

## Pupil Equality Policy including Early Years

**Issue Date:** September 2016, reviewed September 2017 and September 2018

**Review Date:** 02/09/2020

**Endorsement:** Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

**Name:** Thais Bishop

**Position:** Brighton Waldorf School Trustee

**Signed:**

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018



### The legal framework of our practice is:

- Children Acts 2004, Equality Act 2010
- UN convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, Human Rights Act 1998
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Fundamental British Values

### Policy Statement

Brighton Waldorf School (the school) recognizes that diversity is a reality of our community that brings significant educational benefits to all pupils, enabling the creation of learning experiences enriched by different life experiences, varied perspectives, flexibility and creativity.

The school recognizes that the richness and diversity of culture and experience that we now enjoy is our heritage. It is the school's policy to accept and celebrate diversity; any form of intolerance is counterproductive and unacceptable. The school is therefore committed to building an environment where:

- all pupils are treated with dignity and respect and are expected and supported to treat themselves and each other in this way.
- every pupil has the right to reach their full potential.
- diversity is valued and celebrated
- stereotypes are questioned
- bias, bigotry, prejudice and racism are wholeheartedly rejected. Diversity is celebrated as we celebrate festivals from different faiths of pupils in their classes.

We act in accordance with the relevant equality legislation (see above) and guidance relating to race, gender, disability and employment to ensure that discrimination is eliminated and that equality of opportunity is promoted.

## **British Values**

British Values are defined by the Department for Education as: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. These are implicitly embedded in Waldorf education and therefore in the curriculum and ethos of Brighton Waldorf School. All staff are expected to uphold and promote these values both in their own practice and encouraging pupils to uphold these principles too. There are more details about this in our policy Universal Values. The most relevant ones to pupil equality are:

### **Individual Liberty: freedom for all**

Pupils should develop a healthy sense of pride of themselves, their qualities skills and beliefs. Staff can provide opportunities for pupils to develop self-knowledge and belief, self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities.

Staff should encourage a range of experiences that allows pupils to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand that we are free to have different opinions.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you wish to be treated. Brighton Waldorf School uses exemplary behaviour from staff to actively create an ethos and atmosphere of trust, inclusivity, tolerance, celebration of diversity, tolerance and appreciation of the similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions.

Staff will promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes. We also aim to build solid moral principles in all pupils.

All school staff should create and ethos of inclusivity and tolerance.

### **The School Council: Pupil democracy in action.**

At Brighton Waldorf School pupils opinions are valued and can be shared with the class representatives who meet together termly with teachers from the middle and upper school. Class reps are democratically voted in amongst each class from Class 6 upwards. They represent the pupils are a recognized channel to request changes and for student opinions to be heard in the school and action taken if necessary.

In addition Brighton Waldorf School actively promotes diversity and freedom of thinking and speech.

## Procedure

### General

The person responsible for implementing this policy is the Chair of the College of Teachers. In accordance with its legal responsibility we will ensure that there is no discrimination against any pupil for any reason.

It will not segregate or differentiate between individuals on the grounds of:

- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- race
- religious belief
- disability
- pregnancy or maternity
- economic and family background
- mental health
- challenging behaviour
- emotional/ behavioural difficulties

Everyone at the school will take responsibility for challenging stereotypes and all forms of discrimination.

The school will promote equality of opportunity and will investigate all complaints of discrimination.

### Sex Discrimination

All applicants for admission to the school, and all pupils of the school, will be treated the same way, irrespective of sex. In particular, the school will ensure that:

- no attempt is made to balance the number of boys and girls admitted to the school
- any tests used to screen pupils are identical for boys and girls
- all children have equal access to the curriculum
- careers advice, interviews and literature are not sex-discriminatory.

All pupils, regardless of their sex, will have equal access to:

- all subjects in the curriculum
- work experience placements
- all forms of community and social service
- all recreational, sport and social facilities
- all out-of-school activities.

## **Sexual Orientation Discrimination**

The school will not discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone because of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation.

The school will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone because of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation.

The school will promote equality of opportunity for all pupils regardless of their sexual orientation. This is included in its equal opportunities and behaviour policies and the curriculum.

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for all pupils and will apply the school's anti-bullying policy to deal with all instances of homophobic bullying or abuse. Homophobia is a dislike or fear of someone who is, or is perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bisexual. Reaction can vary in intensity from passive resentment to active victimisation.

The school will take account of the Government's Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (available in the staffroom) which makes clear that teachers should deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support where necessary.

## **Racial Discrimination**

The school will promote equal opportunity and good race relations, and will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of:

- race
- colour
- nationality or citizenship
- ethnic or national origin.

The school will not tolerate any form of racial discrimination, racial harassment or inciting of racial hatred. Incidents of this nature may be offenses under criminal law and will be treated as such.

## **Religious Discrimination**

The school recognises, respects and values the various traditions, customs and rules of different religious groups and will not discriminate against any pupil on the grounds of his or her religion, belief or non-belief.

The school understands that for religious reasons certain pupils might wish to behave in ways that are contrary to accepted school rules. Every effort will always be made to meet the sincere wishes of these pupils.

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The school undertakes to ensure that all collective worship is celebrated in a universal way, and is accessible to everyone.

### **Disability Discrimination**

The school will not tolerate any form of discrimination against disabled pupils. This includes the use of any derogatory term to indicate the disabled person's supposed mental capacity.

No assumptions will be made about the general abilities of people who are disabled. The school will bear in mind that a child with special educational needs (SEND) is not necessarily disabled and that a disabled child does not necessarily have SEND.

The school will make every effort to ensure that its premises are accessible to people with all kinds of disabilities.

