

GUILDFORD COUNTY SCHOOL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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1. THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

Guildford County School is a Foundation mixed comprehensive school, providing education for students of all abilities aged 11 to 18. We serve the local community of south-west and central Guildford, and students also come from north, west and south of the town using public transport links. Many students come from relatively affluent backgrounds, but we cater for the full socio-economic spectrum. Out of roughly 90% of students who can be placed according to social class, health, qualifications, income and employment, nearly three fifths come from wards with high socio-economic backgrounds, one sixth from average, and one seventh from below average backgrounds.

IDACI data gives a social deprivation factor of 0.044 compared with a Surrey average of 0.049, with a slightly increasing trend towards a less prosperous intake in recent years, and a higher proportion of students than in the past with family, social, or emotional difficulties. Approximately 5% of students are entitled to free school meals. Our mobility factor is 5.23 compared with 3.5 for Surrey 11-18 schools. Overall, the school has a prosperous intake of students who value education, in comparison with whom less prosperous and vulnerable students can feel disadvantaged and lose motivation.

Students come from more than 30 primary schools. Nearly 10% of students have English as an Additional Language, speaking 30 different languages, and come from ethnic minorities. Approximately 120 students (17%) are on the Learning Difficulties and Disabilities register, a small number of whom are visually, hearing or movement impaired. Very small numbers live in care or are teenage mothers, and only occasionally do we have Travellers, refugees or asylum seekers on our roll. Approximately 120 students are on the Gifted and Talented register.

Our primary purpose is to provide a service of high quality for our students and their parents or carers. We undertake to do everything as well as we can, to review our performance regularly, and always to try to improve.

The School is committed to providing equality and excellence for all by:

- developing in each student an enjoyment of learning and promoting across the school community a culture of lifelong learning
- creating an atmosphere which encourages and expects students to judge for themselves
- providing appropriate and varied challenges for everyone
- promoting tolerance and respect for others at all times within a caring and supportive environment which values diversity
- offering broad, balanced and coherent programmes of study to prepare students fully for continuing education, work and leisure in a diverse society

2. THE SCHOOL'S VISION FOR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Guildford County School aspires to be a school which:

- values and promotes excellence and recognises different kinds of success
- appreciates individual difference and fosters respect and tolerance
- encourages warm relationships, a place for all, and a safe welcoming atmosphere
- provides opportunities for everyone to give and achieve through collaboration
- values integrity, fairness and ethical conduct
- is creative, open to innovation and initiative, and respectful of tradition
- affirms in everyone a sense of identity, confidence and community

Guildford County School has a commitment to Equality and Diversity regardless of a person's perceived ability or disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class or age. The School also aims to appreciate and value the differences between individuals, in order to meet their academic, social and cultural needs.

We will seek to promote equality and embrace diversity by:

- developing awareness of equality and diversity whenever possible through what is being taught, and through teaching and learning strategies
- monitoring all aspects of our provision with the aim of continuously improving equality of opportunity
- actively challenging expressions of prejudice and taking action to stop discriminatory practices or behaviour
- providing appropriate learning support for all those students with identified needs
- seeking to appoint staff and governors of the highest calibre from minority groups to achieve as high a proportion as could reasonably be expected from the community in which the School is situated

3. THE LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Three pieces of legislation are central to our Equality and Diversity Policy:

- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005
- Equality Act 2006

This legislation imposes positive duties on all public bodies actively to promote race, disability and gender equality in everything that we do. The general duties for each are outlined below, and the specific duties are explained in the individual equality schemes.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Under the general duty of the RRAA 2000, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different races

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005

Under the DDA 2005, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled people related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others

Equality Act 2006

Under the Equality Act 2006, public authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act, and discrimination that is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

In October 2007 the Commission for Equality and Human Rights replaced the OCR, CRE and EOC with the aim of promoting a more holistic approach to equality and diversity legislation and encompassing policies and practice into one inclusive scheme/policy. The School will use the advice and materials produced by the Commission to keep this policy up to date.

