculum provides the opportunity for pupils to discuss and understand the context in which views and patterns of behaviour emerge.

Definition

We define equal opportunities as *‘the right of everyone to equal chances, and respecting each individual for who they are’*.

Meeting the public sector equality duty

The information provided in this section shows how we are meeting the public sector equality duty. We are required to have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The information below is a summary of how we have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

- We are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 that it is unlawful to discriminate, treat some people less fairly or put them at a disadvantage.
- The governing body has been briefed on the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. When governors consider equality issues in relation to policies, decisions and services, a record of this is kept in the minutes and papers of governing body meetings.
- There is a Behaviour Policy that ensures all pupils behave in a responsible way, both towards themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for other people at all times.
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy that means that we deal promptly and effectively with all incidents and complaints of bullying and harassment that may include cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to disability or special educational need, ethnicity and race, gender, religion and belief and sexual orientation. We keep a record of all such incidents and notify those affected of what action has been taken.
- We have a Special Educational Needs Policy that outlines the provisions we make for pupils with special educational needs.
- We have an Accessibility Plan regarding making the school accessible to all.
- Our admission arrangements ensure that there is no discrimination in relation to admissions. However, as a school with a religious character, we are exempt from the requirement not to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief in relation to admissions.
- Our Complaints Procedure sets out how we deal with any complaints relating to the school.

The following sections provide information on how Sinai has due regard to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** and **foster good relations**. This includes steps we are taking to tackle disadvantages and meet the needs of particular individuals and groups of pupils with protected characteristics.

Disability

“Anyone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect upon his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities is stated to be disabled.” (*Disability Rights Commission*). Disability is not about wheelchair users only; it includes dyslexia, epilepsy, dyspraxia, diabetes, ADHD, sensory impairment and cancer.

How we advance equality of opportunity:

We support disabled learners by meeting their individual needs.

- We would take steps (reasonable adjustments) to ensure that disabled pupils are not put at a disadvantage compared to other pupils. Amongst other things, we employ the use of teaching assistants in all year groups and learning support assistants with individual pupils who require additional help to ensure that they are not disadvantaged.
- We would involve disabled learners and their families in the changes and improvements we make and consult them on issues affecting them, rather than relying on people acting on their behalf.
- We would carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils that increases the extent to which they can participate in the curriculum, improves the physical environment of the school and increases the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.
- For those pupils with specialist hearing requirements, we would look to adopt a one-to-one loop system so that the classroom teacher can effectively communicate with the pupil, resulting in him having an equal opportunity to learn in a whole class environment.

How we foster good relations and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

- Through the secular and Jewish Studies curricula, we promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils to create positive attitudes to differences and diversity.
- We ensure that the curriculum has positive images of disabled people.
- Our pupils involvement in different charities helps make them aware of children with physical and mental disabilities.
- Through our Behaviour Policy, we tackle bullying or harassment on the basis of special education need or disability.
- Our Behaviour Policy also provides a mechanism for tackling prejudice and any incidents of bullying based on disability.

Ethnicity and Race (including EAL learners)

We are committed to tackling racial discrimination and promoting good race relations. We monitor the racist incident record carefully and are answerable to governors for the effectiveness of actions taken. We make it clear to pupils that racism will not be tolerated.

How we advance equality of opportunity.

- We monitor the attainment and progress of all our pupils by EAL.
- We would set targets to improve the attainment and progression rates of this particular group of pupils, if necessary.
- We identify and address barriers to the participation of this particular group in learning and other activities.
- We have staff who are able to converse with EAL pupils and assist them to integrate into school life when they first arrive in the country/school.

How we foster good relations and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

- Through the Secular and Jewish Studies curricula, we promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils to create positive attitudes to differences and diversity.
- We are continually developing the curriculum to support all pupils in understanding and respecting the value of difference and diversity.

- Where applicable, we ensure that the curriculum challenges racism and stereotypes.
- Where possible within the school's religious ethos, we look to provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the experiences and achievements of different people, communities and cultures. This may be through assemblies, school visits, participation in wider communal activities, special days/weeks or in the classroom.
- All issues of bullying or harassment are dealt with in accordance with our Behaviour Policy.

Attitudes

Racist and sexist comments are strictly prohibited under Halachic (Jewish) guidelines, as they are contrary to Torah values on the part of adults and pupils. These messages are made explicitly clear within the school aims and are promoted within the secular and Kodesh departments.

If such issues arise the incidents will be logged and the Menahel/Headteacher will be informed immediately. The school will be proactive in dealing with such matters with the parents.

We understand that racist views may be generated within the home. If a pupil were to use racist language in school, it would be explained clearly that it is not acceptable and the reasons why. Where possible, we will seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi-cultural society.

Gender

How we advance equality of opportunity.

- We ensure that gender stereotypes are avoided.
- Both male and female parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the school and contribute to their children's learning and progress.
- Parents and carers of both genders are invited into school to work with their children
- Timings of year group presentations and activities are broad enough to help ensure that both male and female parents and carers can attend to support their children.

