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Equal Opportunities Policy

Rationale / Summary:

Open Box Education Centre is committed to social justice and actively opposed to discrimination in society.

Open Box Education Centre believes that all people are of equal value and worth and that all, regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, religion, social circumstances, disability or sexual orientation, should have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. Open Box Education Centre seeks to provide services on a fair and equitable basis. It is the responsibility of all staff to educate against any form of prejudice or negative stereotyping and to ensure that their conduct with students and colleagues reflects this responsibility at all times.

Purpose / Objectives:

- To heighten awareness of the importance of equality of opportunity for all staff, governors and young people.
- To examine, monitor, review and, where appropriate, modify the Centre's practice and provision in order to promote equality of opportunity.
- To encourage a positive attitude and commitment to the principles and practice of equal opportunities.
- To encourage all students in the development of their sense of personal worth and self-esteem.

Guidelines / Procedures:

- The issue of equal opportunities should be a consideration in the procedure for appointing staff and governors
- All staff and governors should be made aware of their responsibilities regarding equal opportunities as employees of Open Box Education Centre.
- There should be effective post-16 liaison which counteracts built-in assumptions and prejudice.
- The centre should adopt syllabuses, resources and teaching strategies which promote equal opportunities.
- The centre's work experience and careers counselling should be free of traditional stereotypes.
- It is the responsibility of all staff, governors and young people to give fair and equal treatment to others regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnic origin, religion, social circumstances, disability or sexual orientation.
- Incidents of racial abuse will be reported to the principal and dealt with according to the Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

Teaching:

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that:

- methods, language, questioning and classroom management includes and engages all pupils;
- suitable resources are chosen which motivate and are sensitive to different groups, cultures and backgrounds;
- stereotypes and what are thought to be stereotypical activities are effectively challenged;
- they are aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

Leadership and Management:

The School Improvement Team are responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged pupils. Measures would include:

- identifying and investigating any patterns with regard to exclusions and poor attendance in respect of particular groups;
- monitoring differences in student attitudes to work and towards each other, with a view to identifying any significant patterns;
- addressing issues such as sexual or racial harassment, bullying and hostile behaviour and ensuring that there are effective procedures for reporting and responding to such incidents;
- ensuring that the performance of different groups of students is monitored and evaluated so that the particular needs of different students are met;
- provide staff development to raise awareness of differences in need and to promote strategies to raise achievement in all students;
- create an environment which affirms and supports ethnic, cultural, religious and social diversity and effectively promotes good personal, community and race relations.

Equality of opportunities

In this policy, the term “parents” means all those having parental responsibility for a child.

Where students have physical and/or learning disabilities, the school will ensure that:

- whatever arrangements are reasonable and practical, within financial constraints, are made to ensure that disabled pupils can gain access to the curriculum.
- the school works effectively with local services and agencies, providing coherent support.

With regard to gender, the school will ensure that:

- guidance is given on subject choices and careers encouraging pupils to consider non-stereotypical opportunities.

- gender issues are considered when preparing for, and following up, work experience.
- account is taken of positive role models when inviting speakers and representatives into the school and in the promotion of specific initiatives.

With regard to Minority Ethnic Groups, including Refugees, the school will ensure that:

- home-school links are made to involve parents directly in the work of the school;
- linguistic diversity is positively recognized.
- interpretation and translation services are made available as quickly as possible.
- links are established with the local community.
- learning support for ethnic minority pupils is efficient and effective.
- provision is made for the spiritual, moral, and social and cultural education, supported by appropriate resources and information.
- students' names should be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Students should be encouraged to accept and respect names from cultures other than their own.

With regard to Travellers, the school will ensure that:

- travelling children are successfully integrated into the school.
- where necessary, distance learning packs are provided to support continuous learning.
- travelling children with special educational needs receive appropriate support.
- travellers cultures' are affirmed to share and broaden experiences for all students.

Response to discrimination

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school will be treated seriously. A careful note of such incidents should be made as part of the incident and behaviour records, wherever they take place in the school. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable. Racist symbols, political symbols or other biased and/or offensive insignia are forbidden in the school. The display of such materials is regarded as discriminatory behaviour. Discriminatory behaviour of any kind may lead to the involvement of parents.

Staff

The Governing Body of the school aims to support the creation of an environment that will:

- eliminate unlawful, direct and indirect discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.
- ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment on grounds of ethnic origin, colour, disability creed, marital status, nationality, race, religion, culture, gender, gender recognition or sexual orientation.
- have regard to equal terms for men and women in employment in accordance with the EC Equal Terms Directive, 2002/73/EC.

- have regard to Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) regulations which prevent discrimination against transsexual people in employment and vocational training.
- eradicate racial, religious or sexual harassment or discrimination; and discrimination on the basis of disability and sexual orientation.
- value, celebrate and learn from the cultural diversity of its staff.

The co-operation of all employees is essential for the success of this policy. Behaviour or action against the spirit or the letter of the aims on which this policy is based will be considered a serious disciplinary matter and may lead to dismissal.

Recruitment:

As an employer Open Box Education Centre aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, educational status, marital status or age.

Entry to employment and promotion or change of posts is determined by personal merit and ability relevant to the purposes of Open Box Education Centre.

Open Box Education Centre aims to ensure that people with disabilities are given equal opportunity to enter employment. In doing so, it will fully consider reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability. In addition, when staff members become disabled in the course of their employment, every effort will be made through reasonable adjustment, retraining or redeployment to enable them to remain in the employment of Open Box Education Centre.

It is the intention of Open Box Education Centre that no individual or organisation connected with its activities shall hinder the positive implementation of this policy. Any form of discrimination is unacceptable to Open Box Education Centre.

Any employee may complain about discriminatory conduct. No individual will be penalised for raising a grievance unless it is proved to be untrue and made in bad faith. Any complaints will be fully investigated. Any discrimination or harassment proven to have taken place will be regarded as misconduct for the purposes of disciplinary procedures.

All staff will be required to demonstrate that they are able to work within Open Box Education Centre's ethos.

Approved by: (Principal) (date)

Authorised by:..... (Chair of Governors) (date)

To be reviewed every: 2 Years

Next review date: November 2022