



The John Roan School

Equal Opportunities Policy

**Whole School Policy
Statement**

Date of Last Revision: April '08



Founded 1677

HONORE ET LABORE

Through work and honour

VISION

The John Roan School will be at the heart of lifelong learning within a caring community.

Our innovative, exciting environment is a place where teaching and learning is fun, challenging and matched to the abilities, aspirations and learning styles of each individual.

The school will be a centre of excellence, which enables all to become active citizens in the global community

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Learning together, achieving together, creating our future together

THE JOHN ROAN SCHOOL

Equal Opportunities Policy

Incorporates

The Race Equality Policy (Race Relations Act Amendment Act 2000).
The Disability Equality Duty (Disability Discrimination Act December 2006).
The Gender Equality Duty (Gender Equality Act April 2007).
The Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amendment) Regulations 2003.
The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) April 2007.

At The John Roan School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for staff, pupils and all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, religion, disability and gender. The achievement of all pupils and students will be monitored on the basis of race, disability and gender and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will aim to provide our pupils with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of race, disability, gender or stereotypes. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against pupils and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation. At The John Roan School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Note: Within this policy the term 'parent/s' is used to mean parents, carers, guardians. This policy sets out our principles regarding our duty to promote equality and how we implement and monitor it. The principles apply to our Race Equality Duty, Disability Equality Duty, Gender Equality Duty and Sexual Orientation Equality Duty, all of which are similar in spirit. We are committed to actively tackling all forms of discrimination, to promoting equality and to eliminating all unlawful discrimination.

1. The School Context:

The school is situated in Blackheath (South East London) in one of the wealthiest wards in the borough. However, it draws its intake from some of the poorest wards. Approximately, 50% of pupils are from ethnic minority groups; pupils speak over 38 languages at home, in addition to English and have a range of religious beliefs, family structures and cultural backgrounds. The gender balance of the school is approximately 59% boys 41% girls, but in some year groups the balance is even more weighted towards boys (60%/40%). Both sites have been adapted to facilitate access for the disabled. There are a small number of students in the school who are travellers, refugees and asylum seekers.

2. Aims and Values:

There is no such thing as a 'level playing field'. At The John Roan School we start from the understanding that children's life chances are already unequal at the point of entry into our school. The school opposes all forms of sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, prejudice and discrimination. We recognise diversity as a positive force within our school.

This policy is our statement of recognition of our responsibility to help each individual find his/her own way of rising to an increasing range of challenges and to develop their unique talents, skills and traits as far as it is possible to do so during their secondary school years.

Equality of opportunity applies also to all members of the school community – students, staff, governors, parents and community members. The school seeks to be a caring, supportive partnership of students, staff, parents and the wider community.

We recognise the importance of ascertaining staff, governors, parents and students' views that encourage an active participation in shaping and reviewing school policy and practice and in particular if we are to create a sense of 'our school' for these most important members of its community. To this end we have an active Student Council and system of communication which allows for all students' views to be aired and listened to. There are whole school staff, senior leadership, school governor meetings and parent day / evenings that are held on a regular basis which provide other opportunities.

Equal Opportunities Statement

All Different, All Equal

The John Roan School values each member of the school community. We are committed to creating equal opportunities for people of all races, nationalities, cultures, religions, sexual orientation or gender whatever their class, age, physical and intellectual ability. We are committed to the belief that each person has the right to work and to learn in an atmosphere of respect and safety and to have an equal opportunity to achieve their academic potential, and to develop socially and personally as a unique individual. We value and accept each other's differences and feelings. Remarks or actions which hurt or offend are unacceptable and will always be tackled by the school in an appropriate way.

The John Roan School's Commitment to Race, Disability and Gender Equality

Legal Duties

This school welcomes its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, The Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amendment) Regulations 2003, The Equality Act 2006 and The Disability Discrimination Act 2006. We are committed to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and pay.
- Promoting good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups and communities.
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment in any form.

Guiding Principles

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

- Every student and person associated with the school should have the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards and the best possible qualifications for the next stages of their life and education.
- Every student and person associated with our school 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.
- Every student and person associated with our school should develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that they need in order to participate in Britain's multi-ethnic society and in the wider context of our interdependent world.

