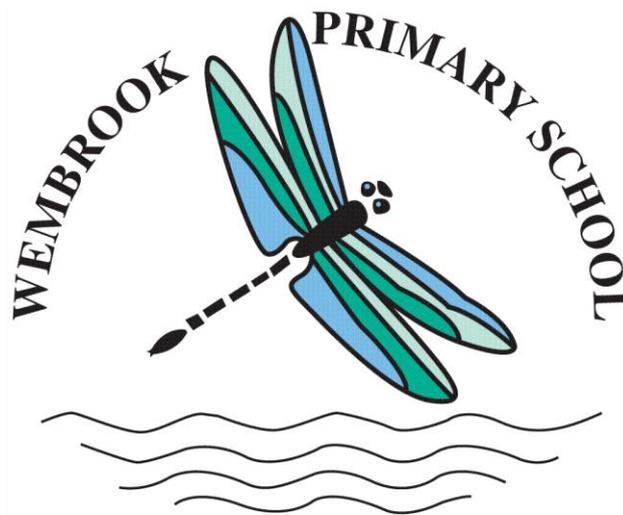


Equal Opportunities Policy



Signed:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. General Statement of Intent

Wembrook Primary School is committed to enabling all pupils to fulfil their potential, regardless of gender, age, ability, race, culture or creed. This involves all staff, governors, parents and pupils having shared values, and this policy has been developed to promote equality of opportunity, entitlement and treatment for all our pupils and staff, avoiding discrimination of any kind. At Wembrook we aim to cultivate an atmosphere in which all our pupils and staff feel secure and valued and achieve the highest standard of which they are capable.

This philosophy of equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of our school's structure, curriculum, policy documents, teaching methods, resources and assessment policies, as well as the attitudes and expectations of our staff and governors in all their interactions with each other, the pupils, parents and the community.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of each member of staff.

This policy was compiled by reference to "Quality Assurance in Schools" (1993) Runnymede Trust.

2. Introduction

We have written this policy to:-

- comply with equal opportunities;
- deliver a curriculum entitlement for all pupils in the area;
- develop the pupils' understanding of their own values and perceptions and those of others;
- counter prejudice, discrimination, and improve standards of achievement;
- ensure consistency of approach for all pupils, parents and wider community;
- ensure equitable employment practices;
- improve and demonstrate the effectiveness of our school in meeting the needs of all pupils.

It has been developed from policies in existence from the foundation schools and agreed by governors and staff.

3. Aims

Our aims are to:-

- prepare children at Wembrook for life in a multicultural, multifaith, multilingual society;
- encourage all children to care, respect, understand and take responsibility for each other;
- meet the needs of the individual with regard to their ethnic, cultural, gender, linguistic, religious and social backgrounds;
- ensure equality of access to the curriculum irrespective of gender, origins and ability, (including giftedness) and for children to make the greatest possible progress;
- respect the religious and cultural beliefs and traditions of each individual;
- appreciate the uniqueness of the experiences which the children bring with them;
- develop a partnership with parents to promote a multicultural, anti-racist and anti-sexist society;
- develop the self-esteem of each child in the school in all aspects of school life;
- provide facilities and resources which reflect a multicultural, multifaith, non-discriminatory society and which supports the delivery of the curriculum;
- recognise and support children who read and speak English as a second language in partnership with S11 support staff;
- create an awareness of other cultures through topic work, stories, assemblies, festivals, plays and musical events;
- promote pupils as reflective members of the community, who value fairness, justice and freedom of expression;
- provide whole school procedures to combat racism and discriminatory actions.

It is acknowledged that parents have a right to withdraw their child on religious grounds from religious education and collective worship in accordance with the 1944 Education Reform Act.

However we intend that the RE curriculum will reflect the multifaith community of the school.

Implementation

4 i. Admissions

The school does not permit race or colour or ability or creed to be criteria for admission.

- pupils names should be accurately recorded and pronounced properly;
- registers should be listed alphabetically;
- pupils should be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

4 ii. Discrimination

All forms of discrimination / harassment by any person within the school should be treated seriously. Discrimination may be handled successfully or avoided if, through the curriculum:-

- values are developed so pupils gain a sense of security, trust, worth, an ability to resist pressure and respect for others;
- pupils gain respect for evidence, a desire to listen to others with different experiences;
- pupils participate in forming rules and feel confident that their views and feelings will be listened to;
- discussions on prejudice, racism and gender issues begin from an early age, so that children can understand and so increase the chances of making discrimination morally unacceptable in the school.

When incidents occur:-

- offenders should be clear that such behaviour is unacceptable;
- deal with the incident quickly using the school code of conduct;
- children who are concerned are encouraged to report incidents to Mrs Winfield who will write them down and discuss with the head / deputy any reported concerns and express a positive way forward;
- circle time etc. should be used or added input into classes where there are concerns;
- consider involving parents if incidents are repeated.

