

FOX HOLLIES SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY – Students

Introduction and Rationale:

This policy describes the way in which Fox Hollies School will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. The policy will be applied to all staff and learners, as well as any volunteers working in the school

In promoting equal opportunities, attention should be paid to all aspects of special educational need, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic background as significant to the delivery of a broad and balanced education. Due attention must be paid to the provision of a curriculum that is suitably varied, differentiated and accessible to all students that their individual achievement and contribution may be promoted, recognised and valued. **An anti-discriminatory ethos is to be fostered through a proactive approach to challenging all discriminatory attitudes and practices. The Equal Opportunities Policy extends to all school students and adults associated with the school.** – See School Dignity Policy

Everyone should have the opportunity to realise their full potential with due regard to **their individual needs, ethnic diversity, gender or socio-economic background**, as is their entitlement. Students will in the school, in the community and in the wider society to promote learning and experience appropriate to addressing their educational needs and to make the National Curriculum accessible to them all. It is our intention to structure students' learning in such a way that curriculum content is delivered and matched to the learner's aptitudes and abilities.

Similarly, within the school, all students should be valued equally and have appropriate access to the curriculum taking full account of their individual needs. This should be taken to refer not only to the published curriculum but also to what is often referred to as the 'hidden curriculum' with its values, attitudes and ethos, conveyed to the students by the total environment of the school.

EQUALISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS.

Self esteem.

The Fox Hollies system of 'merits' - giving public recognition of a student's achievement - should be structured to ensure the possibility of all students gaining such recognition. All staff should aim to work within a framework that relates to what the student can do

rather than can't do and feel able to draw attention to the achievement of a student through this system.

All students should have the opportunity of giving respect to others for what they can and do achieve. Students' positive behaviour should be celebrated publicly, whilst more **negative** aspects of their behaviour should be commented on **with due sensitivity to their dignity and self esteem**.

Expectations regarding students' behaviour, appearance, aptitudes - even appetite, should be governed by knowledge of that person regardless of their sex, culture, disability or background.

Opportunity.

Information about the school, trips, events, medical examinations, annual reviews, etc. should be communicated to their parents or guardians in a way that can be readily understood by them. This is vital in a school where a) the students might not be able to impart such information to parents themselves and b) the student's parents may not be literate in English.

All students should have the opportunity to benefit from residential educational experience offered and recommended by the school. (In line with our Residential Visits Policy, each student is entitled to be offered a residential visit each alternate year of his or her school career.) The same principle of entitlement holds true for the trips into the community, outdoor activities and environmental studies field trips. Leisure pursuits inside and outside school should be arranged in such a way that all students can experience and participate in a wide variety of activities, commensurate with their skills, preferences and attributes. It is necessary to ensure easy physical access to facilities in all parts of our own school and other institutions we may use.

In summary, it is the school's responsibility to promote access for all to the full range of curriculum experience available.

Curriculum.

A school as small as Fox Hollies with its great diversity of student need has, of necessity, to structure its curriculum delivery in a very particular way to ensure breadth, balance and relevance. Each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) will identify the approach to meeting individual priorities. The IEP will identify the context of the school curriculum within which these education targets will be met. Some students will have

need to follow a Core Skills Curriculum within the subject specific curriculum. Other students will also engage in subject specific areas of the curriculum with the aim of increasing their skills and knowledge of the particular subject.

National Curriculum entitlement is delivered through a modular syllabus for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students. This ensures breadth and balance of subject delivery. Objectives and delivery styles being tailored to meet individual priorities. The FE curriculum is also modular in design but broadened to meet the needs of students in transition from school to post school life. Achievement in each subject module is evaluated on a termly basis, through assessment and recording against identified objectives.

There are frequent opportunities within the modular curricula to allow for students' own experiences to be expressed and to form the basis of much of their learning. These contributions will vary as a consequence of students' personal circumstance and cultural differences. Staff should not adopt a narrow view of what is 'correct'.

Fox Hollies recognises the need to encourage students to make choices. Staff should aim to be aware of what governs and constrains students' choices.

Staff should monitor the appropriateness of apparatus and resources used/available for use. Resources that encourage stereotyping e.g. books and photo-packs portraying stereotyped images, should be challenged and replaced by appropriate resources.

Staff should be aware that free choice can (inadvertently) result in limiting opportunity available to the less forceful or articulate student. Likewise, staff should work at providing a balance of opportunities appropriate to all students and guard against responding to the dominant members of the group at the expense of the students slow to respond.

Displays should promote positive images of people regardless of their gender, ethnicity or ability. Staff should be positive role models in promoting equal opportunities.

Conclusion.

Whilst much of the foregoing philosophy is already integrated into the ethos of the school it is imperative that discrimination and stereotyping are openly and honestly challenged.

The staff have a responsibility to actively promote equal opportunities with additional personnel involved with the students in order to ensure that working practices truly reflect this policy on a continuing basis, at all times and in all situations.