



# ALLESTREE WOODLANDS SCHOOL

## EQUALITY POLICY

DATE OF POLICY ADOPTION BY GOVERNORS:	July 2021
AUTHOR/S OF POLICY:	Gemma Penny
DATE OF LAST REVIEW:	February 2022
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	June 2024

Enabling aspiration and achievement for all through delivery of a knowledge-rich curriculum underpinned by our CORE values:

COURAGE

OPTIMISM

REGARD

ENDEAVOUR

## Policy Statement of Intent

Allestree Woodlands School's CORE values underpin our commitment to promoting and striving to deliver equality in representation, in access and in opportunity for all members of the school community. We value relationships and will continue to work towards understanding of each other on the basis that there is more that unites us than divides us. We seek to foster positive attitudes and to counter any anti-social behaviour which works, intentionally or unintentionally, against prospective, current or former employees and prospective, current and former students particularly those with protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are defined under the Equality Act 2010 as disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and age\*.

We will seek to eliminate discriminatory practices and behaviours which may threaten equality of opportunity. We will monitor our curriculum and personal development opportunities so as to broaden the perspectives of all students by helping them to understand the world in which they live. Where necessary, adaptations will be made to enable access and opportunity for all.

The overall objective of this Equality Policy is to provide a framework for the School to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment, promote equality of opportunity and encourage good relationships between people from all backgrounds and protected characteristics. The principles of this policy therefore apply to all members of the School community.

### Key Performance Indicators

1. Promotion of equality and diversity is evident in school assemblies, lessons, displays and events.
2. Students report that issues are addressed effectively.
3. Staff, students and families feel that diversity is valued.

## Relevant legislation and guidance

The legal and local framework for this Equality Policy is as follows:

- Equality Act 2010 and Codes of Practice
- Education Act 1996 and 2002
- Children Act 2004
- SEND Code of Practice
- Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- Disability Equality Duty 2006
- Gender Equality Duty 2007

The public sector equality duty in Section 149 of the Equality Act requires public bodies, including local authorities, schools and hospitals, to take active steps to eliminate discrimination and to do positive things to promote equality.

Advancing equality of opportunity includes having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage associated with a protected characteristic;

- taking steps to meet the needs of individuals who share a protected characteristic (where these are different from others); and
- encouraging people who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity where participation by that group of people is disproportionately low.

The Equality Act 2010 protects children, young people and adults against discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to housing, education, clubs, the provision of services and work\*.

\*Age discrimination for under 18s only applies in relation to work.

## Equality Aims & Values

The School is committed to providing equal opportunities. All members of the School's community, including students, parents/carers, employees, governors and visitors are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of protected characteristics.

The School aims to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act as: sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, maternity and pregnancy
- educate pupils and all members of the School community to understand others and value diversity in an inclusive and secure environment, preparing them for life in a diverse society
- enable each student to stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and enjoy economic wellbeing
- actively respond to reduce actual, potential or claimed discrimination and disadvantage
- put in place reasonable adjustments for disabled employees, students and other members of the school community
- make necessary adaptations to support work and learning for members of the school community where appropriate
- recognise people with protected characteristics and behave sensitively to their social needs
- challenge stereotypes and unconscious biases through curriculum and policies and practice related to behaviour and relationships

## Key Responsibilities

The School's Governing Board to ensure that:

- The School complies with all relevant equality legislation;
- This policy and related policies, strategies and procedures are implemented and carried out, reviewed regularly; and
- It is involved in addressing any serious breaches of this policy.
- Diversity in the school community is valued.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to:

- work with the Governing Body to ensure that all relevant policies, strategies and procedures are implemented and carried out and reviewed regularly
- Ensure that staff at the school are aware of the school's aims as set out in this policy and their responsibilities to act in accordance with this policy
- Deal with any reported incidents of discrimination or harassment and delegate responsibility where appropriate to enable investigations to be carried out
- Ensure that the policy is consulted on every three years minimum
- Ensure that line managers have training on implementation of equal opportunities
- Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

It is the responsibility of all employees at the School to:

- Be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of discrimination or harassment and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur in an appropriate manner;
- Promote an inclusive learning environment both in and outside of the classroom;
- Support students within their class for whom English is an additional language; and
- Attend relevant training to keep up to date with equality legislation and issues.
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure discrimination does not take place.
- Take steps to meet the needs of students who share a protected characteristic.

Approved by Governors on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

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## Employees

### Equal opportunities statement

Allestree Woodlands School is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. You and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics).

## About this policy

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

This policy has been subject to consultation with the staff, trade unions representatives and students.

This policy covers all members of the Allestree Woodlands School Community as appropriate. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

## Responsibilities

Allestree Woodlands School has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, including regular review of this policy, has been delegated to the headteacher.

All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. The deputy head teacher for professional learning has overall responsibility for equal opportunities training.

If you are involved in management or recruitment, or if you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the deputy head teacher for professional learning to request training or further information.

