



**The Orchard Vision:** *Inspiring Success*  
**Values:** *Determination, Courage, Respect and Kindness*

## **The Orchard Equality Policy 2023**

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This policy sets out The Orchard School's approach to promoting equality as defined within the Equality Act 2010. The duty to promote Race Equality came in to force in 2002 and the duty to promote disability equality came in to force in 2006 and the Gender Equality duty in 2007.

At The Orchard we encourage each child to recognise their individuality and to understand that "Everyone is different, everyone is special and everyone deserves respect"

Schools are required to meet significant positive statutory duties in equality and we are required to promote equality of opportunity in all we do. We are also required to avoid discrimination.

This duty is to be proactive in ensuring equality is central to all activities and not simply to react to situations. It is important that we:

- Identify areas of potential inequality
- Make changes to address these inequalities

Schools are required to meet a single duty which includes general and specific duties in promoting equality across the full range of protected characteristics:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Pupils undergoing or who have undergone, gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnerships
- Pregnancy and Maternity

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Accessibility plan, SEND, RSE, PSHE, Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies and should influence all policies and practices throughout the school. Please also refer to the Staff Recruitment policy.

### **Aims of Policy**

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good relations and positive attitudes between children, staff, parents, visitors and the community in all its activities.

- To create a positive atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to valuing diversity and respecting difference and high expectations for all.

- To ensure that every pupil has full and equal access to the curriculum including regular attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that children feel valued at school and develop positive self-esteem.
- To ensure that all Governors, Staff, Parents and our Community feel valued and have equality of opportunity in contributing to, and benefiting from, the school.
- To ensure that learning is enjoyable for all pupils.
- To ensure that progress and attainment is the highest priority for all pupils
- To ensure a co-operative and supportive working relationship between home and school.
- To prepare children to become good citizens developing knowledge, understanding and respect for individuals and their differences.

### Commitments

We are committed to ensuring that

- No person is victimised or treated less favourably than another because they have acted in respect of discrimination- i.e. they have brought a complaint or given evidence
- No person suffers harassment of any kind though conduct which violates a person's dignity, is hostile, intimidating or creates humiliation or offence.

### Roles and Responsibilities

**School governors** are responsible for:

- Ensuring the school complies with current equality legislation
- Ensuring this policy and its procedures are followed

**The Head Teacher** is responsible for:

- Ensuring the policy is applied in all contexts and in relation to the whole community of Children, Staff, Parents and Carers, Visitors, Volunteers and Governors.
- Ensuring a record is kept of any breaches of the Equality Act.
- Ensuring the policy is readily available and that the Governors, Staff, Pupils and their Parents/Carers know about it
- Ensuring procedures are followed
- Ensuring the impact of the policy is analysed and school improvement plans reflect priorities.
- Producing regular information for Staff and Governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary
- Ensuring all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination
- Ensuring equality and diversity issues are on the school council agenda and incorporated in assembly themes
- Monitoring and Evaluating equality through other monitoring and evaluation activities- e.g.- observing gender bias in play activities

**All school staff** are responsible for:

- Modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and explicitly challenging any discrimination.
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities
- Holding high expectations for all the children
- Developing and modelling positive professional relationships with all the children so that they feel valued and respected and in turn value and respect others
- Evaluation and analysis of the impact of the policy in relation to the children in their classes or within their subject area/team responsibility

**Pupils** are responsible for:

- Following the school's expectations and policies in their behaviour towards each other and in the way they speak to and about other people

**Parents/Carers** are responsible for:

- Knowing and respecting the school policy
- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the home-school agenda through a shared input with staff on developing policies relating to this area. This may include involvement in
  - the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy
  - the Working in Partnership with Parents policy
  - the SEND policy
  - the Relationships and Sex Education policy
  - the PSHE policy

**Visitors and contractors** are responsible for:

- knowing and following our Equality policy

### Curriculum content

Our curriculum framework and resources are reviewed annually to ensure they are meeting the needs of all our pupils. Most importantly, children are taught to respect all the different people they meet and learn about inside and out of school through:-

- the role models and relationships which all the staff provide
- the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education curriculum and RSE provision
- the English curriculum (including English as an additional language provision)
- the RE curriculum
- the Geography curriculum
- School Assemblies
- the Music curriculum
- the Art curriculum
- Reading and Books available in book corners, library and through the school reading scheme
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Resources including photographs, books, paintings/art work, music and artefacts are selected carefully, ensuring that we reflect the diverse nature of society and promote positive images of different groups of people. Staff will use strategies to ensure that all pupils have equal access to resources.

