Beachborough School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Updated: September 2026

Date of next Review: September 2027

Policy Lead: Ms SJ Lapper (Deputy Head Pastoral)

Reviewed by: Mrs S Mitchell (Head)

This policy applies to all pupils (including EYFS and boarding), staff, parents and visitors. It should be read with our Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, SEND and Complaints policies.

At Beachborough:
Beachborough is committed to equal opportunities and aims to consider the needs of the individual in the school community. The school will ensure equality of opportunities for all children and staff:

- The school encourages all members of its community to behave in an acceptable fashion towards each other and will not accept words or actions which display prejudice against individuals.
- Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported. The school will discuss what reasonable adjustments, if any, the school is able to make to avoid children being put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to other pupils.
- Equal opportunities will be provided for all pupils and staff. The School does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation and will fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- The School is also committed to promoting inclusion and ensuring fair access to opportunities for individuals from all socio-economic backgrounds. Whilst socio-economic background is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, the School recognises that social and economic disadvantage can create barriers to participation, achievement and wellbeing, and will seek to identify and remove such barriers wherever reasonably practicable.
- This is done in order to develop their talents to the full and encourage awareness and acceptance.
- Equal opportunities will be provided for children with English as an additional language (EAL).
- All members of staff aim to help young people to accept and respect other people's individuality and to behave in a way that does not display bias or prejudice. This includes acceptance and respect for those who may need the school uniform to be adapted.

Guidance:
The School aims to meet the requirements of the following legislation in order to be free from discrimination and stereotyping:
This policy is informed by the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Children and Families Act 2014 (SEND), Independent School Standards Regulations, EYFS Statutory Framework and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Definitions of Discrimination:

The School recognises that discrimination can take a number of forms under the Equality Act 2010:

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging people who share a particular protected characteristic and cannot be objectively justified.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation occurs when an individual is treated unfavourably because they have made, supported or raised a complaint of discrimination, or are believed to have done so.

The School will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation in any form and is committed to promoting an inclusive environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.

Aims:
The school recognises that direct and indirect discrimination might take place and therefore sees the need for a positive and effective equal opportunities policy. It will promote the concept of equality of opportunity throughout the school community, both for adults and for all pupils. It will seek to develop an understanding of, and promotion of, human equality and equal opportunities.

It will promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities. The school will enable students to take responsibility for their behaviour and relationships with others. The school's values, aims and objectives all accord with the equal treatment of people promoted by national laws and regulations, and the rights enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Responsibilities:
All staff are responsible for following this policy and reporting incidents of unequal treatment to the appropriate senior member of staff. Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring equal opportunities within the curriculum. The Head will report any relevant incidents to the Board of Governors.

Equality Objectives and Monitoring:
The School will regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of its policies, procedures and practices to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Any reported incidents of discrimination, prejudice-related behaviour or harassment will be recorded, investigated and addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and disciplinary procedures. The School will use information gathered through monitoring to improve provision and ensure equality of opportunity for all members of the community. Equality-related incidents and concerns will be analysed periodically to identify patterns, trends and any actions required to improve practice across the school.

Staff:
Beachborough is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to avoiding unlawful discrimination either directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of any of the 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, race and religion or belief. The School will make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and applicants as required by the Equality Act 2010.
If, at any time, employees feel that they have been subjected to a detriment or treated less favourably than others in relation to equal opportunities without reasonable justification, they should raise the matter with a senior colleague and utilise the grievance procedure. In the event that any employee has been the subject of discrimination by another employee in terms of physical or verbal abuse, or harassment, he or she should inform their line manager immediately. The perpetrator of any proven instance of discrimination may be subject to disciplinary action and may be dismissed.

Pupils:
All subjects will aim to have equality of opportunity at their core. Positive attitudes and awareness of equality of opportunity will be fostered through lessons, the PSHE Programme, the CREATE framework, Assemblies and Form/Tutor periods. Through the curriculum and wider school life, pupils will be encouraged to develop respect for diversity and an understanding of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will be made for children with disabilities and learning needs.
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EYFS:
When a child starts in the Nursery, Kindergarten or Reception, a member of staff will talk to the child and the parents about the child's background and experiences at home. Staff will use this information when planning and carrying out activities to ensure that familiar experiences are used as starting points for learning.

When planning, setting-up and altering rooms, outdoor areas and equipment within the EYFS, the staff will aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning. This will include:

- Keeping the EYFS classes' environment free from discriminatory practice or stereotypical images.
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities.

- Using display, resources and equipment that reflect the British community in which the children live as well as the wider world.

The curriculum will include activities to encourage children to respect their own cultural background and beliefs and those of other people. These will include:

- Activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic and cultural festivals.
- Telling stories, listening to music and looking at pictures from a range of cultures.
- Role-play activities that reflect a variety of cultures.
- Discussions with and between the children about the similarities and differences in their experiences and the reasons for those similarities and differences.

The staff will ensure that all children are given support to participate in activities, experiences, visits and discussions and to ensure that all children are listened to carefully and with respect. The staff will carefully consider the need for equality of opportunity when planning activities and experiences. When necessary, they will modify activities or provide additional equipment or materials to ensure children are not excluded. Staff will work in partnership with parents and external agencies where appropriate to ensure that children with disabilities or additional needs are able to access the curriculum and wider school life.

Pupils with disabilities are provided with appropriate assistance to eat, in a manner which promotes dignity and choice.

Disciplinary:
Breach of the equal opportunities policy is a potentially serious disciplinary matter for both pupils and staff. Similarly, unsubstantiated accusations of discrimination for malicious purposes could be a serious disciplinary offence. Anyone who believes that they may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is entitled to raise the matter through the Parental Complaints Procedure or Grievance Procedure. Genuine complaints raised in good faith will never result in disciplinary action.

Related Policies/Procedures:

- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Parental Complaints Procedure

Policy Status:
This policy is not intended to form part of an employee's contract of employment and the school reserves the right to amend it at any time.

This policy applies across the whole school including Boarding and EYFS and will be reviewed and updated regularly. ***Linked Policies and read in conjunction with:*** *Accessibility Plan, Admissions Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Safeguarding, Curriculum and SEND and EDI Policy.*