



The Skinnners' School

Equal Opportunities Policy

At Skinnners' School we are committed in policy and practice to equality of opportunity for all those in the Skinnners' School community and those who seek to enter it. We recognise that schools exercise a powerful influence that can either reflect and aid discrimination and stereotyping or be a potent agent for countering such undesirable behaviour. Our aim is to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equal opportunities and good racial relations in all areas of Skinnners' School life. This statement affirms the Skinnners' School's commitment to work proactively to promote equal opportunities for all groups and in all areas, and offers ways of examining and, where necessary, improving professional practices.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, in particular with the Behaviour Policy, Racial Equality Policy and the Curriculum Policy. We recognise that the successful implementation of this policy requires commitment from all members of the Skinnners' School community.

1. Our Responsibility

The Governors and staff at Skinnners' School are committed to provide all students with an equal opportunity to reach their full potential irrespective of their class or social background, religion and belief, race or sex, sexual orientation, ability or medical status. We are proud of, and value, the diverse backgrounds of our students and believe that as a comprehensive school, every child has the right to a challenging and stimulating education.

We also believe that the curriculum itself should reflect the cultural diversity of our society as a whole, so that all students grow up with an awareness of the contribution made by other cultures to that society, even if they have not directly encountered them at the Skinnners' School.

The concept of equality of opportunity is one of our core values as an Skinnners' School, further reflected by our Race Equality Policy.

Staff and Governors have a vital role in ensuring the Skinnners' School is a fair place to learn and work. Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated and staff should ensure that unfair situations are recognised and dealt with including the following types of discrimination:

Direct discrimination: where workers/job applicants are treated less favourably because of their gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs.

Indirect discrimination: where selection criteria benefit, or employment rules put people at a disadvantage because of their gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs.

Harassment: behaviour that is offensive, frightening or distressing in any way.

Victimisation: when an individual is treated discriminately because s/he has made a complaint, intends to make a complaint about discrimination or harassment or has given evidence or intends to give evidence, relating to a complaint about discrimination or harassment.

2. Practice

Our Skinnners' School aims of providing a caring, supportive environment for learning will be reflected in action to promote equal opportunities in the following ways:

- a. **Recruitment & Appointments** - the Senior Leadership Team as a body will set an example in all its dealings with staff and positively promote equal opportunities through its appointments procedures. All personnel involved in selection and recruitment shall ensure that the Equal

Opportunities Policy is applied and that job offers do not overlook the possibility of part-time or job-share arrangements.

- b. **The Treatment of Staff** - No employee will receive less favourable treatment on any grounds other than those arising from good employment practice. All staff will be treated fairly and seen to be valued as individuals whatever their positions. Access to development opportunities will be open to all according to their needs. Inset training will cover the identification and countering of discriminatory attitudes. The Grievance Procedure is available to any member of staff who feels unfairly treated. Alleged breaches of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be dealt with under the Skinners' School's Disciplinary Procedure.
- c. **Documentation and Communication** - All documentation, communication and publicity will be designed to be non-discriminatory and will stress equality and the similarities of experience, abilities and problems across all groups rather than differences between people. Our aim is that images of boys and girls, different racial groups, disabled and able-bodied groups and different professions and employment will be equally presented.
- d. **Physical Access** - Access to all areas and facilities will be provided for all staff and students in so far as this is possible within the resources available. Seating arrangements in classrooms will be such as to allow girls and boys including those with disabilities equal access to equipment, teacher attention and visual aids.
- e. **Skinners' School Procedures** - We aim to provide, by means of our procedures and support systems, equality of opportunity to all staff and students.
- f. **Curriculum and Teaching Strategies** - Material will be used in a non-discriminatory and non-stereotypical way. Methods of teaching and learning will discourage prejudice and will not disadvantage any member of the Skinners' School community. Instead they will present positive role models for all groups of students and will explore issues relating to discrimination and prejudice. Staff will at all times avoid language which is discriminatory or patronising.
 - We will ensure that both boys and girls are allocated an equal share of available resources and are given the same access to careers guidance.
 - We believe that we can help to remove ignorance and misunderstanding through our curriculum. All Skinners' School activities value and reflect the diverse composition of both our Skinners' School community and the wider society.
- g. **Skinners' School Activities** - The Equal Opportunities Policy will apply to all areas of Skinners' School activities whether they be curricular, assemblies, sporting, extra curricular or work placements.
- h. **Pastoral Care and Discipline** – We maintain an effective pastoral system which gives support where necessary to each student and ensures that each student feels safe at the Skinners' School. We are completely opposed to all expressions or acts of a racist, sexist or homophobic or discriminatory nature. We will deal with all such incidents according to the agreed procedures for dealing with bullying.
- i. **Meetings** - The conduct of all those attending meetings shall reflect an awareness of and sensitivity to the rights and personalities of all those present and all participants shall have equal opportunity to express their opinions and obtain value and recognition for their contributions.
- j. **Admissions and Attendance** – Our Admissions policy is transparent and ensures a fair system in the event of over subscription which does not discriminate against any group. The attendance procedures are monitored regularly to ensure that all groups' attendance allows full access to the curriculum and associated activities.
- k. **Parents** - All parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the Skinners' School to ensure students reach their full potential. Where appropriate, additional structures are put in place to support parents. Some examples include letters translated, interpreters provided and signing for deaf parents.

3. Review

The Skinners' School's Policy, practice and results on equal opportunities will be kept under regular review and will be the subject of report to the Governing Body every other year. The practice and results in other related areas (e.g. recruitment, appointments, performance management, rewards

and sanctions, anti-bullying) will be considered and monitored to identify any indications of discriminatory and stereotyping practices and behaviour.

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