

Race Equality Policy

Introduction

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, every school in Britain is required to prepare and maintain a written race equality policy. Medina House School welcomes its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

This policy has been compiled in accordance with the Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality issued by the Commission for Racial Equality in December 2001, and Preparing a Race Equality Policy for Schools, issued in March 2002. The CRE's handbook Learning for All was also a helpful guide.

The policy reflects concerns and concepts in The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain ('The Parekh Report'), 2000, and The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry ('The Macpherson Report'), 1999. Both these argued that the promotion of race equality necessarily involves also the recognition of cultural diversity. The policy reflects these arguments both in its overall title and in several of its detailed references.

This policy is consistent with the requirements and expectations of Ofsted, as presented in Evaluating Educational Inclusion: guidance for inspectors and schools, issued in 2000, and Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils: school and LEA responses, issued in 1999.

Context of Medina House from a Race Equality Perspective

Newport is in a predominantly white area of a largely white island population. The ethnic composition of pupils and staff at Medina House reflect the surrounding area. Although there is a recognition that a wider range of cultural backgrounds at a range of professional levels within Medina House would be beneficial.

Medina House has a 30% mobility rate year on year (09/06 - 09/07)

The level of racist incidents within school over the last year has been 0. This is predominantly due to the severe and complex level of learning difficulties of pupils where their awareness of difference and themselves is at a developmental level and there is a global belief in racial equality within the school.

Aims

We aim to:

- promote good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities
- challenge racial discrimination aiming to eliminate unlawful discrimination
- ensure that every learner, parent/carer, member of staff, visitor and volunteer can make a positive contribution in an environment in which they are kept and feel safe and valued through the promotion of health, achievement, enjoyment and equality of opportunity.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling our legal duties listed above, we are guided by three essential principles:

- All pupils and staff should have opportunities to achieve the highest possible standards, and the best possible preparations for the next stages of their life and education.
- All pupils and staff should be helped to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that is confident and open to change, and that is receptive and respectful towards other identities.

- All pupils and staff should develop the knowledge, understandings and skills that they need in order to participate in Britain's multi-ethnic society, and in the wider context of an interdependent world.

Policy into Practice

The Head Teacher is designated to lead on the development of this policy. The procedure for development of the policy is also aimed at raising awareness of its content and aims. The procedure for policy development is:

- a) head teacher to review policy (April)
- b) disseminated to staff and collate feedback (May)
- c) parents informed of the policy review and given the opportunity for them to have a copy and input into the development of the policy – through newsletter and website (June)
- d) present draft policy to governors to review and approve amendments and ratification (July)
- e) review policy with staff annually
- f) As part of Medina House's Development Plan cycle and self evaluation the impact and implementation of this policy will be reviewed. Any areas of concern or improvement will then be addressed through an action plan.

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors, and also, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents.

As each existing policy is reviewed we ensure that the principles listed are thought about and embedded into policy and practice. Policies reflecting the principles of race equality will include:

- pupils' progress, attainment and assessment
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- pupils' personal development and pastoral care
- teaching and learning
- admissions and attendance
- the content of the curriculum
- staff recruitment and professional development
- partnerships with parents and communities

All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of race equality and cultural diversity in appropriate detail. These include :

- Equals Schemes of Work – PSHE and Citizenship unit 4 – 'Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.'
- B'Squared Assessment System – PHSE and Citizenship
- Race Equality Scheme – May 2005 DFES – available from the school and www.dfes.gov.uk

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to:

- a) deal with racist incidents that may occur
- b) know how to identify and challenge racial and cultural bias and stereotyping
- c) support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- d) incorporate principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work.

Addressing racism and xenophobia

The school is opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example Islamophobia, and against Travellers, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Religious observance

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Support for people experiencing racial incidents and harassment

We recognise that all individuals may need immediate support and must be reassured that the matter will be treated seriously. The support of external agencies will be used if appropriate.

Support for students

Staff should provide appropriate support for the individual, which may include;

- listening attentively or be able to interpret alternative forms of communication
- indicating that they are pleased that the young person has been able to tell them
- remain calm and reassuring
- accepting their language and terminology
- remembering that to confide in a member of staff may need considerable courage
- acknowledging the feelings of the young person
- showing they understand the difficulty in discussing the matter
- establishing whether the incident is part of a pattern
- reassuring while explaining the need to take the matter further

If the student is clear that they do not want any further action to be taken, the incident should nevertheless be reported and recorded.

We will ensure that parents/carers are aware of the incident and kept well informed of the progress of any investigation.

Support for others

We recognise that members of staff, parents/cares and governors can also experience racial harassment from members of the school community or visitors. We will support them in the same way as we would students.

Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Monitoring and evaluation

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate. Records of racial attack are kept and monitored.

This policy will be reviewed annually any issues relating to the implementation of the policy will be reviewed through Medina House self evaluation procedures, and at any other time in response to advice from local or national authorities.

Racist Incidents

Definitions: A racist incident is: "an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. It may be perpetrated against individuals on the basis of their race, colour, nationality, culture, language or religion. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, Report of an inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, February 1999, Recommendation 12.

Racial Harassment is: 'Verbal or physical violence and/or behaviour towards individuals or groups on grounds of their colour, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or culture where the aggrieved believe the aggression was racially motivated, and/or there is evidence of racial motivation. Racial harassment includes attacks on property as well as people.' Brighton and Hove Racial Harrassment Forum

Examples of racist behaviour

A racist incident may include:

- derogatory name-calling, insults, racist jokes and language
- verbal abuse and threats
- physical assaults
- ridicule based on differences of colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, religion or language
- refusal to cooperate with others because of any of the above differences
- stereotyping on the basis of colour, race, ethnicity etc.
- racist comments
- racist graffiti or written abuse
- damage to property
- incitement of others to act in a racist manner
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist badges or insignia
- bringing racist materials such as leaflets, magazines or computer software on to the premise
- recruiting other young people to racist organisations or groups

All alleged racist incidents will be investigated in accordance with Medina House School's behaviour and discipline policy. If the student is clear that they do not want any further action to be taken, the incident should nevertheless be reported and recorded.

Investigators will pay particular attention to insuring a thorough and balanced, impartial approach to the collection and interpretation of evidence.

In addition to the standard procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, where is the allegation, or indication that there may be a racial element to the incident, it will be dealt with as a racist incident.

The investigating member of staff will inform the Head teacher or deputising teacher as soon as reasonably practicable.

The documentation will be completed taking care to ensure a thorough coverage of the following:

- Date, time and location of the incident.
- Description of the incident (witness names if applicable).
- Context (include any background to the individuals involved and the relationship between them, any special needs or medication which may be relevant).
- Action taken (including parental/carer responses).

The incident report will be copied to each child's file, and to the racial incident's file.

Both sets of parents or carers will be informed of both the incident and the action taken by the school, preferably by telephone and the earliest opportunity.

The LA will be informed.

The Crime and Disorder Office - Isle of Wight will be informed.

Policy reviewed April 2008

Signed

Date