This policy is reviewed every 3 years by the headteacher and governors in consultation with staff, trade unions and students.

Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the headteacher.

The School's Governing Board to ensure that:

- The School complies with all relevant equality legislation;
- This policy and related policies, strategies and procedures are implemented and carried out, reviewed regularly; and
- It is involved in addressing any serious breaches of this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to:

- work with the Governing Body to ensure that all relevant policies, strategies and procedures are implemented and carried out and reviewed regularly;
- Ensure that staff at the school are aware of the school's aims as set out in this policy and their responsibilities to act in accordance with this policy; and
- Deal with any reported incidents of discrimination or harassment and delegate responsibility where appropriate to enable investigations to be carried out.
- Ensure that the policy is consulted on every three years minimum

It is the responsibility of all employees at the School to:

- Be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of discrimination or harassment and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur in an appropriate manner;
- Promote an inclusive learning environment both in and outside of the classroom;
- Support students within their class for whom English is an additional language; and
- Attend relevant training to keep up to date with equality legislation and issues.

## Discrimination

Members of the Allestree Woodlands School Community must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former students, employees, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the school, outside the school and on school related trips or events including social events.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views or because they might be gay.
- Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
- Victimisation: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

## Employee Recruitment and selection

Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.

Vacancies will generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements will avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying. Where possible, posts are advertised with flexibility for full or part time working and job sharing will be considered where a full-time role is required. All adverts include a short statement on equal opportunities and a copy of this policy will be made available on request.

We take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market and, where relevant, to particular groups that have been identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented in our organisation. Where exemptions apply for good reason, this is made clear in the advertisement.

Job applicants will not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked

whether they are pregnant or planning to have children. Where appropriate, interviews will be adapted to meet needs.

Job applicants will not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which are only to be used after consultation with Human Resources. For example:

- Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
- Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
- Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
- Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the selection or decision-making process).

All job offers are made conditional on a satisfactory medical check as well as satisfactory references and DBS as required.

We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status are not made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the headteacher's P.A. or UK Visas and Immigration.

To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, and to identify groups that may be underrepresented or disadvantaged in our organisation, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary, and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

## **Training, promotion and conditions of service**

Training needs will be identified through annual performance appraisals. Staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit as demonstrated through application process.

## **Termination of employment**

We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

## Disabilities

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage employees to tell us about the condition so that we can support you as appropriate.

If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible. Where appropriate, the headteacher can also be involved.

We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.

## Part-time and fixed-term work

Part-time and fixed-term staff will be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

## Students

### Community and culture

At Allestree Woodlands School, we want all students to feel that they belong and are valued as part of our school community. As a school with an enhanced resource facility for students with hearing impairment, it is particularly important to us to celebrate the diversity in our school and recognise the value that different life experience brings to our understanding of what it is to be human. Our behaviour and relationships policy is underpinned by a belief in the importance of good relationships and strategies outlined are designed to encourage learning about the impact of our behaviour on others. Where necessary, this includes educational intervention and restorative approaches to issues involving discriminatory or derogatory remarks and behaviours.

What we permit as language or attitude between ourselves or between students is what they will accept as the normal; staff will be conscious of language choices and will challenge cultural phrases that reinforce stereotypes (e.g. 'man up' being used to motivate or 'like a girl' used as derision).

### Curriculum

We aim to offer a rich curriculum that represents our full school community and educates our students about how they fit and how they are connected in our society. Teachers have undertaken training to understand unconscious bias; when teaching and assessing students' work, teachers will consider the possibility of bias and undertake shared activities to reduce the chances of this influencing judgements on progress (e.g. joint moderation of work, blind marking of substantial assessments).



Faculty and subject leaders are responsible for auditing subject content, resources used and teaching approaches to ensure that diversity is recognised and celebrated. They will also support colleagues when teaching about areas of sensitivity so that staff feel well trained and equipped to discuss important issues in ways that deepen students' understanding. Where necessary, adaptation to curriculum and teaching methods will be made to enable access for all students including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Our personal social and health education (PSHE) curriculum will address relationships, citizenship and will promote International and British values relating to acceptance of difference, living in a diverse society. This is supplemented in other subjects such as RE, history and English as well as through wider curriculum and enrichment activities such as mental health awareness week, black history month, deaf awareness week.

### Student Voice

Opportunities to listen to student voices that represent the full community will be planned for and implemented.

Social groups to enable students to support each other and undertake awareness raising activities are encouraged and facilitated by school staff (e.g. LGBTQ+, BHM all year long, ERF)

A position for lead and diversity will be held by a member of 6<sup>th</sup> form as part of the Student Leadership Team Steering Group and will be used to ensure diverse voices are both heard and represented.

### Breaches of this policy

We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure / student behaviour policy. For employees, serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Complaints Procedure, Grievance Procedure or through our Anti-Bullying Policy as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

### Related policies

This policy is supported by the following other policies and procedures:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Sex, Relationships and Health Educations Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy