



1. INTRODUCTION

Eagle House School (Mitcham) is an independent day school, which provides an appropriate education for primary-aged pupils who hold a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health & Care plan for an autism spectrum disorder and associated social and communication difficulties. This will include children and young people with moderate or severe learning difficulties.

2. WHY WE HAVE ADOPTED THIS POLICY

This equality policy brings together all previous policies and action plans around equality and includes all the protected characteristics covered under the *Equality Act 2010*, which have the potential to discriminate against or devalue any individuals within our school community.

Our School embraces the aim of working together to improve children's educational and well-being outcomes and our policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies. This policy explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parent/carers and community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

3. OVERALL AIMS OF OUR EQUALITY POLICY

- To eliminate discrimination
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between different people with different backgrounds, sexual orientation, genders, cultures, faith, abilities and ethnic origin
- To promote positive attitudes towards the needs of children with autism to our wider school community

All of the children attending Eagle House School (Mitcham) have a disability which calls for special educational provision since they have an autism spectrum disorder or associated social and communication difficulties.

4. OUR VISION AND VALUES

At Eagle House School (Mitcham), we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils and equality of opportunity for all staff, parents/carers receiving services from the School irrespective of race, gender, disability, Faith, religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity, able to participate fully in school life, and feel valued and listened to. The development of a positive self image and respect for others is an integral part of our ethos. The achievement of pupils will be monitored closely and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, having a clear anti-bullying policy and creating an environment that supports respect for all.

5. EQUALITY IN PRACTISE

Teaching and Learning

We aim to provide our pupils with the opportunity to reach their highest level of personal achievement by:

- Being a fully-inclusive school whereby all pupils can access all activities on offer
- Providing access to an appropriate curriculum; all pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum, which incorporates the National Curriculum and is differentiated to ensure that it is accessible to each pupil. Every pupil also has an Individual Education Plans (IEP), which focuses on progress within their personal development skills
- Using an autism specific, best practice portfolio, we use whatever specialist techniques and teaching approaches needed to motivate, support and improve access for any individual pupil
- Creating a total communication environment that features a high level of visual support including signs, symbols and object clues. This includes augmentative communication systems such as *Makaton* and *PODD* (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display), which the School uses extensively for pupils without vocal language or with emerging vocal language
- Ensuring pupils have the time they need to process, acquire, develop and practice skills
- Seek to involve parents and carers in supporting their child's education at home including home visits when required, autism specific workshops and access to a dedicated parent liaison officer
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures through a range of school events e.g. Black History month
- We will not discriminate in our provision of teaching or allocating the pupil to certain classes, applying different standards of behaviour, dress and appearance, excluding pupils or subjecting them to any form of detriment
- We have a collective worship policy, which ensures that the pupils meet collectively in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. We offer all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and by providing opportunities for the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We do not to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief
- Support our pupils, to understand their behaviour and for them to recognise language and comments that can degrade or cause offense to others such as racist comments; name-calling; comments about appearance, etc.

Admissions

Our admissions process is thorough, fair and transparent. Our admissions policy and procedure is published on our website and we seek both the views of parents/carers and the pupil to understand what is important in their home life, within their family and local community. This is key as most of our children travel to school from other Local Authority areas.

Our School will not discriminate against children seeking admission or with regard to how pupils are treated, on grounds of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. We will not discriminate against pupils or potential pupils on the grounds of their sexual orientation or that of their parents, carers or other associates. Pupils or potential pupils will not be discriminated against on the grounds of the marital status or gender reassignment of parents, carers or other associates.

Behaviour and Exclusions

Young people with an autism spectrum disorder may exhibit behaviour that can be seen as unacceptable and challenging to others. They equally may not have sufficient understanding or awareness of the effects their behaviour can have on the people around them. Eagle House School (Mitcham), as part of our behaviour policy, seeks to manage challenging behaviour by:

- Establishing the underlying reasons behind the child's behaviour
- Developing appropriate strategies that will support them in their own behaviour

As a result, exclusion is seen as a very last resort and only considered when all other strategies have been exhausted. Where it is considered, it will only be for severe cases of aggressive or persistently disruptive behaviour when there is a potential health and safety risk to the pupil, other pupils or staff around them.

Where it is possible the School will work with the parents/carers and the pupils Local Authority to creatively resolve issues often seeking the advise of other professionals and support agencies.

Equal opportunities for staff

As an employer we ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality in our staff team. We do this through:

- monitoring recruitment and retention
- rigorous monitoring of any cases of bullying and harassment
- continued professional development opportunities for all staff
- a monthly staff council meeting where all staff groups are represented
- all staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability in compliance with the law

Staff training

Staff at Eagle House School are trained in the education of pupils with an autism spectrum disorder. Staff are also trained to be sensitive to the needs of pupils with disabilities additional to their autism because they may have more than one discrete disability, for example epilepsy. Staff work to provide pupils with the best possible opportunities to access all that the Eagle House School curriculum offers.

The school environment

- Frequent premises audits to ensure the implementation of a rolling improvements programme to the school site in order to advance pupil access to education and associated services.
- The installation of autism-friendly equipment such as high frequency fluorescent light tubes throughout the School reducing the risk of triggering epileptic fits in pupils; flattened classroom acoustics for pupils with autism, hyperacusis or sound sensitivity; windows covered with *Makrolon* to minimise the risk of injury to pupils who engage injurious behaviours.
- A termly environmental audit that looks at how conducive the teaching and learning environment is to the needs of the pupils i.e. visual support, organisation, physical structure, use of TEACCH, heat, lighting, sound, etc.

Physical environment

Eagle House School has a cohort of pupils with an autism spectrum disorder and associated social and communication disorders. Many of our pupils are likely to exhibit aggressive and violent behaviour at some point during their time with us. As such, a child with more severe physical disabilities would be considered to be at risk and vulnerable.