### Sanctions/discipline

If the policy to promote equality is not adhered to by any member of or visitor to our school community, the following sanctions, disciplinary action or procedures would be followed. Any conduct which is discriminatory will be recorded in writing and kept in the behaviour incident book/employees file.

#### **A member of staff**

1. Explanation of policy and the expectations for their future behaviour/conduct. Explanation of the school (Surrey County Council) disciplinary procedure (provide a written copy).
2. Follow the written disciplinary procedure.
3. Dismissal.

#### **A Child**

1. Explanation of which behaviour is acceptable/unacceptable. Clarification that discriminatory comments or behaviour is unacceptable and why.

2. Write record of incident.
3. Communicate what has happened to parents of the offender and the victim and action taken.
4. Child to write letter of apology in a playtime or further sanctions if appropriate (see anti-bullying policy).
5. Secure parental support for ensuring no re-occurrence.

#### **A Visitor, Contractor or Parent**

1. Explanation of school policy and provide a written copy. Clarify consequences of any further breach of the policy.
2. If re-occurrence or serious breach of policy, exclude the visitor or parent from the school grounds for a given period of time or permanently as appropriate.

Any contractor who does not abide by the school's Equality Policy will be asked to leave the premises and will not be asked to carry out work in the future and an alternative contractor will be found.

The following key principles underpin our practice in promoting school inclusion:-

- **Setting good habits early:** schools need to help pupils establish regular punctual attendance and good behaviour from the start, involving parents in the process.
- **Early intervention:** prompt intervention is needed where there is poor behaviour or unexplained absence, so it is clear that these will not be tolerated.
- **Rewarding achievements:** positive recognition of individual pupil, class or year group achievements in good attendance and behaviour, through daily classroom reward systems, mentions in assembly, awarding certificates or prizes.
- **Supporting behaviour management:** behaviour management techniques, such as 'Circle Time' and 'Circle of Friends' can help improve and maintain high standards of behaviour and discipline (please see Behaviour Policy).
- **Working with parents:** all schools should encourage parents to support good attendance and behaviour through home-school agreements, parents' meetings and newsletters. Schools should always know who has parental responsibility for all their pupils.
- **Involving pupils:** pupils can help re-enforce school behaviour policies by active involvement and contributing ideas through Schools' Councils and in class discussions.
- **Commitment to equal opportunities:** parents and pupils should know that the school has an Equality Policy and is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils. Schools should monitor the impact of their policies and procedures on different groups. The effectiveness of such policies should be evaluated at Governors' meetings.
- **Identifying underlying causes:** poor behaviour may be linked to a pupil's problems in understanding lessons or due to social and communication difficulties and this will support individualised planning to improve behaviour.

#### **School practices and procedures**

The following monitoring practices and school procedures are in place to ensure all children within the school have equal opportunity to a successful start to their school life.

- High quality teaching for all children with a teaching for mastery approach
- Providing a language rich environment where new vocabulary is taught every day across the curriculum
- Staff vigilance and positive relationships- listening to children, observing, listening to parent concerns
- Staff rigour in following up incidents- finding out exactly what happened, following behaviour and anti-bullying policy to ensure fairness
- Use of curriculum time to promote diversity and to address issues as they arise
- ELSA who supports children with their emotional Literacy
- Family Support Worker to support families who need additional support for attendance, punctuality, behaviour management, special educational need, health issues, etc.
- Half-termly register monitoring of absence rates and punctuality. Punctuality slips are put in a child's bookbag each time a child is late to school. Letters are sent home if there are unexplained absences or regular lateness.

