

WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL



# The Federation of Singlegate and William Morris Primary Schools

# Equality Policy

**Mrs N Bull**

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## **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

William Morris Primary School is located within the London Borough of Merton. Most of our children come from Pollards Hill Estate, Mitcham. Children come mainly from either terraced houses or flats in the immediate vicinity of the school. A small number of families are housed in temporary Housing Association and a large number of families are housed in Social Housing.

The school has a rich and diverse, cultural and ethnic mix with approximately 51% of the school's pupil population whose first language is not believed to be English. There are 23 languages spoken by our children. The most significant ethnic group is Black African at 31%.

The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is 35% and the percentage of children on our SEN Register is currently 16%.

Singlegate Primary School is located within the London Borough of Merton. Most of our children come from Colliers Wood. Children come mainly from either terraced houses or flats in the immediate vicinity of the school. A small number of families are housed in temporary Housing Association and Local Authority Housing.

The school has a rich and diverse, cultural and ethnic mix with approximately 44% of the school's pupil population whose first language is not believed to be English. There are 19 languages spoken by our children.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 12% and our SEN register has recently decreased to reflect the current need of our school.

## **RATIONALE**

Discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, religion, cultural or social background, ability, gender or disability is unacceptable at William Morris and Singlegate Primary School. Every child and member of staff will endeavour to further this objective by personally contributing towards a happy and caring environment and by showing respect for, and appreciation of, each other as individuals.

Equality of opportunity underpins all our policies, practice and decision making, whether these are linked to our children, staff or the delivery of the curriculum. However, the specific aims of this policy are to ensure that:

- expectations of all children are equally high
- all children have access to and can make full use of, the schools facilities and resources

- the school reflects the local communities it serves and responds to their needs
- our curriculum promotes diversity and prepares children for life in a rich and ever changing world
- all members of the school community understand what prejudice means, how discrimination occurs and how they can take a stand against all prejudice
- negative remarks, comments and name calling are dealt with effectively and consistently

## **ADMISSIONS CRITERIA AND ATTENDANCE**

The school follows the Local Authority's admissions policy which does not permit sex, religion, culture, disability or ability to be used as criteria for admission. The school recognises the right of children to have time absent from school for religious observance.

## **PROMOTING EQUALITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

ALL children must have equal access to the school's curriculum which must be balanced, objective and sensitive. Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations and attitudes will impact on the achievement, behaviour and the self-esteem of each child.

Gender cannot be accepted as a reason for not taking part in a particular activity.

## **TEACHING, LEARNING AND RESOURCES**

An innovative balanced curriculum is planned throughout the school in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Programmes of study in English, Mathematics and Science. Learning is maximised to ensure equality of opportunity. The school takes active steps to ensure that:

- resources in all areas of the curriculum are inclusive, multi cultural and non-sexist and that they contain positive images of all groups
- resources are updated to ensure they reflect the diversity of our world
- children have access to accurate information about the similarities and differences between cultural groups
- different teaching styles are used to support the learning of children with differing needs
- discrimination is explored in greater depth during some units of work. For example, gender issues are explored in the Year 6 topic on World War 2
- tolerance and diversity are explored both within the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum and within Religious Education

- assemblies, both whole school and key stage, regularly focus on these issues
- the school actively promotes the Healthy School Standard and works with the Food For Life partnership in developing the personal, social and emotional well being of all children.

## **BEHAVIOUR**

At William Morris and Singlegate Primary School, the Behaviour for Learning Policy outlines the expectations of all staff in how to deal with inappropriate behaviour in an equal and fair way.

## **DEALING WITH INCIDENTS**

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school are to be treated seriously. Incidents should be recorded carefully, in line with the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy and LA guidance 'Preventing Racial Harassment'.

## **ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

William Morris and Singlegate Primary School views linguistic diversity positively and staff should be aware of the language and dialect spoken by children and their families. Children and staff must feel that their language or dialect is valued and should be allowed to use their home language in school. However, this should never be used to exclude others.

Children who have English as an Additional Language receive support from Teaching Assistants, the SEN Co-ordinator and when necessary, support from the Local Authority's bilingual service.

## **DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on schools to promote disability equality. It is unlawful for schools to discriminate against disabled pupils. A school discriminates if:

- it treats a disabled child or prospective child less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification
- it fails, without justification, to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled children at a substantial disadvantage. This duty is known as the 'reasonable adjustments' duty.

