

Governing Body Document Monitoring

Date of Review	Reason for Review	Responsibility	Model or School Specific	Date Ratified	CoC Initials	Name of Committee	Date of next scheduled review
Nov 2015	Scheduled Three Year Review	Headteacher	SCC Model	14 Jan 2016	MS	T&L	Jan 2020

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. Rationale

Every school has an equal opportunities policy, and this places a responsibility on all individuals in the school to uphold its principles.

Schools must broaden the opportunities for all to reach their individual potential. The objective is not equality in the absolute sense of everybody achieving the same, but the removal of what are often referred to as 'barriers' to success.

At a national level, the DfES Circular, *Social Inclusion*, made clear its importance: *Commitment to equal opportunities: parents and pupils should know that the school has an equal opportunities policy and is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils. Schools should monitor the impact of their policies and procedures on different groups (by race, gender and disability). The effectiveness of such policies should be assessed at governors' meetings.'*

In its curriculum guidance, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) refers to the importance of securing equal opportunities for pupils, and OfSTED requires inspectors to take into account the extent to which a school is 'socially inclusive' and ensures equal access and opportunity for all.

The main objectives of this policy are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who have a shared characteristic and those who do not.

2. Policy

This Policy represents a commitment to a common set of values and objectives and to a consistent approach to communicating, implementing and monitoring the policy.

Chamberlayne College for the Arts is committed to promoting and achieving equality of opportunity for all students, parents, staff, governors and visitors. We believe that all people are of equal value and are entitled to equality of opportunity irrespective of ability, disability, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, social class, appearance or sexual orientation.

Equality of opportunity is fundamental to good practice in education, in which fairness of opportunity for all is a basic right. This policy is therefore underpinned by the following values, principles and standards:

- equality and social justice
- acknowledging and valuing diversity
- respect for others
- compliance with equal opportunities legislation
- elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination
- active challenge to stereotypes, prejudiced attitudes and unfair discriminatory behaviour
- commitment to inclusive education which enables and supports all students to develop their full potential
- commitment to the positive development of all staff and governors
- accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of the school community and others engaged in school business or activities.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 All staff are responsible for:

- promoting equality and diversity, and avoiding unfair discrimination
- challenging any incidents of unfair discrimination, or racial, sexual or other stereotyping, perpetrated by students or other staff
- keeping up-to-date with equality law and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training

3.2 Students are responsible for:

- respecting others in their language and actions
- obeying all of the school's equal opportunities policies and codes

This Policy has been approved and adopted by the governing body who will review the policy after two years, or as required to ensure it remains compliant with Equal Opportunities legislation. This policy links with other policies in the school including in particular: Special Educational Needs Policy, Accessibility Policy, Curriculum Policy, Pay Policy, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.

4. Acts concerning equal opportunities and discrimination

The requirements for equal opportunities are underpinned by law. Education authorities, governing bodies and teachers are bound by many of the provisions of human rights legislation. The Human Rights Act, 1998, enshrines the European Convention on Human Rights in UK law. More specifically, there are UK laws that outlaw discrimination on the grounds of race, gender and disability.

4.1 The Sex Discrimination Act (SDA), 1975 (extended and amended 1986), outlaws discrimination on the grounds of gender.

Anybody, including children (or those acting on their behalf), may make a complaint under the SDA if they believe they are being discriminated against on the basis of gender. Discrimination need not be direct and intentional for a complaint to be made. If the indirect outcome of a policy is unfair to males or females, then a complaint of discrimination might be upheld by the courts.

In education, if the outcome of a policy is that females (whether teachers or pupils) receive less favourable treatment than males (or vice-versa), then discrimination may be judged to have occurred. It would not be illegal, for example, to separate boys and girls for certain teaching purposes, but it would be deemed discriminatory if one gender had access to curricular opportunities or advantages that were denied to the other.

4.2 Equal Opportunities Commission

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) was created under the terms of the SDA and has three main tasks:

- to work to end gender discrimination;
- to promote equal opportunities for women and men;
- to review and suggest improvements to the 'sex discrimination' legislation.

The EOC advises and supports individuals or groups bringing complaints under the terms of the SDA and Equal Pay Act. It also investigates issues of gender inequality and public policy, and has published some reports on gender and educational achievement.

4.3 The Race Relations Act (RRA), 1976, outlaws discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic and national origins.

Anybody, including children (or those acting on their behalf), may complain formally under the RRA if they believe they are being discriminated against or receiving 'less favourable treatment' on these grounds. Again, discrimination need not be direct and intentional. If the indirect outcome of a policy is that one group receives less favourable treatment than another, then a complaint of discrimination might be upheld by the courts. The law does, however, allow for particular measures to help designated groups who have defined needs, for example those whose first language is not English.

4.4 The Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000, states even more explicitly the responsibility that all designated 'public authorities', including schools, have:

- to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

4.5 The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) is the statutory body for securing racial equality. It was set up under the RRA. Its statutory duties are:

- to work towards the elimination of discrimination;
- to promote equality of opportunity, and good relations, between persons of different racial groups;
- to keep the working of the Act under review and to make proposals for amending it.

The CRE pursues complaints on behalf of individuals or groups under the terms of the RRA. It also investigates issues of inequality and public policy and has made a number of reports on education. It produces free and priced publications; these are listed in the online catalogue.

4.6 Runnymede Trust.

The Runnymede Trust develops specific and targeted strategies to raise the educational achievement levels of ethnic minority pupils. It produces publications dealing with youth and education issues.

4.7 The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), 1995, outlaws discrimination in the provision of goods and services against those with disabilities. This Act has some implications for teachers who are, or become, disabled. It has some application to pupils in schools. Since September 2002 school governing bodies have been under a duty not to treat disabled pupils less favourably, without justification, than their non-disabled peers and to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled pupils. The new duties cover:

- Admissions
- Exclusions
- Education and associated services

Schools are required to plan strategically to increase access to education at school for disabled pupils. This planning duty applies to access to premises, the curriculum and to written information in alternative formats.

Circular 20/99 discusses the implications of the DDA for schools. It illustrates, for example, ways in which schools should seek to cater for the needs of parents with a disability that could affect their access to meetings on school premises. At all times, individual teachers should seek to ensure that pupils with disabilities are treated appropriately. Through other education legislation, all teachers have to be alert to the requirements of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

4.8 The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) was established in 2000.

It was established by The Disability Rights Commission Act, 1999. The DRC is the statutory body for advising and assisting disabled people in pursuing their rights under the DDA. It gives guidance on good practice to employers, investigates how

disabled people are treated and researches issues of inequality and public policy. Its statutory duties are:

- to work to eliminate discrimination against disabled people;
- to promote equal opportunities for disabled people;
- to encourage good practice in the treatment of disabled people;
- to advise the government on the working of disability legislation.