- The Surrey Education Inclusion Officer is contacted through referral and meets with the family if the school intervention has not solved the problem.
- Analysis of data to consider progress of different groups of children:- children with English as an additional language, Special Educational Needs, free school meals, disability and those from ethnic minorities.
- Signposting for parents/carers to support groups- newsletter and HSLW
- Regular reminders through newsletters concerning the importance of attendance and punctuality.
- Clear guidance to new parents concerning the importance of attendance and punctuality.
- Home school agreement
- Behaviour support plans are written for children who have difficulty with their behaviour (please see Behaviour Policy).
- The school liaises with the Behaviour support service, Language and Learning Support Service and Educational Psychologist where appropriate.
- Parents are involved in Behaviour Support Plans, informed of poor and good behaviour and the strategies in place.
- Anger management training is given to pupils when appropriate.
- A pastoral support programme is initiated when a child is at risk of permanent exclusion, involving parents, staff and outside support agencies (Surrey County Council guidelines are adhered to).

**Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with a named member of staff and governor.**

**Responsibilities include:**

- co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues
- dealing with and monitoring reports of discriminatory talk or incidents
- monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils (e.g. children and young people in care, children from minority ethnic/language or traveller communities, disabled pupils etc).
- monitoring exclusions

### **Monitoring attainment and progress**

The Head Teacher, Core Subject Leaders, Pupil Premium Leader, Year Team Leaders and the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator analyse performance and progress data each term. Pupil Progress meetings are held termly with class teachers to identify pupils and define next steps in supporting children who aren't making expected progress or who are not in line with age related attainment expectations. The Head Teacher and Senior Management Team analyse the data in relation to different groups of children within the school including:-

- children receiving Pupil Premium funding ('Looked after' children, children entitled to free school meals)
- ethnic minorities
- children who speak English as an additional language
- girls/boys
- children on the SEND register
- children whose families claim free school meals
- children with disabilities
- children who are summer born
- children with other special circumstances

If the data causes concern, support is provided for individuals and if a particular group is not performing as it should, an action plan is agreed, shared and written as part of The School Improvement Plan to ensure that practice is improved.

### **Monitoring attendance and punctuality**

The Head Teacher monitors the registers each half term. Names of children with frequent or unexplained absence are noted as well as those who have been late to school on five occasions or more. The Head Teacher writes to the parents or carers of the children noted, explaining their responsibilities, consequences of the absence or poor punctuality and the action which will be taken if the situation does not improve.

If the rate of absence and/or lateness continues the Head Teacher refers the family to the Inclusion Officer. Monitoring of attendance and punctuality is recorded so that the Head Teacher and Governors can analyse the data in relation to ethnic minorities, children taking free school meals, children on the Special Needs Register, children with disabilities or children on the Child Protection register.

Exclusions from school are very rare at The Orchard but are always recorded by the school and reported to the exclusions officer. The Head Teacher, staff and governors discuss and analyse reasons for exclusion.

### **Monitoring Behaviours**

Staff monitor behaviour in classrooms, corridors and in the playgrounds. We watch for trends where, for example, boys dominate the football pitch, girls play on the play-trail so that we can encourage children to try different things and ensure that one gender is not dominating an activity. Our aim, through curriculum planning, resource provision and organising play, is to encourage children to choose and try out a range of activities.

### **The School environment**

All classrooms, offices and staff areas are on the ground floor enabling easy access for disabled pupils, staff, Governors or visitors. There are two disabled adult toilets. The Governors are committed to adapting the school to suit the needs of pupils, staff and Governors or visitors within the budget available to us. See Accessibility Plan (2023-24)

### **Pupil Premium**

**Pupil Premium Funding** is provided for families whose children are entitled to free school meals or are looked after or have been looked after.

Our provision (which is partially funded by Pupil Premium Allocated Funding) includes

- support families through free Breakfast Club/After School club provision,
- provides some Family Link Worker time (providing additional advice/support/signposting)
- provides some ELSA (emotional Literacy support) where needed
- ensures a Senior Teacher holds staff accountable, supports, monitors and evaluates provision and plans actions which will enhance progress and attainment for this group of children.
- ensures SENCO monitors and ensures provision for those children who are entitled to Pupil Premium Provision and also have SEND.

Individual provision which is needs led will vary from child to child according to the needs identified in school and by the family.

