

MARYHILL HIGH SCHOOL



Equal Opportunities Policy

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| Drafted by: | Dr A Jones |
| Date of Approval: | 2007 |
| Review Date: | 2010 |

MARYHILL HIGH SCHOOL EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1. What sort of school are we?

Maryhill High School is situated at the northern edge of the Stoke on Trent conurbation. Its ethnic mix, both students and staff is overwhelmingly white European. There is a small number of ethnic minority students, the largest such group is of Chinese origin (from Macau) for whom English is a second language.

Most year groups are balanced for gender. The gender balance is the staff is as follows:

| | Male | Female |
|------------------|------|--------|
| • Teaching Staff | 24 | 36 |
| • Support Staff | 8 | 45 |
| • Overall | 32 | 81 |

There is one student with limited mobility at the school. Limited adaptations to parts of the buildings have been made to help with access, but many parts of the building are not accessible.

The school admits and ensures inclusion for students who have a degree of visual or hearing impairment.

In recent years the socio-economic background of the students has improved, but although Free School Meals is low at 8.47 %, there are many more families in work on fairly low incomes. The attainment level of students on entry has also improved in recent years, and is now broadly inline with the national average at the end of KS2.

Most students remain at the school for 5 or 7 years. Mobility of students is not an issue.

2. Aims of Equal Opportunities Policy

Equality of opportunity at Maryhill High School is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – students, staff, governors, parents and community members.

It is based on the following core values and ethos as expressed in this school's aims statement.

At Maryhill High School, we aim to create and maintain the highest standards in caring for our students. This means, firstly, Ensuring a high quality learning environment, one where there are high expectations, a high level of motivation and plenty of challenges to keep students interested and involved. Secondly, it means maintaining an atmosphere of trust and security where our students feel valued and respected, and value and respect others in return, so that everyone has the confidence to participate fully in the learning experiences and adventures provided for them. Our inclusive culture means that every student is treated as an individual with differing needs and every student is valued. 'Recognising Achievement' is our motto and is also a daily feature of school life. As a Media Arts College, we aim to make our students powerful voices within the community and confident communicators for the twenty-first century.

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.

3. The School's Commitment to Race Equality

At Maryhill High School we aim to:

- *ensure that all students and staff are encouraged and able to achieve to their full potential;*
- *respect and value differences between people;*
- *reppare students for life in a diverse society;*
- *acknowledge the existence of racism and take steps to prevent it;*
- *make the school a place where everyone, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, feels welcomed and valued;*
- *promote good relations between different racial groups within the school and within the wider community;*
- *ensure that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;*
- *oppose all forms of racism, racial prejudice and racial harassment;*
- *be proactive in tackling and eliminating unlawful discrimination.*

4. Leadership and Management

All the school policies reflect a commitment to equal opportunities, including race equality.

The governing body and school leadership team set a clear ethos which reflects the school's commitment to equality for all members of the school community.

The school promotes positive approaches to valuing and respecting diversity, for example in assemblies and in the curriculum.

The school management will work in partnership with others to promote equality of opportunity and oppose all forms of oppressive behaviour, prejudice and discrimination.

All staff contribute to the development and review of policy documents. The school ensures the involvement of governors and takes appropriate steps to enable the contribution of parents.

The evaluation of policies is used to identify specific actions to address equality issues.

Teaching and curriculum development are monitored to ensure high expectations of all students and appropriate breadth of content in relation to the school and the wider community.

Additional grants and resources are appropriately targeted and monitored.

5. Staffing : Recruitment and Professional Development

The school adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and LEA guidelines.

Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is informed of the contents of this policy. It is part of the new staff induction programme.

The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff are recognised and valued. All staff are given status and support and are encouraged to share their knowledge. This is an ongoing process that is part of our commitment to investors in people.

The staff handbook contains a summary of this and all school policies. Regular professional development activities are planned for all staff members to support their practice in relation to this policy.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

6. Curriculum

Curriculum planning takes account of the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all students.

The curriculum builds on students starting points and is differentiated appropriately to ensure the inclusion of:

- boys and girls;
- students learning English as an additional language;
- students from minority ethnic groups;
- students who are gifted and talented; (see G & T policy)
- students with special educational needs, including those who have visual or hearing impairments; (see SEN policy)
- students who are looked after by the local authority;
- students who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion. (see inclusion policy)

The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for students of all backgrounds.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. All subjects contribute to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all students. All resources are non-racist, without bias and do not reinforce negative stereotyping of any kind.