Other relevant legislation

We also acknowledge that diversity and equality mean more than the promotion of race, disability and gender equality. We therefore regard the following legislation as relevant to our Equality and Diversity Policy:

- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

This legislation does not have associated positive duties to promote equality but does apply to employment and the provision of further and higher education. We will therefore aim to ensure that through our functions, policies and employment practices the School does not discriminate on any of these grounds.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body is responsible for making sure the school complies with its legal duties.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high profile lead on all Equality and Diversity issues
- promoting the Equality and Diversity Policy both inside and outside the school
- ensuring that the Equality and Diversity Policy and its procedures are followed
- keeping the governing body informed of data gained from monitoring procedures

All staff are responsible for:

- dealing with incidents relating to bias, discrimination or stereotyping on the basis of perceived ability or disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class or age
- challenging any verbal or other discriminatory behaviour used in the classroom or in a learning context
- making reasonable adjustments when providing a service to those with a disability and not treating these learners less favourably
- promoting equality and diversity for all members of the School
- showing sensitivity towards and respect for cultural diversity based on the differences between religious traditions of students or their non-belief
- developing empathy for the circumstances faced by students whose backgrounds are different from their own
- keeping up-to-date with the law on discrimination, and taking up training and learning opportunities
- familiarising themselves with guidance available on fair and appropriate language use

Students are required to

- show respect towards all members of the School community regardless of perceived ability or disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class or age

5. STAFF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Recruitment of staff will be carried out in accordance with legal requirements and equality and diversity practice. No candidate will be discriminated against on the grounds of their perceived ability or disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class or age.

- Selection for posts will be based on criteria which are written down and agreed by the appointing panel prior to advertising the post
- Interview questions will be strictly job-related
- Job sharing and proportional contracts will be considered where consistent with the operational needs of the School
- Applicants with disabilities or from ethnic minority groups will be encouraged to apply for internal and external posts.
- Measures will be taken to increase the proportion of staff from ethnic minorities and with disabilities applying for new posts whilst always appointing the strongest candidate for the post.
- Promotion will be in accordance with the commitment to equality and diversity.
- Staff training and development programmes will be offered based on objective assessment of need and appropriateness, and without discrimination.
- Should a staff member with a disability identify that their working environment or resources need to be adapted to accommodate their disability, then the requirement will be investigated and reasonable adjustments made if possible.

6. ADMISSIONS

Guildford County School is committed to a continuing policy of open admissions to the school without any selection or discrimination. The following criteria are used, in order of priority, to allocate places when the school is oversubscribed:

1. Looked After Children
2. Exceptional Circumstances
3. Sibling
4. Distance to School
5. Any Other Applicants

7. TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Teaching materials will reflect the variety of lifestyles and cultures in Britain according to the demands of the subject, and will aim to broaden students' knowledge and experience of world cultures.
- Teachers will be expected to challenge negative stereotypes based on perceived ability or disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class or age through their teaching.
- Where teachers have to use teaching and assessment materials which are discriminatory, they will identify and challenge the prejudiced assumptions of these materials.
- Teaching approaches will value the differences between cultures and the diverse backgrounds of the students.

8. COMPLAINTS

Any conduct related to equality or diversity which is unreasonable or offensive to the recipient or affects her/his personal dignity should be reported to the line manager, or any other trusted member of staff. They will then bring the matter to the attention of the Headteacher or a member of the Leadership Team. Conduct judged to be unreasonable or offensive may include verbal or physical abuse, unfair treatment, harassment, victimisation, isolation, jokes, graffiti, insensitive comments, or unwanted sexual advances.

9. PUBLICATION

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be placed on the School website. A hard copy can be made available on request.

10. CONSULTATION

The School will consult people who will be affected by our Equality and Diversity Policy and the three schemes contained within it, in particular:

- staff and students from ethnic minorities and with disabilities
- staff and students of both genders, particularly including staff who take maternity leave and any staff involved in trans-gender reassignment
- other members of the community who use the school

11. REVIEW

The impact of the policy will be monitored on a regular basis through:

- the achievement of different groups of students
- the number of racist and homophobic incidents recorded
- the incidence of complaints on grounds of disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class or age
- the profiles and responsibility structures of teaching and associate staff

The policy will also be reviewed at least every three years.

APPENDIX 1

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

The general duties of the Race Equality Scheme are embedded within the Equality and Diversity Policy.

The specific duties of the scheme are to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- encourage good relations between people of different races

In order to achieve this the School will:

- ensure that the impact of School policies on students and staff of different racial groups is assessed
- monitor the attainment and progress of students in all racial groups
- monitor the recruitment and career progress of staff in all racial groups
- take specific action to tackle any differences between racial groups in terms of their achievement levels and progress, in the use of disciplinary measures such as exclusion against them, in admissions, or in assessment
- create a positive atmosphere, where there is a shared commitment to value diversity and respect difference
- challenge and prevent racism and discrimination, including recording and reporting any racist incidents
- promote good relations between people from different racial groups
- prepare students to be full citizens in today's multi-ethnic society

APPENDIX 2

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

The general duties of the Disability Equality Scheme are embedded within the Equality and Diversity Policy.

