



Equal Opportunities Policy

Written Sept 2023

To be reviewed Sept 2024

Intent:

At Penpol we aim to ensure that all children and adults have equal opportunities in terms of access and outcome through all aspects of school life and community. We want to make sure their life chances, for the present and the future, are not impeded by anything but are in fact widened to allow them to reach their full potential.

Equal opportunities recognises and celebrates our similarities and our diversity as individuals or groups. All individuals have an intrinsic right to be nurtured in such away they are able to reach their full potential.

The Equality Act makes explicit that it is our responsibility to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In this respect, a protected characteristic could be any one of a multitude of factors that are shared by particular groups of people, but will include characteristics such as race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. Central to a commitment to fulfil this responsibility is a recognition that all groups with protected characteristics fall within the compass of the human race as a whole, and who by definition therefore have equal status and equal rights.

As a school, we are in the privileged position of supporting equality in our current practices, whilst also helping children and adults to develop and embed the principles of equality and responsibility that will best promote this in the longer term. **(Please also see the Equalities Statement)**

Equal opportunities are about creating structures and contexts for unlocking potential.

Implementation:

At Penpol, we know that meeting the needs of all, and ensuring everyone meets their individual potential, encompasses many aspects of school life as a place of education and work. We base a lot of focus on positive relationships within the school community. When children and adults feel safe, trusted, respected and represented they grow in self-worth, self-

confidence and ultimately believe they can achieve in all areas.

(See **Behaviour for Learning Policy and Relationships and Safe Touch Policy**)

We endeavour to create and maintain a school ethos which is welcoming, reflective of the diverse, multicultural society around us and fosters a sense of well-being, confidence and security. Through curriculum delivery, personal relationships, culture and ethos we aim to affirm individual choice and identity, celebrating the rich diversity of our community. We want to supportively challenge and expand horizons to encourage co-operation, confidence and respect.

- Experts deliver training to staff to confidently facilitate discussion amongst pupils, and themselves, paying attention to the language used and terms applied to sometimes sensitive conversation.
- We offer wellbeing support to pupils, staff and parents to ensure there is an open and honest discussion if needed.
- The curriculum is closely monitored to ensure all groups are represented through delivery of content, text used and through trips and visits. Subject leaders monitor the content of the curriculum to ensure it includes opportunities to address issues of inequality and has an inter-cultural and global outlook.
- Care is taken that all children have equal opportunities to take part in all school activities and individual regard is paid to those who may feel excluded for any reason.
- A taskforce meets regularly consisting of pupils, parents and governors where there is opportunity to discuss how the school is providing for all groups of the community.
- All faiths, values and cultures are respected and valued equally while their needs and experiences are valued.
- A career curriculum has been adopted to further knowledge of the opportunities open to all regardless of their life choices or social constructed bias.
- Diversity is celebrated in carefully constructed assemblies and recognising specific days in the school calendar.
- Challenge inappropriate stereotypes in all areas of the curriculum.
- Ensure there are positive role models for all groups of our school community.

Sex and Gender equality:

We aim to ensure that no discrimination takes place on the grounds of gender, transgender or sexual orientation. At Penpol, we establish an ethos of equality and adopt strategies to achieve equality of opportunity for all sexual orientations.

Sexism is the term used to describe discrimination on the basis of gender; where the operation of forces in society (beliefs, attitudes, behaviours) can allot benefits and privileges, as well as curb and limit opportunities, on the

basis of a person's gender. Conforming to gender roles can inhibit performance and aspirations of all by restricting their choices.

Penpol is committed to sexual equality and seeks to counter sexism, gender or sexuality stereotyping in order to extend the choices and horizons of all staff and children to discover who they are and reach their full potential.

Anti-Racism:

We aim to provide a curriculum which emphasises respect and understanding of all cultures and religions. We want to educate people to recognise and challenge inequality and ensure a consistent approach to tackle racism in all its forms and manage racist incidents with understanding and according to the policy guidelines and those laid out in the law.

