



Equality Policy

Review Period: Annually

Status: Statutory

Next review Date: Spring 25

Introduction

Located in Caterham, Surrey, Sunnydown is a fully inclusive, Special School with approximately 90 pupils on roll and 50 employees. It has a positive approach to ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion, as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Its Equality Policy covers all 'Protected Characteristics' as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Equality of opportunity is a fundamental right for all members of the Sunnydown community and the School is committed to developing the potential of all persons associated with it.

The aim of the Policy is to ensure that individual diversity is valued and that rights and beliefs are protected and respected. In order to guarantee that this occurs, these must be made an integral part of the thoughts, words and deeds of all individuals at Sunnydown. This Policy is intended to have a direct and positive impact on the ethos of the School.

Sunnydown's values are set out in the following aims and it strives to be a caring and achieving community by:

- maintaining a safe, secure and stimulating environment
- ensuring quality teaching and learning
- working in partnership with pupils and other stakeholders
- preparing its students for adult life
- nurturing self-esteem and a sense of belonging
- investing in people
- encouraging self expression and feeling comfortable with who they are
- offering a rich variety of educational and creative experiences
- recognising effort and achievement
- emphasising respect
- serving the needs of each individual
- building on strengths
- giving clear and consistent guidance
- providing equal opportunities
- promoting healthy living
- celebrating success

Through on-going education and training, Sunnydown promotes a culture of respect for all. It promotes equality by recognising and celebrating diversity and creates a school community which prepares pupils for a life in a diverse society.

Aims

The community in which Sunnydown is situated is predominantly white British and the pupils and staff come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. All students have an EHCP. Whilst the School is a cohesive community, the need actively to promote relationships between the various sections of society represented at Sunnydown is recognised. The School is adapted to accommodate students with additional physical needs.

The School aims to embrace the diversity of the community which it serves and, as such, to celebrate all groups represented within it. Sunnydown will address any evidence of discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good relations and positive attitudes between all people in the School community and beyond.

Sunnydown aims to create a community which has equality for all at the heart of all which it does. It seeks to ensure that no pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors or any other person who has contact with it receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified.

Each student should be held in equal esteem, but individual abilities and experiences should be taken into account. The School aims to provide all pupils with a well-balanced education. All students should have equal access to the whole curriculum, though there may need to be greater emphasis on literacy, numeracy or social skills for some pupils and there may be some individual changes which are made in the best interests of the student and in consultation with parents.

Sunnydown promotes the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education which it provides. This Policy applies to all students, staff, parent helpers, visitors or contractors and covers all aspects of life at the School, including pupil admissions, teaching and learning, behaviour management, staff recruitment and career development, parental involvement and the role of the Governing Body. All members of the Sunnydown community must be free from any form of discrimination or harassment.

There is a constant drive at the School to remove any forms of indirect discrimination which may form barriers to learning. Sunnydown ensures that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve in line with the 2010 Equality Act.

Stereotyping and prejudice are challenged whenever they occur and care is taken to ensure that no discriminatory material is used at the School. The cultural diversity of the Sunnydown community is celebrated and respect shown for all groups, whatever their diversity. Wherever possible, materials which celebrate and show different cultures and national origins will be used in all subjects.

There is an awareness that low self-image and ignorance can cause prejudice and stereotyping. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, the School aims to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all. This is a major aspect of the Citizenship and Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) schemes of work, but is seen to be the responsibility of all curriculum areas.

Sunnydown provides professional development in the areas of equity and diversity to staff and ensures that they are provided with the skills and information to address and support equality within the classroom setting.

There is specific reference to groups covered within the Equality Act 2010:

Race: The School aims to reflect the cultural diversity of the wider community in order to promote awareness and understanding.

- It is the right of all students to receive the best education which Sunnydown can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the School. Sunnydown does not tolerate any form of behaviour which discriminates on the basis of race, colour and culture. All incidents of a racially motivated nature will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate education, support and sanctions applied. All incidents will be recorded through the behaviour and safeguarding school systems (Sleuth and CPOMS). A central log of racially motivated incidents will be maintained by the Headteacher. Support, respect, sympathy and understanding are always shown to the victim. Following investigation and in appropriate circumstances, parents are informed by the senior member of staff if their child is either a perpetrator or victim.
- Where there are reported incidents of this nature, appropriate education, sanctions (where necessary) and support are applied.

Religion or Belief: It is the right of pupils, staff, parents, governors and visiting community members not to be treated differently on grounds of their religion or belief.

- Students are encouraged through a comprehensive Religious Education programme to explore a range of religions and to encourage tolerance and acceptance of others who have differing religions or beliefs.

