**Lansdowne School**

**Equal Opportunities Policy**

**Aims**

**Our mission statement is:**

Lansdowne School is working towards becoming a centre of excellence for Pupils with learning difficulties. We aim to enable our Pupils to make informed decisions in their lives by providing excellent quality teaching with sensitivity towards Pupils with special needs.

We are therefore committed to creating equal opportunities for all our Pupils whatever their SEN, class, colour, culture, ethnic origin, religion or sex.

To help our Pupils make more informed choices, we want to equip them with an awareness of an increasingly diverse society by presenting the world as it is and as we would like it to be. Pupils can then develop their own attitudes to a pluralistic society.

**Statements of Principle**

1. The primary objective of Lansdowne School is to educate, develop and prepare all our Pupils, whatever their inheritance and background, for adult life.

Discrimination of any kind is therefore unacceptable.

1. Lansdowne School reflects the multi-cultural nature of Lambeth. Mutual respect has always been the norm and will continue to be, so that all members of the School live and grow together in a spirit of harmony.
2. Lansdowne School acknowledges the complexity of modern society and recognises that it would be failing the Pupils if it did not prepare them for their integral part in society.
3. Lansdowne School is committed to emphasising the common elements and values of our multiple cultures rather than highlighting conflicting areas.
4. Staff are encouraged to examine their own attitudes, identifying within themselves those that are both overt and covert in relation to class, colour, culture, disability, ethnic origin, religion and sex.
5. All Parents/Carers are told about the School’s Equal Opportunities Policy and encouraged to support this Policy.

**Equal Opportunities Policy**

**Principles in Practice**

**Class**

Staff expectations of Pupils should not be affected by any knowledge of background or family circumstances. Staff should be aware that their own value judgements ahould not prejudice attitudes towards Parents/Carers, Staff, Pupils or any other agencies.

**Curriculum**

All Pupils must have access to the School’s Curriculum that is based on the National Curriculum. The Curriculum sets out to be balanced, objective and sensitive, and to reflect the nature of the School. Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each Pupil.

Members of staff should ensure careful selection of new teaching materials and thorough review of existing materials. Some text related to subjects, such as Geography, History and R.E., together with both fiction and non-fiction, reading material may contain offensive and prejudicial wording.

Pupils should be able to see their own cultures and experiences positively reflected in the curriculum in all establishments and thus develop a clear knowledge of their own cultural, linguistic and historical identities. This will be accomplished through the use of multicultural resources, links with the community in the forms of visits, guests speakers and active participation with multicultural drama and linguistic input.

**Disability**

We ensure that all of our Pupils have access to the National Curriculum as shared by all mainstream Pupils, regardless of the individual’s learning, language or behavioural disabilities. When necessary, Pupils are offered a modified curriculum at appropriate levels.

**Dealing with Discrimination**

All forms of discrimination by any person within the school are to be treated seriously. A careful note must be kept of all such incidents, whether they take place in the play ground, corridors or teaching areas. It should always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable.

If there are subsequent incidents, then the appropriate senior staff member should be informed and consideration should be given to involving Parents/Carers. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and bags are forbidden in School. Graffiti will be immediately removed.

**Language**

Lansdowne School views linguistic diversity positively and staff are aware of the language and dialect spoken by Pupils and their families. Staff must be conscientious of any racist or sexist connotations in the language they use themselves. Staff are aware of the new orders of the National Curriculum which states that standard English should be used, and sees that this could be contradictory to the view that the language and dialect spoken should be respected.

**Racism**

We define racism as discrimination because of colour, ethnic origin or religion.

Racist literature or any other forms of propaganda are not tolerated within the School.

Every attempt is made to promote Pupil’s awareness and appreciation of their own cultural and religious heritage and that of others. All Pupils’ names are accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Pupils are encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

**School – Parent/Carer Liaison**

Lansdowne School values the importance of good Parental/Carer links and arranges for the provision (where appropriate) of interpreters, and home visits to ensure a full understanding of a Pupil’s ethnic, cultural and religious background.

In order to understand the background and experience of ethnic minority Pupils and to raise expectations of their potential, staff will need to be aware of the historical and contemporary process that have caused, and may continue to sustain, racism. Close liaison with families in the School is beneficial to all concerned. The School’s pastoral care organisation will be used, particularly with regard to the Home/School liaison and for dealing with any situations of discrimination or harassment.

**Sex**

Pupils participate in all curricular activities to the levels appropriate to their abilities and irrespective of their sex.

Staff roles are non-sexist, the only exception being that dictated by regulation, barring male staff from being involved with the personal needs of the female Pupils. Male staff attend to the personal needs of the male Pupils.

**Staff Recruitment**

In all staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria without discrimination on the basis of colour, culture, disability, ethnic origin, religion or sex.

**Governing Body**

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that it discharges its duties and responsibilities within the legislative framework of equal opportunities.

**Policy Review**

The success of any policy depends on the degree of commitment of Lansdowne School Staff. The effectiveness of meeting the aims and objectives of the Policy is judged from feedback on how the policy operates.