



Equal Opportunities Policy

Written by : Sue Beauchamp

Date : 22 / 03 / 23

Review Date: 22 / 03 / 25

Two Bridges School



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

TWO BRIDGES SCHOOL PRIDES ITSELF IN PROVIDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL OF ITS EMPLOYEES AND CHILDREN REGARDLESS OF DISABILITY, RELIGION, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, CULTURE, GENDER, ETHNIC ORIGIN, COLOUR, CLASS OR AGE.

This policy aims to:

- Offer equal opportunities regardless of race, culture, gender, academic ability, physical ability or class.
- Provide an environment free from social, sexual or cultural prejudice for all members of our school community.
- Achieve an environment in which members of the school community can be respected as individuals and in which the varied experiences of the community can enrich the life of the school.

Principles:

Two Bridges School is committed to Equal Opportunities and Inclusion. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to learners who may have experienced previous difficulties. We model Equal Opportunities and Inclusion in our staffing policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community in order to meet legislative requirements as laid down in the Equality Act 2010.

Equal Opportunities is the responsibility of the whole school community and must be reflected throughout the organisation of the school and be addressed in the taught and hidden curriculum. The school ensures that staff expectations of different race/religious belief groups are no different.

All staff, governors, parents/guardians and students regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender and socio-economic background, are welcome and will be encouraged to participate in the life of the school.

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Race Relations Act, Sex Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Act to eliminate discrimination and to promote good race relations.

Two Bridges School



Actions:

Statements of equality dimensions and opportunity will be printed in all relevant school documentation e.g. school prospectus, vision statement, policies and in the staff handbook.

Governors, staff and students will receive training in relevant aspects of equal opportunities to ensure their ability to actively support this policy.

Parents and students will receive information detailing the school's rules identifying expectations of behaviour in the termly calendar.

The school will make all reasonable effort to ensure that meetings are accessible and convenient for all and take into account particular needs and requirements, e.g. physical access, child care and interpreter support.

The school will include in its annual report information concerning the arrangements made for the admission of disabled students; the steps taken to prevent disabled students from being treated less favourably than other students; the facilities provided to assist access to the school by disabled students. The school buildings have been inspected for access and the plans have been accepted by the Management Committee. Progress in this area is documented in the School's S.E.N.D.A action plan.

What follows are the different areas in which the school will pay particular attention to ensuring that there is Equal Opportunity for all.

Equal Opportunities - Multi-Cultural:

It is our school policy:

- To incorporate a balanced view of the world through a multi-cultural approach.
- To recognise that our students are world citizens who will meet a wide variety of cultures throughout their lives.

Equal Opportunities - Gender

It is our school policy:

- To seek to promote non-sexist attitudes in both children and staff.
- To allow children equal access to opportunities which will equip them for adult life and to achieve challenging expectations.

Two Bridges School



- To work towards the eradication of sexual stereotyping.

In order to work towards the eradication of such differences we will ask ourselves the following types of questions when evaluating our practice.

- 1) Are all children able to try out new roles in play and learning activities?
- 2) Are all classroom tasks shared equally between girls and boys?
- 3) Do all children get an equal chance to use equipment and resources?
- 4) Do all our displays and teaching aids present a non-sexiest attitude?
- 5) Are our responses to challenging or risk taking behaviour the same to both boys and girls?
- 6) Are men and women from other cultures presented to children in a non-stereotypical way?
- 7) Do all children have equal access to playground space and other play facilities?

Equal Opportunities – Sexuality / Identity

It is our school policy:

- To seek to promote acceptance on an equal basis of all children and staff despite their choice of sexual orientation description or indeed the lack of such.
- To include wide ranging examples of all sexual orientations and gender definition in the taught and hidden curriculums
- To respect an individuals personal right to 'come out' in a safe environment of including confidentiality where required

Equal Opportunities - Race:

It is our school policy:

- 1) That no child or adult should be treated in any way differently, or in a derogatory manner, because of their race.
- 2) To challenge racism in the context of a caring school community.

In order to fulfil the above, the following types of behaviour will not be tolerated:

- 1) Provocative behaviour, i.e. wearing of any racist badges or insignia.
- 2) The use of verbal abuse or name calling of a racist nature.
- 3) The encouragement of others to behave in a racist manner.
- 4) The ridiculing of an individual for cultural differences.
- 5) The telling of racist jokes or stories.

Two Bridges School



6) The exclusion of others because of their culture, ethnicity or race.

Equal Opportunities - Ability:

It is our school policy: To recognise good effort and attitudes regardless of academic achievement.

- To allow all children access to equipment, resources and teacher time regardless of their academic achievements.
- To value all efforts and achievements of children in all areas of the curriculum.

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, impairment, and background, including those identified as having special educational needs. All children have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum including GCSE and BTEC qualifications, which is accessible to them, and to be fully included in all aspects of school life. Two Bridges sees the inclusion of children identified as having special educational needs as an equal opportunities issue.