The content of the curriculum reflects and values diversity. It encourages students to explore bias and to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

Extra curricular activities and special events cater for the interests and capabilities of all students and take account of parental concerns related to religion and culture.

The media specialism is used to involve students in producing high quality items (films, posters, assemblies) that reflect the school's commitment to equal opportunities.

7. Teaching and Learning

Teachers ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all their contributions are valued.

All students have access to the mainstream curriculum including those with disabilities and SEN.

An assessment is made of students learning styles visual, auditory, kinesthetic and their ability to use English.

Teaching is responsive to students different learning styles and takes account of students cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs.

Teachers take positive steps to include all groups or individuals.

Student grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under continual review and are analysed by ethnicity, gender and background.

Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All pupils are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks.

Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities.

Resources and displays reflect the experience and backgrounds of pupils, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes in all curriculum areas. They are reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

8. Assessment, Student Achievement and Progress

All students have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Baseline assessment (MDYIS) is used appropriately for all students. The school ensures that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias, and that assessment methods are valid. (see assessment policy)

The school monitors and analyses pupil performance by gender, ethnicity and background and is therefore able to identify groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

Staff have very high expectations of all pupils and they continually challenge them to extend their learning and achieve higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement. (The schools motto is 'Recognising Achievement')

9. School Ethos

The school opposes all forms of racism, harassment, prejudice and discrimination.

The school publicly supports diversity and actively promotes good personal and community relations through assemblies and citizenship education. Diversity is recognised as having a positive role to play within the school.

Staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic groups.

The R.E course use of study makes students aware of the dietary and dress requirements of different religious groups.

It teaches students about festivals and other events relevant to different faiths and actively encourages all students to understand these.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that staff deal with all forms of bullying and harassment promptly, firmly and consistently. Actions taken are in line with relevant LEA policies and guidance such as those for anti-bullying and dealing with racist incidents.

All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies.

Students, staff and parents are aware of the procedures for dealing with intolerant behaviour and that such behaviour is always unacceptable.

Staff are trained to deal effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice.

10. Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions

The school expects high standards of behaviour from all students.

There are strategies to reintegrate long term truants and excluded students which address the needs of all students.

Exclusions are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken when disparity becomes significant.

The school's procedures for disciplining students and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all.

It is recognised that cultural and social background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

All staff operate consistent systems of rewards and sanctions.

Students, staff and parents are aware of procedure for dealing with harassment. They know that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is always unacceptable.

11. Personal Development and Pastoral Care

Pastoral support takes account of religious and ethnic differences.

The school provides appropriate support for students learning English as an additional language and encourages them to use their home and community languages.

All students are provided with appropriate career and post 16 advice and guidance which encourages them to consider the full range of options.

Work experience providers are required to demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunities.

Appropriate support is given to victims of harassment and intolerant behaviour, using the support of external agencies where appropriate. The perpetrators are dealt in accordance with school policies and provided with relevant support to consider and modify their behaviour.

12. Admissions and Attendance

The admissions process is monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and consistently to all students, so that pupils from particular groups are not disadvantaged.

Comprehensive information about students ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc. is included in all admissions forms.

The school and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to student attendance and absence is always followed up by appropriate personnel who are aware of community issues.

Provision is made for leave of absence for religious observance which includes staff as well as pupils.

Provision is made for students on extended leave so that they are able to continue with their learning.

Attendance is monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational need and background and action is taken in order to reduce any disparities between different groups of students.

13. Partnership with Parents and the Community

All parents are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school.

All parents are encouraged to attend student review meetings. Special arrangements are made if needed, to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue.

The school works in partnership with parents and the community to develop positive attitudes to diversity and to address specific incidents, for example by reporting student work on equal opportunities in the Media Newsletter.

The school takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under represented groups of parents and sections of the community.

Information material for parents is easily accessible in user friendly language and is available in languages and formats other than English when needed.

Informal events are designed to include the whole community.

The school's premises and facilities are available for use by all groups within the community, Evening classes can be accessed by those with limited mobility.

The school actively seeks to develop global partnerships that will raise awareness, develop understanding and promote positive attitudes to diversity.

14. Responsibilities

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the school complies with all relevant equalities legislation.

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that the policy and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy.

The member of staff named below will be responsible for co-ordinating work in equal opportunities.

15. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated every 3 years, as part of the review of the School Improvement Plan, by the member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities.

Member of staff responsible for Equal Opportunities: _____

Date of policy approved by governors: _____

Date of review of policy : _____