

Middlewich High School



Equal Opportunity Policy 2019

Agreed by staff and governors: January 2019
Next review date: January 2022

Achievement for all

Introduction

This policy statement outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of Middlewich High School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. These include:

- Students
- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- Parents
- Governors
- Visitors to the school
- Students on placement.

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life, and is the responsibility of every member of the school community.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community. The responsibility for keeping the issue of equal opportunity at a high level of priority at all times and in all areas is the member of the Leadership Group responsible for Inclusion.

All members of the school community should be aware that every individual has a right to be considered of equal value and be given equal opportunities regardless of the following "protected characteristics":

- Ethnicity/Race/Colour
- Gender (including transgender or undergoing gender reassignment).
- Social background
- Ability/Disability
- HIV/AIDS
- Age
- Marital or civil partner status
- Nationality/Citizenship
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity

In the context of the school we feel the most appropriate definition is that:

"Equal opportunity is the right of everyone to equal chances, and each individual is respected for who they are."

The school is committed to contributing to

1. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Ethos and Atmosphere

- At Middlewich High School we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community.
- There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school.
- Students and staff are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.
- The displays around the school are of high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity.
- Through our accessibility plan physical access to the school and its facilities can be easily arranged for disabled visitors.
- Access can be provided for parents with impaired mobility, as mentioned in the 'Young Carer's Policy.
- Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of both assemblies and classroom activities.

Learning Environment

- There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All students are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.
- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students. All adults in the school try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- We aim to meet all students' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work.
- The school places a very high priority on the provision for students who have a special educational need and/or disability.
- The school provide an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- All students are actively involved in their own learning.
- A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students.

The taught curriculum

- At Middlewich High School we aim to ensure that our planning reflects our specific commitment to equality of opportunity in all subject areas and cross curricular themes in line with the National Curriculum.
- Our planning takes account of the differing needs of students and their progression.
- We have a commitment to evaluate our curricular outcomes regularly through monitoring by senior and middle leaders to ensure that what we have actually planned takes place.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within Middlewich High School is a high priority. These resources should:

- reflect “the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society”
- reflect a variety of viewpoints
- show positive images of males and females in society including people with disabilities
- reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues
- be equally accessible to all members of school community consistent with health and safety
- not include explicitly or implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or ageist materials. Our materials seek to promote all areas of equality.

Language

We recognise that it is important at Middlewich High School that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
- does not offend
- creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- use correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals

Organisation of Learning

When organising groups for various activities, consideration is always given to the composition of the group, to provide a balance appropriate to the activity.

At Middlewich High School our environment is not culturally diverse, and we are very conscious of the need to provide first hand experiences for the students to encounter people from other cultures. We do this by providing opportunities to study different cultures e.g. visiting speakers and World Challenge.

Extra-curricular provision

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all extra-curricular activities to all students.

We undertake responsibility for making contributors to extra-curricular activities aware of the school’s commitment to equality of opportunity e.g. sports helpers.

We are committed to ensuring that all such non staff members who have regular contact with students adhere to these guidelines.

Provision for Bilingual students

We undertake at Middlewich High School to make appropriate provision for all bilingual groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- students who use British Sign Language as their main form of communication

- students whose home language is not a standard form of English
- students for whom English is an additional language.
- Traveller children
- those from refugee families

While there is a need for students to learn to communicate in standard English we believe that their home language should be celebrated and respected.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models. This must include students' access to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages.

We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals through Performance Management and Appraisal.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of students in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g.

- unwanted attentions (verbal or physical)
- unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, disability or any other protected characteristic.

The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these – see Anti-bullying Policy.

Parents and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all students to achieve their potential.

We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to reach out to other diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond.

Monitoring and Review

The person on the staff responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the policy is the member of the Leadership Group responsible for Inclusion. S/he will be responsible for:

- Leading discussions in designated staff meetings which will include support staff, to discuss issues of equal opportunities within the school community.
- Working closely with the Governor responsible for this area – Mr A Gibson

- Working with the member of the Leadership group with responsibility for achievement and progress to address gaps between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, by monitoring:
 - information gathered at each data drop as a means of continuous assessment of learning and progress
 - GCSE predicted and actual results
 - results from screening for specific learning needs (in conjunction with the SENCO)
- Monitoring the following to enable the school to see where equality of opportunity needs to be more intensely focused:
 - participation in extra-curricular activities
 - exclusions and truancy
 - racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic incidents, in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy
 - attendance