The John Roan School's Commitment to Disability Equality

We actively promote opportunities to access the full curriculum for disabled students (physical and mental impairment including dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, asperger's syndrome, diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, mental health problems, hearing and sight) and for staff who have disabilities to teach it. Each person will be recognised as having individual needs. Whilst our buildings present limitations, we do adapt the rooming / timetabling to ensure the needs of wheelchair users are taken into account. We ensure our disabled students do not receive less favourable treatment than others via individualised systems of target-setting, review and assessment and via in-class differentiation of learning activities across all subjects. When planning activities both within and beyond classrooms, we make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students and staff can engage fully in the activities and are supported.

3. Leadership, Management and Governance

The John Roan School governing body maintains an overview of implementation of the policy and has race, gender and disability equality as a regular item at governors' meetings to ensure the policy is followed.

Responsibilities:

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with Race Relations, Gender, Disability and other anti-discriminating legislation.
- Ensuring that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.
- The Governors Equal Opportunities and Raising Achievement committee meet termly to examine the school's policy and practice.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy and its related procedures and strategies.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support.
- Taking appropriate action in any cases of discrimination.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with racist incidents, and knowing how to identify and challenge all forms of harassment, bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting equality of opportunity, good race relations and eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- Keeping up to date with anti-discrimination legislation by attending training and information opportunities.
- Supporting students in their class for whom English is an additional language.
- Incorporating principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work.
- Making visitors and contractors aware of, and ensuring they comply with, the school's equal opportunities policy, including race, gender and disability equality.

The member of staff identified as having specific responsibility for co-ordinating racial, gender and disability equality work is the Assistant Headteacher for Equal Opportunities who works in conjunction with the Deputy Head Curriculum and the School's supportive education faculty.

Subject Leaders, College Leaders and Senior Staff are responsible for dealing with reported incidents of racism or racial harassment according to the school's policy and guidelines (see appendix "Dealing with racist incidents").

The Deputy Curriculum and Assistant Headteacher Equal Opportunities are also responsible for ensuring that records of incidents and follow up decisions are reported termly to the LA as required by Gender Equality Scheme.

Breaches of the Policy

Action will be taken against any individual who does not comply with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy according to the school's disciplinary code.

4. Policy Planning and Review

In line with the General Duty of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 (including the DDA 2005 Part 4) and the Gender Equality Act 2007, all policies, functions and strategies will be regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in: a) eliminating all forms of discrimination b) promoting all forms of equality c) promoting good race, disability and gender relations.

The school also has specific duties to assess and monitor the impact of its policies on pupils, parents and staff from different racial, gender and disability groups.

We will do this in the following ways:

Policy Planning and Development

- Build race, disability and gender equality impact questions into policy development and planning processes.
- Incorporate race, disability and gender equality targets into relevant strategic plans (School Improvement Plan).

- Assess the impact of the policy through consultation, evaluation and auditing tools e.g. "Learning for All", to identify race, disability and gender equality targets and action.

Ethnic, Disability and Gender Monitoring

- Use data to monitor the attainment and progress of pupils by disability, gender / racial group and to set targets.
- Ensure that the monitoring data by racial, disability and gender groups e.g. Attainment, progress, exclusions, sanctions and rewards are used to inform planning and decision-making.

Review and Assessment of Policy

- Regularly review, monitor and assess all policies and strategies for their effectiveness and impact in eliminating racial, disability and gender discrimination and promoting all forms of equality and good race relations.
- Build racial, disability and gender equality questions into school self-review and evaluation frameworks.
- Use the results of reviews and assessments to inform all planning and decision making.

Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and the Council. Members of the school community will also be kept informed, ensuring that no individual can be identified.

5. Implementing the Policy

The school will review the policy every three years through the following mechanisms:

- School examination results by racial, disability and gender groups.
- Analysis of racist incidents.
- Exclusions.
- Report induction and training of all new staff.
- Organisation of teaching groups by disability, gender and ethnicity.

The Governors' Equal Opportunities Committee will ensure that the review of the policy takes place and implications and targets are reported to the whole Governing Body.

