

# Aspire Academy Trust



## Equality and Diversity Policy

### *Equality Information and Objectives*

Date: September 2020  
Date of Approval: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020  
Approved by: Aspire Board of Trustees  
Review date: September 2024

#### Revision Log (last 5 changes)

Date	Version No	Brief detail of change
16.9.20	2	Scheduled review/update

<b>Applicable to</b>	✓	<b>All individual academies</b>
	✓	<b>The Aspire Trust</b>
<b>Approval body</b>		<b>The Trust Board</b>

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the trust's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and the guiding principles that it has adopted to enable this commitment to be put into practice.

## Aims

The Aspire Multi Academy Trust ("the Trust") is committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010, and the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a provider of education and an employer of staff, the Trust has due regards for the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

## 1. Legislation

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives. This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).
- We welcome our duty under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 as an employer with more than 250 employees to publish information annually showing the size of the pay gap between our male and female employees.
- We recognise that we are obliged under our funding agreement with the Department for Education that each of our academies is at "the heart of its community, promoting community cohesion" and that we are required to ensure the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our young people.

- We understand the above duties are important in enabling the trust to make a positive contribution to wider society, and that they reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Trust fully understands the principle of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

## **2. Protected characteristics**

A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin;
- Sex (including transgender);
- Gender reassignment;
- Maternity and pregnancy;
- Religion and belief;
- Sexual orientation; and
- Marriage and civil partnership (for employees).

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### Trust's Board:

The trust board will review this policy and evaluate its effectiveness in achieving its aims.

### Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

the CEO in the case of the central team is responsible for ensuring this policy is consistently implemented; 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 potential discrimination.

Each Head of School is responsible on behalf of the Trust Board for monitoring the application of this policy at school level to ensure appropriate equality objectives and actions are identified and implemented.

**Staff:** All employees and volunteers are expected to:

- take personal responsibility to behave in a manner which is consistent with the trust's values;
- positively promote an inclusive culture and challenge any incidents of prejudice or stereotyping that may occur;

- keep up-to-date with developments in equality, diversity and inclusion relevant to their work; and
- where relevant to their role, plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles set out below and provide appropriate support to pupils with specific needs e.g. those with SEND or for whom English is an additional language

The Trust Board will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout for academies, including to staff, pupils and parents, and that they are reviewed and updated at least once every four years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the head of school.

#### **4. Advancing equality of opportunity**

**As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the Trust aims to advance equality of opportunity by:**

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils with disabilities, or gay pupils who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils to pray at prescribed times)
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school societies)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the Trust will:

- Analyse attainment data each academic year showing how pupils with different characteristics are performing and determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and present this information to the AIG (delegated committee of the Board)
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish any further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect pupils

**We recognise, respect and value difference and diversity.**

All members of our trust community are of **equal value**. We view all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, staff, hub councillors, Trustees and members as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled or have physical or mental health challenges;
- whatever their race, ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status;
- whatever their sex, gender or gender identity;
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or their beliefs;
- whether their sexual orientation is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes;
- whether or not they are pregnant or are on maternity leave;
- whatever their age; and
- whatever their marital or civil partnership status.

Valuing people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and practices must not discriminate but will nevertheless take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barriers, disadvantage and prejudice which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made, and physical and emotional wellbeing promoted;
- race and ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men, and trans people, whether non-binary or non-gendered, are recognised;
- sexual orientation;
- religion, or a lack of religion, or philosophical beliefs, or a lack of beliefs, that affect their life choices or the way they live;
- age;
- pregnancy or being on maternity leave; and
- marital or civil partnership status.

## **5. Fostering good relations**

The Trust aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, citizenship and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute

- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, school councils should have representatives from different year groups and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- Aim to develop community links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

## **6. Equality considerations in decision-making**

The Trust ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made. The Trust always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities
- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

## **7. Policies and practices**

We ensure the principles above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- learners' progress, attainment and achievement;
- learners' personal development, welfare and wellbeing;
- teaching styles and strategies;
- admissions and attendance;
- care, guidance and support;
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- working in partnership with parents and carers;
- working with the wider community;
- safeguarding children in education;
- religious beliefs and practice including requests relating to religious observance and practice;
- employment and volunteering opportunities including recruitment, retention and professional development

## 8. Addressing prejudice and hate crime

We are opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to greater equality, diversity and inclusion including:

- prejudices around disability, mental health and special educational needs;
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum;
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia; and
- prejudices which may be the precursor to radicalisation and extremism.

## 9. Equality objectives for 2020-2021

**Objective 1:** Undertake an analysis of recruitment data and trends with regard to race, gender and disability by April 2021, and report on this to the Board

Why we have chosen this objective:

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Progress we are making towards this objective:

**Objective 2:** Train all members of staff and Trustees involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

### **Objective 3**

Include the 'Two Ticks' positive about people with disabilities symbol on all job adverts, application forms and information by December 2020 to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce.

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

The Trust Board will update the equality information we publish, at least every year. This document will be reviewed at least every 4 years. This document will be approved by the Trust Board.

## 11. The Policy

The Trust's Equality Information and Objectives Policy draws together all previous equality legislation and details how the Trust is fulfilling the requirements of the Act.