This does not mean that we will treat all learners in the same way, but that we will respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs.

We recognise that students learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and maturity. We believe that many students, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

At Two Bridges School we aim to identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve to his or her full potential.

We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of learners. Every child has an entitlement to a positive, helpful learning environment, with carefully planned work which matches individual needs, in order that they may reach their potential. This will be through differentiated planning by class teachers, and support staff as appropriate. Within each class, teaching and learning styles and organisation will be flexible to ensure effective learning. Grouping to support children identified with additional needs will be part of this process.

Two Bridges School



Equal Opportunities - Class:

It is our school policy:

- That children should not be treated in any way differently because of an assumed social class.
- That assumption will not be made as regards class difference.

Equal Opportunities - Physical Disability:

It is our school policy that:

- Children should not be treated in any way differently to others due to their individual physical disabilities and needs.
- A provision should be made for the individual special needs of any disabled children within our school community.
- A physically disabled child has a right to take part in all activities within the school environment in so far as their individual disability allows them to do so.

Equal Opportunities – Mental health Needs:

It is our school policy that:

- Children should not be treated in any way differently to others due to their mental health diagnosis or needs
- A provision should be made for the individual needs of any student where their mental health requires adaptations to the usual expectations of the School.
- A child with mental health needs has a right to take part in all activities within the school environment in so far as their mental health allows them to do so safely.

MANAGING EQUALITY IN PRACTICE

1. **Admission** - The school follows the West Kent Learning Federation referral and admission Policies that do not permit sex, race, sexual orientation, colour or disability alone to be used as criteria for admission.
2. **Registration** – Student’s names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

Two Bridges School



3. **Discrimination** -All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria. Parents should be aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities. Incidents will be recorded.
4. **Language** - The school views linguistic diversity positively. Students and staff must feel that their natural language is valued.
5. **Resources** will be provided for all students according to their needs, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, ability or ethnic origin. Current resources and new acquisitions will be monitored by the Head and Deputy Head Teachers to ensure the promotion of a positive image regarding race, sexual orientation, gender and special need. The library resources are regularly reviewed to ensure they include books that reflect the range of special educational needs issues and come from a disability equality perspective.
6. **The P.S.H.E.C curriculum** delivered across all of our work with students will help to promote a positive image of all members of society, with particular reference to race/religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability and special need.
7. **Displays** reflect a positive image of race/religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability and special need. All children are given the opportunity to contribute to display throughout the school and their contributions are valued.
8. **The Schools Monitoring and Evaluating System** for regularly observing, assessing and recording the progress of children is used to identify children who are not progressing satisfactorily and who may have additional needs. Whole school monitoring and evaluation procedures will include sampling of work and observations. Target setting for all students takes place daily, half-termly and within each Key Stage.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES SPECIFIC TO STAFF

Two Bridges School is an equal opportunities employer. The School prides itself in providing equal opportunities for all of its employees and children regardless of disability, religion, sexual orientation, culture, gender, ethnic origin, colour, class or age.

Two Bridges School



Protected Characteristics

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular but not only, in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, transfer and training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- Conduct at work
- Procedures ensure fair and equitable treatment in relation to admission and assessment of students

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff must treat visitors, students, parents, suppliers and former members of staff.

Implementation

The School with the assistance of the staff will:

- Break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit
- Advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job.
- Promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary.

Two Bridges School



- Ensure that all members of staff are fully informed and trained on this Policy.
- Monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices.
- Existing procedures are reviewed and examined to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation
- Language used in official communication reflects the letter and spirit of the **Recruitment and Selection process**.

Two Bridges School is committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which represents the population within our recruitment areas in terms of race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age and disability (together known as “Protected Characteristics”).

Please refer to the School’s **Safer Recruitment Policy** for further details.

Disability

If you are disabled or become disabled, the School encourages you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your Head of Department to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your Head of Department may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments and you may be required to give your consent to a report being produced about your state of health and ability to perform your duties. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible. Once an

Two Bridges School



adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or School premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out his or her duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job redesign and flexible hours.

Where during the course of their employment a disabled member of staff recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work arrangements or School premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Bursar.

Mental Health Needs

If you have mental health needs or receive a diagnosis of such, the School encourages you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

We have developed structures and strategies to support staff in continuing to fulfil their working responsibilities and contract alongside being supported with mental health needs. In addition, the school buys into confidential therapeutic support for staff where more intense support is needed on a short term basis.

Harassment & Bullying Policy

Harassment of any kind is not accepted within the School as detailed in the Staff Handbook.

Monitoring of the policy

Equality of opportunity permeates the whole School and will be reviewed regularly. We recognise it is all too easy for the structure of institutions to result in “inequality by default”. We therefore commit ourselves to take positive steps to examine our policies and practice and to change them where necessary.

The effectiveness of the above policy and our practice will therefore be evaluated every 2 years. This will be done every 2 years by the Senior Management Team in consultation with the whole school community.