

SWINDON ACADEMY STAFF POLICIES

Equal Opportunities Policy (L13)

Aims

- To engender positive attitudes among our Academy community so that everyone respects the rights of all people and challenges inequalities based on ability, gender, ethnicity, language, culture, age, class, disability or religion. We want all our students and staff to feel valued as we celebrate their uniqueness.
- To prepare our students for adult life in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual society.
- To ensure that all individuals in our Academy have opportunities to achieve. To remove the barriers to success based on prejudice, discrimination or fear of harassment so that people develop high self-esteem, are confident and secure in their own identities and are therefore able to take a full part in the learning and development opportunities afforded by our Academy.
- To promote equality by examining our policy and practice in Academy, ensuring that resources like extra classroom support are allocated to all groups according to their need. To work to eliminate the disadvantage faced by different groups within the Academy so that all pupils have full access to the curriculum.

The Policy

Admissions:

- Any student at the age of 4 or 11 is admitted to Swindon Academy provided that they fulfil the criteria laid out in the current Admissions Policy. This is regardless of aptitude or ability.
- The Academy will make every effort to be able to offer a full curriculum to disabled students, taking care that they receive the classroom support they need.
- All pupils are monitored according to appropriate gender and ethnic groups.

Ethos and atmosphere:

- All staff, leading by example, will aim to engender mutual respect between all members of the Academy community. They will challenge individuals who fail to do this.
- All parents and visitors will be made to feel welcome.
- Parents' evenings and meetings with teachers will take place on the ground floor whenever possible so that there is easy access for those in wheelchairs.
- The outlines of the disabled parking space will be repainted regularly so that it is always visible.
- The environment is safe and well cared for.
- All staff are encouraged to reflect diversity in their displays.

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Learning Environment:

- All staff have high expectations of all students. In every subject, curriculum plans and learning resources are differentiated appropriately.
- All students are encouraged to be actively involved in their learning. They understand what they have achieved already and know what they need to do to be able to progress further. They are encouraged to set challenging but manageable targets for themselves in consultation with their teachers.
- A range of teaching methods and processes of learning will be involved in delivering the curriculum so that students' progress will not be limited by only having one way of doing the work.
- Staff will endeavour to be proactive role models concerning all aspects of equal opportunities and they will always challenge any negative attitudes.

Resources and materials:

These will be monitored and reviewed by each faculty to ensure that they:

- Reflect and promote positive images of different groups in Britain today
- Are free of stereotypes
- Show positive images of women and men in society, including disabled people
- Reflect the students' own experiences
- Reflect the experiences of the wider community
- Exclude explicitly and implicitly racist and sexist materials
- Include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunities issues

Curriculum:

- The curriculum will be organised so that all students will have access to learning opportunities irrespective of gender, ethnic origin or disability.
- Planning will take into account the different needs of pupils. It will endeavour to identify opportunities to celebrate the richness and diversity of a range of cultures. Opportunities will be created for pupils to encounter cultures not represented within the Academy by both external visits and invited guests.
- All public examination results will be analysed according to gender and ethnicity. Any detrimental aspects will be redressed.
- Career guidance will seek to alleviate peer group or parental pressure in stereotyping career and option choices.
- Work Experience placements should continue to encourage students into non-stereotypical placements and support will be offered to students making non-traditional choices.
- The curriculum will address issues of prejudice and stereotyping.

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Extra Curricular Provision:

- Staff running extra-curricular groups will ensure that there is equal access to all activities for all pupils.
- The range of interests and abilities being catered for will be as wide as is practicable.
- The uptake of the groups will be monitored to check that specific groups are not being excluded and steps may be taken to redress the balance, e.g. by forming boys' choir or girls' football teams.
- Out of Academy activities will be offered to all pupils regardless of their ability to pay. This includes instrumental and vocal tuition.

Provision for bilingual pupils:

- All staff will be made aware of pupils who have English as an additional language and will be given guidance concerning their specific learning needs.

Staffing and Staff Development:

- As far as is practicable, the staffing of the Academy will reflect and reinforce the Academy's commitment to equal opportunities. As job vacancies arise, the Governors will seek to encourage applicants from candidates likely to redress the balance of gender, race or disability (e.g. male Learning Support Teachers).

Parents and the Wider Community:

- The Academy's Equal Opportunities Policy will be shared with parents, who will also be provided with good quality information about the Academy, particularly the progress of all students. This information will be translated into the parents' first language if this is required. It will also be sent to both parents separately, if requested.
- In our links with industry, the Academy will ensure that companies are aware of our Equal Opportunities Policy and will be invited to participate in a way that reflects this. They will be encouraged to share their expertise in the area of Equal Opportunities as part of the Curriculum.
- Work Experience will reinforce the work done in careers lessons with opportunities to experience non-traditional jobs.
- All Academy events will reflect the way in which Equal Opportunities are practised within the Academy.

Racist Incidents:

See Racial Equality Policy

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Monitoring the Implementation of the Policy

- It will be the responsibility of each Curriculum Leader to monitor the quality of teaching and resources in his/her area. It is suggested that when undertaking lesson observations for performance management, the Equal Opportunities Classroom Observation Checklist, may be completed, in addition to the Lesson Observation Evidence form, to inform discussion.
- It will be the responsibility of the Governors and the Principal to monitor Equal Opportunities with regard to staffing and admissions.
- It will be the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that racial equality is being promoted actively throughout the Academy community.
- It will be the responsibility of the Associate Principal to ensure that all racist incidents are being logged and dealt with.
- The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for recording incidents that breach this policy and archiving these for 10 years.
- Sanctions may be exercised against any form of discrimination by any person within the academy.

The Law

The **Disability Discrimination Act (1995)** brought in new laws and measures that are aimed at ending the discrimination which many disabled people face. The Act gives disabled people new rights in areas of employment; getting goods and services; and buying and renting land or property. The most recently implemented part of the Act came into force in October 1999 and imposes a duty on service providers to provide auxiliary aids and services. Where physical barriers make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use a service, then reasonable steps must be taken to provide the service by an alternative method.

The **Race Relations Act (1976)** makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), or ethnic or national origins. The Act outlaws direct and indirect discrimination and victimisation in certain areas. If individuals feel that they have been discriminated against at work, they have the right to take their employer to an Employment Tribunal. If students at Academy think they have been discriminated against, they bring a case of racial discrimination to the County Court.

The **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000** is the government's main response to the McPherson Report. In it there is a new 'positive' duty to promote race equality – this will be in the form of a general duty on all public authorities and specific duties relating to local government, education, health, police and central government.

The **Sex Discrimination Act** came into force in 1975 and was amended and broadened in 1986. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against individuals on the grounds of sex. It applies to two kinds of discrimination:

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- Direct discrimination – this means treating someone unfairly because of their sex
- Indirect discrimination – this means setting unjustifiable conditions that appear to apply to everyone, but in fact discriminates against one sex.