Religion and Belief

Summary information.

As a faith school, 100% of our school population practise the same religion whilst at school. However, we are aware that there are different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and within that.

How we advance equality of opportunity:

- We ensure that no pupil is excluded from an activity because of his/her level of religious observance.
- All requests for leave during term time in order to travel to a destination in good time for the Sabbath, or a religious festival or family celebration are treated as exceptional circumstances, notwithstanding the level of the family's observance so as to promote equality throughout.

How we foster good relations and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

- Through our Jewish Studies and Secular curricula, we promote SMSC development, which enables pupils to develop positive attitudes to difference and diversity.

- The Jewish Studies curriculum enables pupils to develop respect for others and helps to challenge prejudice and discrimination by emphasising good character traits on a weekly basis, i.e. kindness to all people, showing mutual respect to all regardless of faith or ethnicity.
- Our Behaviour Policy tackles bullying or harassment on the basis of faith and belief.

Responsibilities

The whole school community is responsible for being considerate and respectful to one another. It is expected that all members of the community will pay regard to the feelings of others and their needs and will implement this policy to the best of their ability.

Governing body

The governing body must not discriminate in relation to any prospective or existing pupil or member of staff, in the provision of goods, facilities and services to the public or in relation to employment and vocational training.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that there is an Equal Opportunities policy in place which is monitored and reviewed.
- Making reasonable adjustments if the premises or employment arrangements limit access to particular community groups or individuals.
- Monitoring the accessibility of the school to disabled pupils.
- Receiving feedback as part of the Headteacher's report and questioning school practice.
- Giving due regard to its own membership and the recruitment of new governors.
- Overseeing the application of the admissions policy.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Drawing up an Equal Opportunities policy, in consultation with the governors.
- Ensuring that governors are given accurate feedback on the implementation and effectiveness of the school's Equal Opportunities policy
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities policy, access plans, disability equality etc.
- Monitoring the overall ethos of the school including the number of racist incidents and incidents of bullying and harassment.
- Ensuring that the record of racist incidents is maintained and acted upon.
- Ensuring that the record of bullying and harassment is maintained and acted upon.
- Overseeing the recruitment practice of the school and ensuring that equal opportunities legislation is met.
- Leading the development of a supportive ethos for all pupils in the school.
- Coordinating the curriculum in conjunction with subject leaders/department heads to ensure equality of opportunity is represented in the core and foundation subjects.

Teachers and support staff

Teachers and support staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented within the classroom and in their own dealings with staff, pupils and the school community

- Creating an environment where there is equal access to all children, where self-esteem is enhanced, and where care is taken to treat sensitively any individual matter, which a child may be embarrassed about.
- Monitoring their own procedures and routines to ensure that pupils are treated equally.
- Referring incidents and concerns, where appropriate, to the Headteacher.
- Setting an example in terms of conduct towards staff, pupils and parents
- Encouraging pupils to try new activities, challenging stereotypical roles and prejudice
- Setting high expectations for pupils and supporting them in achieving them
- Monitoring the progress of groups to identify any trends or difficulties and identifying and monitoring possible solutions
- Encouraging pupils to share their experiences and discuss issues in a supportive environment.

The curriculum

Pupils are encouraged to build confidence through avoiding stereotyping curriculum areas. Planning takes account of the need for differentiation to provide full access for pupils with a range of varying requirements. Core subject leaders/ department head and the SENCO check planning to ensure that provision and resources are appropriate.

Where examples of bias or unfair representation of groups in resources exist, this is drawn to the attention of the teaching group. In some cases this is used as a teaching point, for example lack of reference to female scientists in older textbooks. Wherever possible, reference is made to the experience of and examples from different cultures. An international perspective is built into curriculum planning.

PSHE, circle time and some of our cross-curricular topics offer opportunities for discussion on equal opportunities. For example, some of the textbooks chosen for study in literature raise issues relating to equality and units such as 'blue for a boy' raise issues for discussion about stereotyping.

All curriculum plans are drawn up with an emphasis on ensuring accessibility to activities and concepts for all groups of learners. Planning teams apply the checklist to ensure they consider any effect that different religions, languages or cultures may have on interpretation and understanding.

Success criteria for this policy

This policy will be reviewed through asking the following questions:

- How many racist incidents have been recorded?
- How many referrals for bullying have there been?
- What do observations of playground staff suggest about the way pupils play together at lunchtime?
- What do lesson observations suggest about the way that pupils work together in class?
- Do pupils feel that they are all valued?
- Do parents feel that the school values all pupils?
- Are the staff and governing body representative of the community?
- Are all groups of pupils represented on the Higher Achievers register?
- Are all groups of pupils represented in school clubs?

- Are all groups of pupils attaining the standards expected of them?
 - Are high standards set for all groups of pupils?
 - Do parents regularly attend parents' evenings and other events/activities open to them?
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Signed:

Date: March 2021

Review: March 2023