The school will produce an accessibility plan detailing the planned improvements that will be made for:

- increasing the access of disabled pupils to the school curriculum
- improving the access of disabled pupils to the physical environment of the school
- improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils.

Clare Martin is the SENDco for Classes 1-10 and Carrie Rawle is the SENDco for the EY department.

### **Educational Visits**

Where educational visits are being planned it is assumed that all pupils will take part. In order to achieve this we:

- plan well in advance and check the suitability of every venue
- make sure there is accessible transport to the venue
- liaise with staff at the venue
- ensure that the program of activities is accessible to all; if this is not possible, we ensure that the program offers at least one activity that is accessible and of equal merit
- complete any risk assessments with the needs of pupils with iSEND
- ensure that all staff have the necessary knowledge about the pupils they are taking.

Educational visits will include trips to places of cultural interest, institutions that help form our society, and will overall reflect the diversity of the culture, art, drama and faiths in our country.

### **Positive Discrimination**

We operate a policy of positive discrimination where necessary. This means that on occasions, additional privileges, resources or staff time will be allocated to pupils in order to enable them to fully participate in the school. We additionally monitor pupil progress to

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ensure that all children are being included and that the learning needs of all pupils are being met.

### **Monitoring Pupils' progress**

The school collects data referring to children's progress and especially in reference to:

- looked after children
- pupils from different age groups (eldest and youngest and differing ages in Early years)
- pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)
- gender.

### **Measuring Inclusion**

Not all aspects of inclusion can have a measure placed against them. However, there are some key indicators that can demonstrate how effectively pupils are being included within the school. These include:

- fixed-term and permanent exclusion statistics
- attendance data, particularly in relation to persistent and recurrent absences
- numbers of pupils from different groups attending extra-curricular activities
- numbers of pupils from different groups who are on the register of academically more able pupils.

### **Brighton Waldorf School Early Years Department**

We believe that all children should be treated fairly regardless of race, religion or ability. This applies no matter what they think or say, what type of family they come from, what language they speak, what their parents do, whether they are girls or boys, whether they have a disability or whether they are rich or poor. All children have a right to be listened to and are valued in our department.

### **Staff**

Jasmin Brackenfield is the lead person responsible for the equalities in our department, though providing a fully inclusive education is the responsibility of all the Early Years staff team. As part of their induction new staff are briefed on the equal opportunities policy and its implementation into practice.

We try not to make assumptions about children and their families, their lifestyles and their beliefs. It is our intention to find out accurate information when we are unsure.

All staff have access to on-going equalities training and workshops to ensure that they keep up to date with new developments, current research and appropriate practice.

### **Admissions**

We provide clear and concise information in written and spoken form. We endeavour to meet the needs of individual families, where possible we would provide translated

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documents for parents who have English as a second language. When appropriate we would try and enlist the support of a bilingual staff member or support worker.

We base our admissions policy on a fair system. We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our department on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background. We do not discriminate against a child with a disability or refuse a child entry to one of our settings because of a disability.

We aim to gather full and accurate information about all children before they start at our school to ensure that their needs are met to the best of our ability. We take care to ensure we have the correct spelling of names and know their correct pronunciation.

An Early Years Teacher is identified for each child before they start to liaise with and to support both the child and their family.

### **Environment and resources**

We aim to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all children and their families in which they can fully access and express themselves.

We offer positive images through stories, puppet shows, songs and verses of a diversity of backgrounds living and working together and respecting each other. We use open-ended resources that allow children to express ethnic and cultural diversity through creative play, and do not promote negative stereotypes.

We value linguistic diversity and provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in their play and learning. We value bilingualism as a strength and encourage all children to learn some of the languages they hear around them.

We ensure that children have the opportunity to hear their home language through the use of songs, rhymes and verses.

We work together with professionals from other agencies such as EMAS, CEYC, PreSENS, Speech and Language therapists, local and community health services in order to promote the best care and to ensure that learning opportunities are available for individual children.

### **Curriculum**

All children have a need to develop, which is supported by exploring and discovering the world around them. We plan opportunities that build on and extend all children's knowledge, experiences, interests and skills and develop their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn. We consider what might be appropriate to offer them according to their ages, stages of development and levels of understanding.

- We join in the celebration of community festivals and events.

- Both sexes are encouraged to explore resources and activities traditionally used by the other.
- We welcome families into our settings to share food, stories, songs and festivals from their own cultures.
- The staff in our department aim to continually be aware of the language we use; we use non-gender specific language in identifying job roles.

### **Working with parents and carers**

We believe that a positive relationship between parents and carers and our school is very important in supporting children to reach their full potential. We strive to make time to listen to the expectations of parents and carers and to explain our procedures clearly and carefully, particularly when settling a child into one of our settings.

When possible we will provide resources in languages other than English for parents and carers for whom this is not their first language and we will provide resources in large print for parents who have a visual impairment.

We are fully aware that parents are their children's first educators and are an important resource for the school, especially in terms of information about their own child. We need to work with parents and carers alongside their children sharing the benefits of joint education.

We value the contribution that parents can make to the school and aim to make all parents feel comfortable with in our community.

### **Discriminatory remarks or behaviour**

As a staff team we aim to recognize and examine our own beliefs and prejudices, being conscious of the effect they have on our practice and seek to overcome them.

We regularly review practice and resources to ensure we are continuing to meet the individual needs of the children attending. Addressing equalities issues is an ongoing process not a one off activity.

### **Related Policies:**

- Admissions policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Staff Equal Opportunities Policy
- Bullying and Harassment at Work Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Settling- In Policy
- iSEND Policy
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy
- Partnership with Parents
- British Values