Eagle Court is a more modern building and the ground floor is suitably accessible, via the main doors, to visitors with mobility difficulties including wheelchair users. There is a designated disabled toilet for visitors with mobility difficulties or wheelchair users.

The main school building, *Eagle House*, was built in 1705 and is registered with *English Heritage* as a Grade 1 Listed Building. The building has six flights of stairs, another staircase and other physical restrictions, which might impair accessibility for individuals with mobility difficulties. Given the building's special legal status, which is monitored by English Heritage, it is not possible for the school to increase or improve physical access for individuals with such difficulties, for example by installing a lift or ramps, as such works would contravene the listed building regulations.

Review of pupil progress and impact

We make regular assessment of pupils learning and use this information to track pupil progress and take appropriate action to address any gaps. We collect and analyse the following:

- The performance of children who are looked after and those in receipt of Pupil Premium
- Attendance
- Monitoring of IEP targets

We will seek to monitor the progress of children from minority groups across each academic year.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Directors

The Directors will ensure that:

- the School complies with equality related legislation
- the policy is implemented by the Head of Education
- all other School policies promote equality
- due regard is given to *Equality Act 2010* when making decisions

The Head of Education

The Head of Education will ensure:

- the implementation of the policy and related procedures
- all staff are aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy
- That appropriate action is taken in case of actual or potential discrimination
- That all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff
- That all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice related incidents

All Staff

All staff will ensure:

- That they enact this policy, it's commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy
- Bullying and discriminatory incidents are dealt with, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping
- The promotion of equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds
- They attend training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation
- To be models of equal opportunity through their words and actions
- That pupils are supported in refraining from discriminatory behaviour or any behaviour that contravenes this policy

Visitors (parents/ carers, helpers and contractors)

Visitors will ensure:

- They are aware of and comply with, the School's equality policy
- They refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour (i.e. racist language)

7. CATEGORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

The *Equality Act 2010* states that there are seven categories of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating a person less favourably than others in comparable circumstances because of a 'protected characteristic' such as sex, race or a disability is unlawful.
- **Associative discrimination:** direct discrimination against a person who associates with another person with a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination:** it is unlawful when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all but has a different impact on a person with a protected characteristic. (indirect discrimination is only lawful if it can be justified for reasons unrelated to the characteristic in question).
- **Victimisation:** treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague, is unlawful.
- **Harassment:** unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on grounds of one of the relevant characteristics such as sex or race – is also unlawful in many of the situations covered by discrimination law.
- **Harassment by a third party:** harassment by people not employed by the school e.g. contractors.
- **Discrimination by perception:** discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic (even if they don't).

8. POLICY REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Head of Education supported by the other members of the school's Senior Leadership Team to monitor this policy. It should be reviewed annually or when new legislation is published. The Head teacher reports on Eagle House School (Mitcham) matters to the CEO/Directors.

9. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| ❖ Collective worship Policy | ❖ Complaints Policy |
| ❖ Recruitment Policy | ❖ Anti-Bullying Policy |
| ❖ Admissions Policy | ❖ Curriculum Policy |

❖ SMSC Policy

❖ Exclusions Policy

❖ Behaviour Policy

Appendices:-

➤ *DDA 3 Year Action Plan*

Document:	Equality and Access Policy
Date adopted/written:	July 2011
Last Reviewed:	August 2017
Next review:	August 2018
Version:	Final



The implementation of this plan and the access needs of the school will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and kept under review.

	Target	Strategies	Impact	Timeframe	Success Criteria
Access to the curriculum	To increase staffing levels to provide 1:1 Support for specified pupils and to ensure the needs of each pupil's EHC plan are fully met and addressed	Staffing numbers in all classes will be increased as necessary 2017 LSA staffing numbers between 2014-2017 have increased by 40% to support more complex needs pupils/those needing additional support 2017 – appointment of an in school Educational Psychologist to assess and support those pupils with specific learning difficulties and barriers to learning in addition to their ASD	Additional staff will enable pupils to fully access the curriculum	Autumn term 2016 onwards	Pupils fully accessing the curriculum. Pupil's making expected levels of progress in all curriculum areas.
	Provide a range of portable technology within each class	Portable iPads were introduced in 2017 Autumn 2017 – full 3 year IT development plan to be developed	Pupils will access a range of curriculum activities through alternative means	Autumn term 2014 onwards	All classes allocated an iPad which is used for a range of curriculum activities including reading, writing and mathematics All pupils making expected levels of progress
	To access specialist teaching input for specified pupils	Liaise with local authorities to access specialist teaching services such as VI and HI teachers as appropriate	Staff learn and apply new skills and equipment to enable pupils with additional needs to fully access the curriculum	On going	Pupils with additional needs making 'expected' progress in line with their class peers

Physical environment	Planned programme of improvement to all classrooms and communal areas to include: New flooring, ICT room, new furniture, improved toilet facilities, improved acoustics, improved medical room Improved entry system	School business manager to lead on improvements using CAPEX funding Autumn 2017 – full 3 year feasibility study to review existing and potential new build facilities to create larger, more ASD specific class rooms and an larger hall plus a focus on early years provision	Provision of high quality teaching and learning environment for all pupils staff and visitors	On going – 2016 - 2019 see planned programme of work	All pupils, staff and visitors enjoying a high quality environment
Delivery of information	Availability of written text material in alternative formats using the 'Boardmaker' programme	Investment in appropriate on line technology to convert written information into visual format and PODD apps on tablets	More effective access to information by pupils, increased pupil voice and ability to make choices	On going	The school provides written information such as pupil questionnaires in alternative formats that can be accessed by all pupils at a level appropriate to their cognitive ability