Sexual Orientation:

The School operates a Citizenship and PSHE curriculum which supports students in addressing relationships in all forms.

- All incidents relating to sexual orientation are taken seriously and dealt with by the senior staff.
- The Leadership Team is able to identify through this system if homophobic bullying is on the rise and react accordingly.

Sunnydown ensures that all LGBTQIA+ students, or the students of LGBTQIA+ parents are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils at the School.

Sex and Gender:

- Sunnydown is a secondary school for boys aged 11-16 and meets the requirements set out in the 2010 Equality Act.

Disability:

The Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day

activities'. Some specified medical conditions are all considered as disabilities regardless of their effect. The Act sets out details of matters which may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Sunnydown aims to treat all students equally. The School will provide an auxiliary aid or service for individual pupils when it is reasonable to do so and if the aid would alleviate the disadvantage which they face.

Sunnydown will ensure that students with any form of disability play as full a part as possible in school life and the school will make reasonable adjustments to support this. Sunnydown is committed to the equality of opportunity between disabled and able-bodied people. It aims to eliminate discrimination as well as any harassment of disabled people related to their disability.

For additional information relating to the Disability Discrimination Act under the Equality Act 2010, please see the School's Accessibility Plan and Special Educational Needs Policy

Pregnancy and Maternity:

The School will consider the needs of any member/s of staff or the visiting community who is/are pregnant or are on maternity leave. The protected period, in relation to a person's pregnancy, begins when the pregnancy begins, and ends – if a person has the right to ordinary and additional maternity leave, at the end of the additional maternity leave period or (if earlier) when a person returns to work after the pregnancy; if a person does not have that right, at the end of the period of 2 weeks beginning with the end of the pregnancy.

Marriage and Civil Partnership:

Staff and visiting members to the school community have the right to not be treated differently if they are in a marriage or civil partnership.

Gender Reassignment:

Staff and visiting members of the school community have the right to not be treated differently if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the said person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. A reference to a transsexual person is a reference to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Age:

Staff students and visiting members of the school community have the right to not be treated differently dependent upon their age or age group.

Procedures:

Sunnydown's Governors are responsible for:

- Making sure that the School complies with current equality legislation
- Making sure that this policy and its procedures are followed

Every member of staff takes responsibility for:

- Treating all members of the Sunnydown community with respect
- Constantly recognising the contributions made by every pupil at the School
- Ensuring that all incidents of a discriminatory nature are immediately challenged and recorded through the appropriate channels
- Logging all racist incidents in accordance with the Statutory Guidance

The class teacher ensures that:

- He or she is aware of the background and educational needs of all the students whom they teach
- Pupils are treated equally and with respect.

At Sunnydown, there is no negative discrimination against any child under any circumstances. When planning activities, teaching staff pay due regard to the racial and cultural sensitivities of the class. They further strive to incorporate diversity in a positive way which challenges stereotypes and assumptions.

The roles of the Headteacher are:

- To implement the School's Equality Policy
- To make sure that staff are aware of the contents of this Policy
- To ensure all appointment panels give due regard to this Policy, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities and that all staff work in an environment which is free from harassment

The Deputy Headteacher (EDI Lead) treats all acts of discrimination and unfair treatment seriously and monitors all incidents of a discriminatory nature.

The Role of Parents/Carers is:

- To support Sunnydown's Equality Policy

Where a child has intentionally behaved in an unfair, unjust or discriminatory manner, it is the expectation that the Parents/Carers will support the sanction applied. The School works collaboratively with Parents/Carers so that a strong and consistent message is delivered about appropriate behaviour.

Students are to:

- Abide by this policy in school and when travelling to and from school
- Report an incident of discrimination when they witness it

A pupil who is a victim of discrimination must report it so that the School can deal with the matter swiftly and efficiently.

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices at Sunnydown lies with the Deputy Headteacher, and governor.

Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents)
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of students
- Monitoring exclusions

Monitoring, Reviewing & Assessing Impact:

The Policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment should be considered for future planning and decision-making.

The Governing Body will receive annual reports for review; these will include reference to Sunnydown's population, key initiatives and progress against targets and plans.

Equality Objectives:

These objectives can be monitored through CPOMS.

- The school aims to reflect the cultural diversity of the wider community in order to promote awareness and understanding
- It is the right of pupils, staff, parents, governors and visiting community members not to be treated differently on grounds of any of the protected characteristics identified in the policy
- Through the school's citizenship and PSHE curriculum, we support students in addressing relationships in all forms. There is a zero tolerance to incidents sexual and homophobic bullying, all of which are reported, investigated and recorded on CPOMS.