4 iii. Staff

- The school endorses Warwickshire's Statement on "Equal Opportunities in Employment" .
- In all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed, based upon strict professional criteria.
- The help of parents in school will be encouraged, irrespective of their race, cultural background, gender or ability.
- All staff should be aware of possible cultural and gender assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

4 iv. Curriculum

- The ethos of a multi-cultural, multifaith, anti-sexist society is reflected in the curriculum delivery of all topics and subject areas.
- We value the experiences that all pupils and parents bring from home and encourage them to share their expertise / knowledge in the delivery of the curriculum.
- In partnership with the ICSS we develop multicultural aspects of the curriculum.
- All pupils are entitled to be taught the National Curriculum. Staff need to be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and esteem of each child. The curriculum must be balanced, objective and sensitive to diversity.
- The school views linguistic diversity positively and staff should be aware of the language and dialect spoken by their pupils and their families. Staff must be conscious of any racist or sexist connotations in the language they use. Pupils and staff need to recognise that their language or dialect is valued.
- All pupils should be provided for according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin. Whenever possible, staff should ensure that books, resources and displays used to support learning promote positive images of all groups. Variety should be evident in the morals, stories, information and experiences offered to pupils. See Appendix 1.
- All curriculum policies when reviewed should contain a statement on equal opportunities. Subject co-ordinators should refer to "Equality Assurance in Schools" for detailed indications of good practice.

4 v. Ethos and Atmosphere

We aim that everyone should feel welcome, secure and confident at all times and that all individuals should feel valued and able to participate in school life. We will:-

- display a wide range of pupils' work, which will promote positive images;
- create a comfortable and informative reception area, where information about the school is displayed;
- help pupils feel involved in creating a positive and caring atmosphere around the school e.g. by using pupils as guides for visitors when appropriate;
- hold some assemblies which highlight achievements for different groups of people, so as to reflect the equal opportunities ethos of the school.

5 Developments

This policy needs to be ongoing as change is not an event but a process. We are concerned with increasing our awareness of equal opportunities amongst all adults and children at our school, as well as promoting equality.

We need to develop the partnership with parents as it is realised that parents can set the scene for a multicultural, anti-racist and anti-sexist society.

Subject managers should review resources in all curriculum areas to establish where the equal opportunities policy can be further supported.

There should be time for discussion from the classroom to the governing body and training opportunities, to raise staff awareness for promoting equal opportunities, counselling victims of verbal / physical abuse and developing classroom procedures for preventing such incidents.

Everyone needs to be aware of their vital role in making this policy inherent in the ethos of the school through whole school development.

6 Monitoring

We need to monitor the delivery of the equal opportunities policy. Each subject manager and phase leader needs to be aware of equal opportunity issues as they evaluate their areas of responsibility.

Appendix 1

4.2.1 Fiction and Reading Schemes

A good stock should contain the following.

- (a) Books which present a balanced view of the world seen from a variety of perspectives.
- (b) Books where children of different ethnic groups are shown to have common feelings and experiences.
- (c) Books in which children from ethnic minority groups can find characters which will confirm their own sense of self and enhance their self esteem.
- (d) Books in which ethnic minority characters have important social roles and hold positions of power.
- (e) Books which communicate clearly how it feels to be a member of another ethnic or cultural group.
- (f) Books in which ethnic minority characters do not have to justify their colour by being exceptionally good, brave or strong.
- (g) Books with illustrations drawn by sensitive artists or photographs of real people.
- (h) Books where language is used carefully so as not to evoke stereotypes.
- (i) Books in which dialect is used appropriately and naturally rather than appearing as an inferior language code or something to be ridiculed.
- (j) Books that represent our cities and towns as truly multicultural.
- (k) Folk tales from various oral or cultural traditions.
- (l) Stories or poems written by children from different cultures.
- (m) Books written by members or the groups depicted in them.

4.2.2 Non Fiction

We endeavour to select:-

- (a) Books which aim at a world view and do not simply equate “civilisation” with the white man.
- (b) Books that are factually up to date and accurate - the maps and illustrations as well as the text - and which do not distort the information.
- (c) Books that do not portray whole cultural groups or individuals as stereotypes.
- (d) Books that use language with care; do Africans live in huts or homes; do they jabber and shriek; do they speak a language or a dialect; are whole groups ever described as “savage” or “primitive”?
- (e) Books that do not define “poverty” as a lack of western consumer goods. The reason for the poverty of certain nations should be set in their historical and political context, e.g. the colonial experience.
- (f) Books that give information about a variety of cultures and societies showing their effectiveness and achievements whether past or present.
- (g) Books which show children of different cultures and ethnic groups carrying out the activities illustrated, e.g., experiments in science.
- (h) Science books that do not make any assumptions that it is scientifically viable to classify people in terms of race. Such assumptions can lead to the implication that one “race” is biologically superior to another.
- (I) Reading schemes that are relevant to the children using them and do not feature only white middle class girls (helping mum) or white middle class boys (kicking footballs).

(These guidelines for selecting fiction and non fiction are adapted from Gillian Klein; “Resources for Multicultural Education: an Introduction” published by Longman.)