Schools are required to develop accessibility plans to improve access to education for disabled children. The reasonable adjustments duty require

schools to think ahead, anticipate the barriers that disabled children may face and remove or minimise them before a disabled child is placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Adaptations have been made to ensure that all disabled people have access to the building, facilities and curriculum. Our accessibility plan outlines steps taken to promote disability equality.

## **RACIAL EQUALITY**

Every school has a key role to play in eradicating racism and valuing diversity. Developments in communications and technology and changing patterns of work mean that, in the course of their lives, young people are likely to meet and interact with people from many different communities, cultures and backgrounds. Schools have an important role to play in increasing mutual understanding and respect and appreciation of cultural diversity. (Learning For All, 2000)

The Race Relations Act (1976) makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of colour, race, nationality and ethnic or national origin.

## **CHALLENGING RACISM**

All insults hurt, but racist insults are particularly and distinctively serious for three separate reasons:

- they are an attack on an individual's family, community and heritage
- they have the effect of intimidating or threatening large numbers of people, not just the specific individual under attack
- they are serious because those who use them sometimes believe they are representing widely spread views

## **RACIAL HARASSMENT**

The school follows the guidance set out in the Local Authority's document entitled 'Preventing Racial Harassment in schools'.

**'Racial Harassment is any hostile or offensive action against individuals or groups because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or cultural background. Racial harassment can take many forms, including physical, verbal or indirect harassment such as exclusion from a group, humiliation, spreading rumours, ridicule and graffiti'.**

## **RACIAL INCIDENTS**

If incidents of racism or racial harassment occur they would in the first instance be dealt with by the Executive Headteacher or Associate Headteacher. All racially motivated incidents that occur within the school are logged and reported to the Local Authority on a termly basis. The school has a very low rate of incidents which are racially motivated.

### **An incident should be investigated for racial motivation if:**

- the incident is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person
- the incident includes the use of racist language, comments or insults
- the incident would not have happened but for the victim's race, colour, nationality, or nation or ethnic origin

### **William Morris and Singlegate Primary School supports children, staff, parents, governors or visitors who believe they are being racially harassed by:**

- listening carefully to all complaints
- reinforcing the school's total non acceptance of racial harassment
- recording details of any incident
- reassuring complainants that firm action will be taken against anyone who is racially harassing them
- ensuring that action agreed as a result of an investigation is carried out

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Equal opportunity issues will be discussed regularly at staff development meetings in order to raise awareness and develop our understanding and expertise in areas such as the language needs of bilingual children and ethnic minority monitoring and achievement.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY**

William Morris Primary School positively encourages all parents to work in partnership with the school. This includes planned parental workshops on

curriculum issues. Parents are also encouraged to support in class and also work alongside their children to provide a positive role model and to develop their skills. Communication from school is mindful of the diverse range of recipients needs, such as English as an additional language or poor literacy levels.

## **ATTAINMENT, PROGRESS AND ASSESSMENT**

Our aim is that all children are provided with an education not only appropriate to their needs, but one that extends and develops their interests, abilities and raises standards.

All children's' attainment and progress is monitored by the Executive Headteacher, Associate Headteacher and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator as part of their ongoing commitment to raising standards of achievement for all children. It is important to monitor the progress of certain groups of children who may be at risk of underachieving. These groups include ethnic minority, SEN, Gifted and Talented and gender groups.

Underperformance that links to particular groups of children will be incorporated into the relevant action plan (eg; SEN, English, Mathematics) and included, as appropriate in class and individual pupil targets and as part of School Improvement Planning and the staff performance management cycle.

## **RECRUITMENT AND THE SELECTION OF STAFF**

The school values diversity amongst the staff and in all staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria. All posts within the school are open to the widest pool of applicants.

## **MONITORING**

The curriculum is monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. As part of this monitoring and evaluation process the appropriateness of lesson content is examined. All subject leaders are responsible for ensuring that equality issues are embedded within the policy, practice and resources of their particular area of responsibility.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it meets Equality and Race Relations requirements. Incidents and issues linked to equality will be raised/discussed with Governors at Curriculum and Standard Committee meetings and through the termly Executive Headteacher's report to Governors.