6. Training and Development

The school is committed to supporting a training strategy for the professional development of all staff and the Leadership Group will ensure that all staff are made aware of Race, Disability and Gender Equality Policy with its implications. All new staff and governors will be made aware of the school's policy on Equal Opportunities, Race, Disability and Gender Equality and the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment, Disability Discrimination and Gender Equality Acts. This will be implemented through the Induction Programme for all new teaching and support staff. The training will be monitored and evaluated through the senior member of staff responsible for Professional

Development and through line managers of support staff (Premises, Office Staff, Contract Staff and Technicians). The Governors will require a report about the monitoring and evaluation of training.

7. Admissions and Attendance

The admissions policy at The John Roan School is administered by the Local Authority on behalf of the school at transfer from primary to secondary. It is monitored by the Gender Equality and Disability Equality Schemes to ensure it is administered fairly and equitably to all pupils and it enables the pupil population of the school to reflect the balance of the local community including those for whom English is an additional language. Comprehensive information about students' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs and diet is included in all admission forms to the school.

The school will ensure that staff and families are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to student attendance. Pastoral staff and the School Attendance Officer always follow up absence. The religious beliefs and practice of staff, students and parents / carers are respected, and reasonable requests for leave of absence for religious observance, which also includes staff, are considered sympathetically. Strategies to re-integrate long-term truants and excluded pupils are described in the Attendance Policy and these address the needs of all students from all backgrounds.

8. Attainment, Progress and Assessment

The John Roan School staff have high expectations of all students and they continually challenge them to reach higher standards. The school recognises and values all forms of achievement; academic, practical, artistic, technical, sporting, personal and social.

The monitoring and analysing of pupils' performance by gender, disability, ethnicity and background enable the identification of groups of pupils where there are patterns of underachievement. The school ensures that action is taken to counter this.

All students have the opportunity to achieve their highest standards. Assessment is used appropriately for all students, and staff use a range of methods and strategies to assess pupil progress (see Assessment Policy). The school ensures where possible, that assessment is free of gender, cultural and social bias; and that conditions, such as, dyspraxia, dyslexia and others which might affect a student's formal assessment activities are acknowledged.

Self-assessment provides all students with opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through reflection and feedback on their progress. All pupils have full opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do and therefore, to benefit from assessment.

9. School Ethos: Equal Opportunities

The John Roan School opposes all forms of sexism, racism, xenophobia, prejudice and discrimination. We publicly support diversity and actively promote good personal and community relations. Diversity is recognised as having a positive and enriching role to play within the school. Our aims and values and commitment to equal opportunities are

written in the school prospectus, the student planner and in all information to new intake parents and pupils. Assemblies reflect our commitment to equal opportunities, gender, disability equality and the promotion of good race relations. Displays around the school reflect the diversity of community. All staff foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all ethnic, gender and disability groups.

Clear procedures are in place to ensure that all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly, firmly and consistently. All forms of harassment are recorded, monitored and dealt with in line with relevant school policies. Racist incident forms are returned on a termly basis to the Education Directorate. All staff are aware of the procedures for dealing effectively with bullying, racist incidents, racial harassment and prejudice (see appendix "Dealing with Racist Incidents").

10. Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

The John Roan School has a clear and accessible code of conduct for students which is made available to all new intake parents and students and published in the student planner. The school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all. It is recognised that cultural background may affect behaviour. The school takes this into account when dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. All staff aim to operate consistent systems of rewards and discipline.

Exclusions and attendance are monitored and action is taken in order to reduce gaps between different groups of pupils.

Pupils, staff and parents / carers are aware of procedures for dealing with harassment. We aim to ensure that all members of the school community understand that any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic or potentially damaging to any minority group is unacceptable.

11. Personal Development and Pastoral Care

The pastoral support system at The John Roan School takes account of the religious and cultural diversity of students' backgrounds and beliefs and the experiences of particular groups of pupils, e.g. Refugee and Asylum seeker children. The school provides appropriate support for EAL pupils and encourages them to use their home and community languages. The school takes account of and meets the needs of Traveller pupils and Gender Equality Scheme support.

