

The Ambleside Centre



Equal Opportunities Policy and Guidance

The Head Teacher and governing body recognise their responsibility for Equal Opportunities. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the Centre complies with current legislation. This policy is aimed at admissions and all aspects related to children; please see Equal Opportunities in Recruitment policy for all aspects relating to HR.

Members of the governing body's Curriculum & Inclusion Committee will implement and monitor this policy by following the Centre's review timetable.

We share the Council's belief that no-one should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of:
race; gender; disability; sexuality; age; income; religion; colour; ethnic or national origin; marital status; nationality.

The legal framework and other supporting policies

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

To help The Ambleside Centre in its equal opportunities work, it has the following policies:

- Special Needs Policy
- Group Harmony Policy
- Professional Development Procedures
- Pay Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Plan

1. Introduction

The Equalities Policy sets out the Centre's approach to promoting equality and diversity in line with legislative requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.

Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above, we are guided by seven principles.

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

- We see all learners and potential learners as of equal value:
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whichever their gender.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys.

Action plans

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy are what make a difference.

Each year we will draw up an Equality action plan setting out the specific actions and projects we shall undertake to implement the principles above.

The Curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles in paragraph 5 above.

The Centre is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs

- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with.

We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Head of Centre is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

2. Consultation and Involvement

We consult with all stakeholders in the school in order to develop this plan and the actions within it. We consult in the following ways:

- children express their views during their play and conversations
- questionnaires
- parent/teacher consultations, newsletters and questionnaires
- issues raised in annual reviews for **Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP)** or reviews of **Early Years Intervention Plans (EYIP)**
- feedback at Governing Body meetings and consultations with governors
- informal and formal discussions and questionnaires involving all staff

3. Information and resources

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

4. Religious observance

- We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

5. Staff development and training

- We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

- We are developing the collection, study and use of quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and will make adjustments as appropriate.
- We are developing the use of data relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.
- To review good practice we are using a range of auditing schedules.

Race equality

In line with the requirements of the **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**, the centre fully understands the need to promote racial harmony and to plan opportunities for combating racism in our policies, procedures and curriculum.

We believe that our centre must be a safe place for everyone and we are committed to the principles outlined in the **Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report** and to the recommendations it makes. We are committed to:

- tackling racial discrimination
- promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations

Tackling racial discrimination

We will tackle racial discrimination by monitoring the outcomes of opportunities at our centre and by dealing with and reporting racial incidents.

We accept the definition of a racist incident adopted by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and Wokingham District Council:

A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on ethnicity will be investigated as far as possible, using the centre's usual disciplinary procedures, and racism will be directly challenged. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence. Our procedure for dealing with racist incidents will be made known to everyone at or connected with our centre. Racist incident report forms will be completed to help the centre monitor incidents

and take appropriate action, with a summary of incidents being reported termly to governors. Copies of racist incident report forms (with no names of individuals) will be sent to the LA. In the event of a member of staff being implicated, the usual disciplinary procedures will apply.

Promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations

These aspects of our race equality work will largely be done through monitoring and planning within the curriculum to reflect diversity and engage with teaching about discrimination and race equality.

In addition, the centre will audit its policies and practices to identify areas of race equality for development and to inform the Action Plan.

Gender

We believe that girls and boys should have equal access to all aspects of centre life, including the curriculum, subject choices and extra-curricular activities. It may be necessary for children to receive different treatment in order to ensure equality of opportunity and the centre will pursue strategies to ensure that both girls and boys achieve to their full potential. The centre will examine its practices to ensure that both girls and boys are given opportunities to achieve and that stereotyped expectations do not limit the experiences available. Its examination will include the awareness and use of appropriate teaching and learning styles.

We will promote approaches which provide equality of opportunity by:

- challenging gender issues;
- avoiding gender stereotyping when organising children into groups.

Allegations of harassment and discrimination based on gender will be investigated and, where proven, directly challenged. Action will be taken to prevent the likelihood of recurrence.

Disability

The Ambleside Centre is fully committed to the duties placed on schools in the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001** and accepts its definition of a disabled person as someone who has:

“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

We will consider the needs of all people in the centre including:

- children who may be disabled but not have a statement of special educational need nor be on any stage of special needs assessment
- teachers and other centre staff
- members of families and carers
- governors
- all visitors to the centre

The Ambleside Centre will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to working conditions for disabled children and staff and to the curriculum for disabled children. In addition the centre will ensure that discrimination does not occur and that disabled people will not be placed at avoidable disadvantage compared to others who are not disabled. In

particular, our policies relating to the education and related services we provide and our admissions policy will ensure there is no substantial disadvantage.

We will ensure that our policies, in particular in relation to admissions procedures, do not place disabled children at a disadvantage.

The Ambleside Centre will work with the LA to audit the centre for facilities and access for disabled people and for access to buildings, facilities and the curriculum. It will maintain updated written information on facilities and services and produce a plan to develop accessibility. (See Accessibility Plan)

Teachers will take specific action to enable the effective participation of children with disabilities by planning the Foundation Stage Curriculum to meet specific needs.

Roles and responsibilities

The general duties of the centre in relation to equal opportunities are the responsibility of all members of staff and people involved in working at our centre. Specific responsibilities should include:

The centre's objectives

The aims of this policy will be met by:

1. **Promoting the principles and practices of equality and justice throughout The Ambleside Centre**
 - 1.1 Establishing an action plan to guide the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy
 - 1.2 Ensuring that all children receive their entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which is differentiated to meet identified individual needs through flexible and varied provision
 - 1.3 Promoting racial harmony, preparing pupils for living in a diverse and increasingly interdependent society and specifically to prevent and address racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination
 - 1.4 Complying with equal opportunities legislation and meeting OfSTED criteria for Inclusion
2. Identifying and removing practices that may result in direct or indirect discrimination
 - 2.1 Developing the support and training available for all staff, including governors, to develop their practice in equal opportunities work.
 - 2.2 Monitoring and evaluating:
 - access to educational opportunities and services by gender, ethnicity and disability
 - attainment
 - curriculum, teaching and learning
 - membership of the governing body
 - parental involvement

- staff recruitment, retention and career development
- 2.3 Monitoring and evaluating annual data on the number and type of racist incidents in the centre.
 - 2.4 Working towards ensuring that families for whom English is an additional language have materials, about the centre and the curriculum, translated into their languages.
 - 2.4 Ensuring that the admissions policy is objective, clearly set out and does not disadvantage certain groups.
 - 2.5 Working towards meeting the new Commission for Racial Equalities (CRE) standards for racial equality in schools, set out in 'Learning for All'.

Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

A range of information, including quantitative and qualitative data, will be used. Annual reports will indicate progress on equalities issues outlined in the annual action plan.

It will include:

- data on pupil attainment and access to the curriculum, by gender, ethnicity and disability;
- data on staff recruitment by gender, ethnicity and disability;
- analysis of racist incident report forms;
- OfSTED reports on The Ambleside Centre's educational provision and standards
- consultation with parents, pupils, governors and the LA.

Data will be used to inform planning and to ensure the centre's commitment to equal opportunities goes from policy to practice to improve outcomes.

The policy will be reviewed every two years.