

Gordon Primary School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Reviewed Spring Term 2025

Signed _____ Chair of Governors

To be reviewed Spring Term 2026

Gordon Primary School

Equal Opportunities Policy

Equality Statement

As part of Redbridge Local Authority, at Gordon Primary School we are committed to delivering on the views expressed in the Redbridge Children's Services Equality Strategy - which states;

"Children's Services is committed to equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination and prejudice in the way we deliver our services and employment. We are also committed to ensuring children and young people understand, respect and embrace being part of a diverse Borough".

It is this commitment to this 'equality of opportunity', which drives our intrinsic conviction in ensuring our school, is a place in which high quality opportunities exist for all, which in turn allows all children to reach their maximum potential and enjoy the process.

Introduction

At Gordon Primary School we believe that all our pupils should have a common educational experience which will prepare them for life in a pluralistic society. In addition to the taught curriculum, children learn a set of attitudes, values and skills throughout their everyday experiences in our school. This "hidden" curriculum is a term that is used to describe the assumption that are implicit in all aspects of our school life. Children will absorb a set of attitudes based upon the way that adults and others around them approve or disapprove of values or types of behaviour. The imposition of stereotyped expectations and behaviour mean that children may acquire attitudes that can make them undervalue themselves or others of different gender, sexuality, ethnicity background, socio economic group or disability.

We closely monitor the needs of our children and staff in order that we can meet their needs and ensure that we can remove any barriers they may face, so that they can play a full and active role in school life.

We promote a culture by which equality is regularly talked about and children are encouraged and supported to challenge stereotypes. Examples of this can be found within our English curriculum (whereby the experiences of a character in a text may lead to wider discussion), whole school activities such as assemblies and within our PSHE lessons, which directly address equal opportunities.

All staff at Gordon work hard to encourage children to have a positive self-image. We regard all of our children as being of the highest worth and we foster an environment that promotes this view. We actively seek the support of Governors, parents and our community in promoting this.

Barriers To Equality And What We Do To Overcome Them

1. The Appointment of Staff

It is the responsibility of the Governors and Headteachers to examine their selection and shortlisting criteria and interviewing procedures when appointing new staff. We recognise our duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and as such;

- We do not discriminate against any candidate on the grounds of their age, sex, sexuality, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic / national origins, pregnancy or maternity or health grounds.
- No assumptions should be made about a candidate's suitability for a post on the basis of their family responsibilities or disability.
- Interview questions only relate to the requirements of the post.
- We monitor the distribution of posts/promotions within our school between men/women and ethnic groups.
- We ensure that all staff are fully implementing all aspects of our equal opportunities policy.

2. Sex and Gender

This is a psychological and cultural term referring to the social roles, attitudes and abilities which are attributed to one sex. Pressures to conform to stereotyped expectations can lead boys and girls to acquire gender roles which diminish those qualities most strongly associated with the other sex. This may lead to the development of hostile attitudes towards each other, diminished opportunities and low peer or self-esteem.

- Staff at Gordon Primary School expect the same range of behaviour, achievement and moral and social understanding in both girls and boys.
- Day to day organisation at Gordon Primary School encourages equal opportunities / responsibilities for both sexes. Boys and girls line up together to move around the school. Activities used mixed groupings except on the occasions when this may be inappropriate. Tasks are not awarded according to stereotyping. For example, both boys and girls are expected to assume caring roles.
- All children are given equal access to extra-curricular activities.
- Reading / reference material is kept under constant review to identify sexual stereotyping. Texts are chosen that appeal to both boys and girls.
- Some girls may not have the chance to use tools or mechanical devices or computers at home. This may contribute to lack of confidence and under achievement in science, design technology and ICT. We provide opportunities at Gordon to redress this.
- Our staff aim to bring out and value the personal qualities which stereotyping can cause to be suppressed.
- Staff at Gordon Primary School actively seek the support of parents in valuing these non-stereotypical characteristics in their children.
- Evidence suggests that girls learn language skills faster than boys. We ensure that boys are given plenty of learning opportunities that will stimulate language development.
- Senior staff monitor the progress of children in the school by gender and ethnicity to ensure that all children have equal access to the curriculum and everything else that our school has to offer.
- Ensure that any children/ staff in the process of gender reassignment are well supported and not treated less favourably.

3. Sexuality

While children at Gordon are of an age whereby they are not sexually aware, we recognise the impact that mass media and popular culture has on our children and accept their awareness of the existence of sexual orientation.

- Homophobic name calling or bullying is not deemed acceptable or tolerated on any level.
- Incidents of homophobic name-calling or bullying are dealt with quickly, positively and appropriately.
- Recognise that family units can vary and ensure that all families are valued equally.

4. Ethnic Minorities

Gordon Primary School is a multiracial and multicultural school supporting a diverse multicultural community in South Ilford. All staff and pupils are encouraged to understand what this means. Education at Gordon Primary School is more than a reinforcement of the beliefs, values and identities that each child brings to our school.

- We want our children to be proud of their own individual, cultural and religious backgrounds. We expect them to respect those of others.
- This respect should permeate all aspects of our school life and is never seen as a separate topic.
- We endeavour to be aware of the multicultural nature of our school community when reviewing the curriculum and all aspects of school life.
- We openly promote the cultural traditions of ethnic minority groups through assemblies, while also championing the achievements of individuals from these groups through participation in local and national events for themed months such as Black History Month, Gypsy, Roma Traveller, History Month or Refugee Week.