All pupils are provided with appropriate career advice and guidance at school and through the Connexions service. We encourage all pupils to aim high and avoid stereotype assumptions about careers and jobs. Through the "Aim Higher 'Aspire' " programme we seek to encourage pupils in wider participation of further and higher education. Work experience providers are informed of our equal opportunities policy.

12. Teaching and Learning

Teachers aim to ensure that the classroom is an inclusive environment in which pupils feel all contributions are valued. Where groups or individuals are marginalized, the teacher takes positive steps to include them in learning both within and beyond the

classroom. Teaching is responsive to pupils' different learning styles with the teacher taking positive steps to include all groups or individuals. Teachers aim to ensure that student grouping in the classroom is planned and varied. Allocations to teaching groups are kept under review by Heads of Department / Faculty and are analysed by ethnicity, disability and gender. Teaching styles include collaborative learning so that pupils appreciate the value of working together. All students are encouraged to question, discuss and collaborate in problem solving tasks. Teachers encourage pupils to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers challenge stereotypes and foster pupils' critical awareness and concepts of fairness, enabling them to detect bias and challenge inequalities. We aim to ensure that resources and displays reflect the experience and background of students, promote diversity and challenge stereotypes across the curriculum. They are reviewed to ensure that they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.

13. Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to ensure **inclusion** of all students: boys and girls, students with English as an additional language, students who are Gifted and Talented, students with special educational needs, students from all ethnic groups and students who are in care.

We offer a **range** of academic, specialist and vocational options, some of which are developed in partnership with other providers, and which are responsive to changes in local employment patterns, including those generated by the Thames Gateway developments. We are committed to offering equality of opportunity for all our learners to follow a programme of **vocational and Work Related Learning**. In our guidance towards courses at Key Stage 4 and beyond, and in our placements for Work Experience, we address issues of stereotyping, discrimination, harassment and disability.

Students are carefully **targeted** and **guided** towards their course choices at each Key Stage. This helps us to ensure that each individual's learning is pitched at an appropriate level of challenge to match the student's potential and aspirations. For example, when students with English as an additional language are grouped we take into account their likely pace of development as English language users.

All subjects on the curriculum are planned to incorporate the principles of equality of opportunity and to promote positive attitudes towards **diversity**. Through the **content** and **delivery** of the curriculum we encourage students to explore racism, sexism and other forms of oppression and to challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

Extra curricular **enrichment activities** cater for the interests and abilities of all students. Via our **Aim Higher** programme we identify students with no family history of Higher Education, or who are facing other barriers to continuing their education post 16 and beyond. These students are targeted for Aim Higher activities such as university visits, support completing their UCAS applications, financial support post 16 (Education Maintenance Allowances) and interview practice.

From 2003-4 we began developing a range of curriculum pathways to provide for different sorts of learners and to increase **flexibility of choice** for students as they progress

through Key Stage 4 and 5. We will make full use of the National Qualifications Framework to provide appropriate pathways for progression.

We will continue to explore **innovative patterns of delivery** in order to accommodate our expanding pathways. We are currently embarking on a new curriculum model which increases the range of study options and examination timings available for students.

14. Staffing: Recruitment and Professional Development

The John Roan School adheres to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equal and in line with statutory duties and the Council's guidelines. Steps are taken to encourage people from under-represented groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school. Information about the school's aims, values and equal opportunities policy is sent to all applicants for posts in the school. The skills of all staff, including support and part-time staff are recognised and valued. Staff handbooks and regular professional development activities are available for all staff members to support their practice.

Staff and visitors provide a wide range of role models and reflect the diversity of the local and wider community.

The Governing body (Equal Opportunities Committee) monitors staff by grade, gender, disability and ethnicity and provides the data to the Council on request.

15. Partnership with Parents and the Community

The John Roan School seeks to work in partnership with parents / carers who are encouraged to participate at all levels in the full life of the school. Information and meetings for parents and carers are made accessible to all. The school takes steps to encourage the involvement and participation of under-represented groups of parents and sections of the community. Information material for parents is accessible in user-friendly language and is available on request in languages and formats other than English through the use of interpreters. Times of parent evenings are designed to include the whole community. The school's premises and facilities are accessible to the disabled.