The specific duties of the scheme are to:

- eliminate disability discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people
- eliminate harassment of disabled people
- take account of disabled people's disabilities even if this means treating disabled people more favourably
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life

In order to achieve this the school will:

- take specific action to ensure that no students suffer academically or socially because of any disability, in terms of their achievement levels and progress, in admissions, or in assessment
- create a positive atmosphere, where there is a shared commitment to value all students and staff, regardless of any disability
- challenge and prevent any discrimination against disabled students and staff

Particular areas that the school will look at are:

Student admission arrangements

There are currently no special arrangements for admission of pupils with disabilities. These will be reviewed and, if appropriate, arrangements will be put in place. This is in our Action Plan.

Educational facilities and support

The School will review the facilities and support available to students with physical or learning disabilities to establish whether these are adequate. This is in our Action Plan

Examination arrangements

Students with medical needs who wish for special examination provision are asked to bring in supporting documentation from relevant authorities. The School will then contact the examination boards on these students' behalf.

All students entitled to special examination provision will receive it in external examinations. This may be in terms of extra time, use of a word processor, a reader, an amanuensis, break times throughout the exam, taped answers, enlarged question papers, separate rooms. In internal exams they will be allocated as much of this provision as is possible.

Physical accommodation and access

Our sloping site and the age of our buildings mean that there are many steps and various levels within the school, making it extremely difficult for those with physical disabilities to move round the site. The Governors have a vision for the improvement and rebuilding of the school site, but this would involve considerable capital expenditure which is not currently available. Improved physical access and accommodation is part of the long term vision of the school. This is in our Action Plan.

Development of the policy

We will involve disabled people in the development of our policy by:

- Consulting with all known disabled users of Guildford County School wherever possible and, where necessary to progress parts of the action plan, form a working party to target and develop specific objectives,
- Trying to canvas and take onboard the comments of every disabled visitor to the school,

- including parents and members of the wider community
- Responding quickly and constructively to any complaints,
- Keeping up with the latest statutory and government guidance in order to strive for best practice.

APPENDIX 3

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

The general duties of the Gender Equality Scheme are embedded within the Equality and Diversity Policy.

The specific duties of the Gender Equality Scheme are to:

- promote equality of opportunity between men and women in all aspects of School life
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment

In order to achieve this the school will seek to ensure that:

- female and male students and prospective students have equally high aspirations
- any gender imbalance in individual subjects is gradually reduced
- both male and female students and staff feel effectively engaged in decision and policy-making on matters which have a direct effect on them
- women and men are represented at all levels of the workforce and in all areas of work
- harassment and sexual harassment of staff, service users and others is dealt with promptly and systematically, according to agreed procedures, and tolerance of harassment drops within the organisation as a whole.
- any reported level of discrimination experienced by pregnant staff and staff returning from maternity leave is eventually eliminated
- any gap between women and men's pay narrows and is eventually eliminated
- employees with caring responsibilities receive appropriate support including flexible and part-time working opportunities at all levels of work where possible
- employees who have commenced or completed gender reassignment will be supported and valued as staff and potential staff, and any barriers to their recruitment and retention are identified and removed
- employees are aware of the gender equality duty, understand how it will affect their work, and have the skills to implement the duty in their work

**APPENDIX 4
COMMUNITY COHESION**

The School will seek to promote community cohesion by

- ensuring opportunities throughout the curriculum and in all year groups for students to understand others' values, beliefs and ideas
- promoting common values and celebrating difference at every opportunity
- promoting students' awareness of human rights
- creating roles for all students in which they take responsibilities, work together, and express opinions
- ensuring a wealth of opportunities for participation and enrichment for all students
- tackling barriers to individual achievement and participation
- raising the achievement of all social, ethnic, religious and ability groups
- seeking opportunities for all students to meet and work with those from different backgrounds and customs
- provide access to the School's facilities for activities and provision for disadvantaged families in the local community
- build links with local schools to support progression and curriculum development
- build links with schools in other countries to promote international understanding

**APPENDIX 5
ACTION PLAN**

Action point	Responsible person	Time frame
Consider whether special arrangements should be put in place for the admission of disabled students	Peter Costello	July 2009
Review the facilities and support available to students with physical or learning disabilities to establish whether these are adequate	Sue Harris	July 2009
Improve the physical access and accommodation of the school	Governing Body	Long term
Consider whether information is available to all parents, in different languages, and those who do		July 2010

not have access to a computer or the internet		
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