Our data is analysed to examine the performance of different groups within our school community and to set targets for improvement. (See School Improvement Plan)

There is a strong five year trend for children at The Orchard performing above their peers nationally and locally when reviewing attainment. In 2020 and in 2021 there was no attainment data for end of key stages due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. Outcomes for the academic year 2021 – 2022 show our previous trend of performing above their peers nationally and this continued in 2022 - 2023

**Our priorities for our disadvantaged children 2022-24 are:**

- Children will have improved early reading skills.
  - Children will speak confidently in full sentences when talking about their learning and when communicating their needs.
  - Children will be able to regulate their emotions more successfully.
  - Children will be able to work and play successfully with a range of children.
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1. Children will demonstrate consistently improved (or high if not an area of need) rates of attendance and punctuality.

## **Race Equality**

### **Our aim is to**

- Protect individuals from any form of racial discrimination
- Promote Equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different ethnic groups

Areas for Consideration:

We will aim to address racial discrimination in these policies:

- Curriculum, Planning, Teaching and Assessment Policy
- Assessment
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Behaviour Policy
- British Values
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- PSHE
- RSE
- Recruitment
- All Curriculum policies
- Schemes of Work- eg Geography, History, Art, DT, Science, RE- must celebrate and value diversity and the significant influence of people of different races.

We monitor and evaluate all our policies and practices constantly to ensure no discriminatory or prejudicial practice is occurring.

Any Racist behaviours will be recorded in the behaviour log for children or in Staff files for Staff with appropriate action taken.

In the case of children, parents or carers will be informed and responses and actions agreed.

In the case of Staff an investigation would be initiated and the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures will be followed.

In planning schemes of work and daily plans it is important to consider and reflect racial diversity and challenge racism.

In purchasing books and providing pictures and artefacts it is important to show images which represent and celebrate our diverse community.

In all lessons and in all school activities it is important that we create an inclusive, positive atmosphere where children and adults show mutual respect, celebrate difference and share a commitment to challenging and preventing racism and discrimination.

## **Gender Equality**

### **Our duty is to:**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, taking active steps to comply with the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act
- Take active steps to promote equality of opportunity between men and women when carrying out their functions and activities
- Prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation

This duty is particularly relevant to the following policies:

- Pay
- Recruitment
- All Curriculum and Staff policies
- Schemes of work – especially Geography, History, Art, DT, RE, Science- must celebrate and value men and women in terms of significant people who influence, lead and have changed society in some way.

## **Disability Duty**

We have a duty to

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate Harassment of Disabled People that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes
- Encourage participation of disabled people in public life
- Take steps to meet the needs of disabled people

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

## **Monitoring**

We monitor attendance, wellbeing, progress and attainment in relation to our pupils with disabilities.

We monitor the makeup of our staff and how well we meet the needs of staff with disabilities

The SENCO liaises with parents in addition to conducting an annual survey to parents of children with disabilities.

The duties are relevant to the following policies and Practices:

- Curriculum policies
- Schemes of work- ensuring the celebration and valuing of people with disabilities in our curriculum plans and resources
- Recruitment
- Accessibility Plan
- Young People's health and the administration of medicines
- Educational Visits

## **Staff Equality Statement (based on NEU model)**

The Orchard is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants, and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment. Any allegations of harassment will be dealt with in a supportive manner via the school's bullying and harassment policy. Employees can use the grievance procedure to address other complaints on the grounds of equality issues.

We will ensure that we do not discriminate against staff, job applicants, pupils (including during the admissions process), governors and parents on the basis of their protected characteristics, ie age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or on any other basis.

We will take every opportunity to make our curriculum content (including pastoral sessions and assemblies) representative of equality issues and diversity.

We recognise, and take very seriously, our public sector equality duty to have due regard to:

- the need to eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different groups.

We believe in the benefits of a diverse workforce (which includes a representative governing body) for our pupils, their parents and the wider school community. We have are taking the following steps to facilitate the appointment of as diverse a group of workers as possible:

- Our application forms and candidate information packs are available electronically and in hard copy.

- Where appropriate, we will address under-representation within our workforce by including welcoming and encouraging statements in our job advertisements. For example, our adverts may say: “We welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.” or “Applications are welcome from all sections of the community regardless of gender, gender identity, ethnic origin, disability, age or sexual orientation.”
- We will encourage the employment agencies we engage to draw supply staff from as diverse a pool of workers as possible. Equal opportunities in recruitment and selection training will be a requirement before staff are asked to undertake this role. To ensure that we are meeting our public sector equality duty, we will monitor the impact of our workplace policies on staff through our annual questionnaire.

Most recent review: November 2023