16. Monitoring and Review

All members of staff and the governing body have responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

The Governors Raising Achievement Committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy every three years. In terms of gender, it will be based on achievement of pupils, staff satisfaction levels and distribution of staff pay scales.

17. Involvement and Consultation

The John Roan School will endeavor to consult with pupils, staff, trade unions and service users in the development of our Gender Equality and Disability Equality Schemes to determine their priorities for the school with regards to gender and disability equality over the next three years. For example, this could be via Focus Groups, Questionnaires, Feedback Slips and Drop-in Sessions.

18. Implementation

In order to ensure that action to meet the Gender Equality Duty and the Disability Equality Duty, The John Roan School has drawn up an action plan to make things happen, which outlines how the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty and the Disability Equality Duty will be met. This action plan will endeavor to be shaped in consultation with students, staff, trade unions, parents and all those that we provide a service to as outlined in the previous sections.

Appendix

Dealing with Racist Incidents

All Different, All Equal

The John Roan School is committed to equal opportunities for all pupils as outlined in our Equal Opportunities Statements. The school is required by the LA to keep a 'log' of all racist incidents, describing the action taken to deal with the perpetrator and support the victim.

Incidents which must be reported to Pastoral Leader/Senior Staff

- Racist name-calling.
- Racist graffiti.
- Distribution of racist literature.
- Expressions of racist beliefs / views.
- Racial harassment.
- Violence with racist motivation.

In the first instance the teacher should always respond quickly to investigate and support the victim while ensuring that the perpetrator is left in no doubt that they have contravened school policy. Further investigation, disciplinary action, support and a resolution to the incident then needs to be pursued by the Head of College / Senior Staff. The involvement of senior staff marks the seriousness of the incident to all concerned. Parents **must** always be informed.

In summary:-

Respond quickly to an incident.

Acknowledge the depth of hurt caused by a racist name-calling and how this may trigger further incidents.

Investigation is essential: time spent with both the perpetrator and victim is very important. An explanation to the perpetrator must be given as to why the action was wrong and against the school's Positive Discipline Framework.

Counselling for the perpetrator and victim: talking through with the pupils will often bring an acceptance of wrong-doing, understanding and resolution.

Sanctions: a range of sanctions can be used. It is important that the perpetrator and victim feel that justice has been done. This may include exclusion from school or lessons, or detentions. Parental interviews are particularly effective.

Resolution: the perpetrator needs to understand through acknowledgement of wrong-doing that a way forward can be established. The victim needs to feel that the school has supported him / her and that the resolution of the incident leaves them with a sense of confidence and strength.

Parents / Carers need to be informed/interviewed about the incidents.

Recording / monitoring: all incidents need to be recorded and the senior leader responsible for equal opportunities should be given details of the action taken.

Racist incidents between pupils

Racial incidents mainly occur in the form of name-calling. It is important to consider the way in which this can happen, while **always** being clear that it is unacceptable.

It is important to consider that a child who calls another child a racist name may not hold racist beliefs.

There may also be some children who **do** hold racist beliefs but do not use racist names for fear of punishment from teachers or by other children.

There may be other children who hold racist beliefs and believe the use of racist taunts is legitimate.

There may be children who do not hold racist beliefs but use racist taunts for 'self defence'.

There may be some children who respond unacceptably by using a racist name / taunt when they are in a 'hot' situation which they then regret.

It is important that the teacher investigating the incident understands that children will make mistakes and that we must enable them to understand and acknowledge their mistakes and move to a position where they are unlikely to become involved in similar incidents. Very often, if racial incidents do occur, they happen between pupils who are in the same tutor group or year group. It is extremely important that time is spent rebuilding the bridge which enable both pupils to work together and that the victim feels confident in the school's support of and skill in dealing with the incident.

It can thus be seen that monitoring is essential; if a child continues to become involved in racial incidents, senior staff need to be aware of this situation and further action needs to be taken.

Time, energy and skill are required in order to deal with racist incidents. The importance of dealing with them seriously and appropriately is recognised as essential by the school. Although teachers may deal with an incident in the first instance, s/he should always refer it to the Head of College or Senior member of staff.

This revised draft:
R. Dagless May '08