5. Racism

At Gordon Primary School we do all that we can to promote the welfare of all our pupils from every ethnic, racial, religious and cultural background. The school challenges and rejects the stereotyping of ethnic minorities. This plays an important part in counteracting the pervasive influence of racism. If a member of staff is influenced by ethnic stereotyping his/her ability to teach a pupil may be undermined. This is never acceptable.

- We aim to combat racism, and address inherited myths and stereotyping. We aim to combat the ways that they are embedded in practices and behaviours.
- When racist abuse/incidents occur, the school confronts the situation and deals with it appropriately. These incidents are logged and monitored.
- Racist attitudes among children or adults should not be left unchecked.
- It is the role of staff within our school to equip our children and adults with the knowledge and understanding to combat racial prejudice.
- We expect everyone to make the same provision for and treat all children equally.
- We ensure that no child is excluded from any part of school life because of his/her religious beliefs or cultural background, e.g. our dress code does not offend the sensibilities of any part of our community.
- We aim to use assessment procedures and diagnostic tests that are not culturally biased.
- We monitor the progress of different groups of children. If particular ethnic groups are performing less well, we try to ascertain the reasons for this and set appropriate targets for pupils and staff, providing support and assistance as required.

6. English as an Additional Language

At Gordon Primary School we regard the presence of multilingual communities in our school as a positive enriching attribute. It gives all our pupils an opportunity to broaden their cultural and linguistic horizons. In this school all staff have an equal role to play in the language development of all children.

- All children should have the opportunity to acquire an understanding of the role, range, and richness of language in all its forms.
- EAL pupils should have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities in our school.
- EAL work is given a high status at our school, provision is regarded as an extension of the language needs for which all teachers cater.
- We promote a positive attitude towards language diversity – we do not equate lack of English with lack of ability.
- Parents are encouraged to use / develop the child's mother tongue.
- We actively encourage parents to attend school-based language classes.

7. Religion

Education should not indoctrinate children into thinking that their belief is the only one. A wide range of religious beliefs are represented in our school. It is not our role to present anyone of these as the only true one.

- We do emphasise the similarities/principles that are common to the major faiths.
- We all join in celebrating the festivals/events that are important to our school population.
- We encourage children to learn about the diversity of beliefs and rituals among our children.
- We try to promote tolerance and understanding amongst pupils and parents.

8. Socio Economic Status

Some research on school performance has been shown to correlate with socio-economic status (Douglas, 1964). Poor health, diet, housing may put a child at a disadvantage. Although we try to offer practical help to such children, it is important NOT to stereotype children's achievement or ability according to background circumstances.

- It does not follow automatically that low socio-economic status leads to underachievement.
- We can help children by informing parents of any benefits or help to which they may be entitled.
- Advice/help can be given on diet/health care.
- Support can be gained from contact with outside agencies.
- Senior members of staff monitor all children's achievement, taking as many contributing factors into consideration as are relevant.

9. Special Educational Needs

Around 13.5% of children at Gordon Primary School are estimated as having SEN at some period of their schooling. Approximately 2.5% of these children have an EHC Plan. At Gordon we ensure that access to all aspects of the curriculum are available for all children whatever their needs.

- Children with SEN are fully integrated in school life, whenever it is in the best interests of the child concerned.
- We monitor the number of SEN children accessing after school clubs and holding positions of responsibility within the school, such as being a school councillor.
- We aim to help all children to understand and value others, whatever their differences may be – physically, cognitively or behaviourally.

The Importance of Monitoring

Staff appointments are closely monitored to ensure that the guidelines of this policy are adhered to. Furthermore, the progress of all pupils is closely monitored in relation to the areas set out in the aforementioned sections as allows us to ensure that our school is one in which child has an equality of opportunity. The responsibility for this monitoring lies with all staff from teachers through to Senior Leaders and forms the basis of both informal and formal conversations through means such as pupil progress meeting and staff performance management.

Identifying potential inequalities and devising systems and approaches by which we may overcome these is the constant role of all staff in order that we can ensure that every child has the same opportunity to reach their full potential within our school.

Equal Opportunities Action Plan

In order to ensure that our school remains a place where barriers to equality can be overcome, we have a clear Equal Opportunities Action Plan. This is a three-year plan, produced following consultation with stakeholders. The targets set out are in place to ensure that we can continue to bring about positive changes within our school, which lead to greater equal opportunities. This Action Plan is reviewed annually, to ensure it remains relevant and challenging.

The Equalities Action Plan can be found as an Appendix to this policy.

Governors

The school Governing Body has a statutory duty to ensure that its functions are carried out with due regard to the need to;

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.
- Promotion of equality of opportunity and good relationships among persons of different racial groups.

Reviewing This Policy

To put our school Equal Opportunities policies into practice and ensure we deliver on our firm commitment to this area, we need to continually examine and reassess our own attitudes, values and practice. As such this policy is reviewed on a regular and ongoing basis.

Reviewed Spring Term 2025

To be Next Reviewed Spring Term 2026