(Behaviour for learning policy)

Racism refers to the consequence of placing social significance in concepts of race which has as their outcome the disadvantage of individuals and groups. Racism may be exhibited in many forms including physical assault, verbal abuse, insults, jokes, ridicule of an individual for cultural or religious reasons, provocative behaviour and refusal to co-operate with others because of their ethnic origins.

Race includes all practices and procedures that discriminate against people because of their race, colour, culture, nationality or ethnic origins. People are seriously harmed by it and the law recognises the seriousness of racism requiring serious action to be taken.

A racist incident is 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person' (Stephen Lawrence report 1999). All Racist incidents are fully investigated recorded and will be reported online to the LEA. Advice will be sought where appropriate.

In the past racist incidents have been under-reported and the broad definition means that any reported incident should be fully investigated. A response may well be to excuse the incident by emphasising the lack of intent. This underplays the feelings of the individual and everyone must be aware of the hurt caused. The distinctive feature of a racist incident is that a person is attacked not as an individual, but as a representative of a family, community or group. This has the potentially harmful consequences not just for the individual, but the wider community.

In order to work towards the elimination of racism we aim to promote a climate of respect and understanding and prepare people for life in an inter-cultural and increasingly global society.

We aim to:

- place value on different ethnic groups, cultures and languages in our multi racial/cultural society, recognising that culture is central to a child's identity and foster these cultures into our learning environment.

- Ensure each child is valued as an individual
- Regard bilingualism as an asset.
- Ensure that lack of fluency in English will not be used as an indication of academic potential.
- Give equal status to all ethnic groups and hold appropriately high expectations of all children.
- Foster a climate where children are confident in reporting and discussing racism.
- Ensure curriculum reflects and values cultural diversity and the wide range of social and ethnic groups in society.
- Equip children with the knowledge and skills to challenge them, that is incorporates anti-racism strategies.

Disability:

We are committed to equal access and opportunity for disabled people. Issues involving access and need are discussed with the LEA and advisory support service. Our Health and Safety manager and Site Manager work closely with the LEA to provide any equipment, modification or equipment which will enable a child or member of staff to undertake a full education or employment.

Disability is promoted through training and understanding as an equality issue.

- We work to identify and remove any physical or procedural practices which could disadvantage a child.
- Incorporate issues involving disability into the curriculum and assemblies where appropriate.
- Promote positive images of disability
- Work to facilitate access will be fully risk assessed and monitored by Governors, Site Manager and Health and Safety manager

Inter-cultural education:

At Penpol, we understand the importance of insuring our children are outward facing and have an understanding of all cultures, religions and ways of life that are present in our global society.

We also nurture and promote a sense of self in all. Representation for pupils is important when looking at self-esteem and self-worth. All children need to understand the positive role they have to play to develop a just and fair society.

- Children need to develop a respect knowledge and understanding for other cultures, religions and ways of life if they are to play a positive and effective role in our global society.
- We celebrate diversity of language, culture and religious belief in our school through a diverse curriculum, language days and visitors to the school.
- We ensure our school resources and texts reflect the diverse range of cultures and religions in our society.
- Displays around school are another way for all cultures, religions and cultures to be represented.
- We also recognise the valuable resources our children, parents, staff and community visitors can bring into our intercultural education.
- It is important that all children's experiences are valued by the school.

Employment and Staff Development:

We are committed to ensuring that all adults working at, or applying for a position, receive full and equal consideration through the whole recruitment process.

We ensure that at least one member of the panel has safety recruitment training and all procedures are followed. (**See Safer Recruitment Policy**). Any person who feels that they may have been discriminated against would be supported by a named person and made aware of the Equal Opportunities policy.

- All staff have the opportunity to attend any training that they feel would be valuable to their development.
- Any individual needs identified which may be inhibiting them from successfully accessing any part of their employment will be noted and a discussion take place about the best way to support.
- Performance management procedures provide an opportunity for staff to discuss their needs and opportunities they would like to take in order to develop.
- Time is given at points in the year to discuss the targets set and if there are any barriers in place impeding their continued development.
- Staff appraisals focus on individual development and training needs that would maximise the success of the individual.

Part-time Employees

We monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately and individually.

Termination of employment

We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

Penpol is a place where all are respected, represented and supported to reach their individual potential.

This policy is reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body