



ALSOP HIGH SCHOOL

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Equality (and Diversity) Policy

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Equality [and Diversity] Policy

Introduction

At Alsop High School we are committed to ensuring quality of education and opportunity for students, staff and all those receiving services from the School. We have a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose information about their identity and participate fully in School life. The achievement of all students will be monitored and we will use this data to ensure that we promote equality and provide inclusive teaching. For those students, staff or other service users who require additional support, where necessary, we will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the School environment is as accessible as possible. At the School we strongly believe that diversity is a strength which should be valued, respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Related Documents/Resources

Alsop High School Equal Opportunities for Staff Policy

Alsop High School SEN Policy

The Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-schools-england>

Helpful Definitions

“**Disability**” means a physical and/or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

“**Gender reassignment**” is a personal process (rather than a medical process) that involves a person moving away from his or her birth sex to his or her preferred gender and thus expressing that gender in a way that differs from, or is inconsistent with, the physical sex with which he or she was born.

“**Positive Action**” is the term used to describe action that The Act permits the School to take to counter the effects of past or present discrimination experienced by groups of students who share a Protected Characteristic, to meet the particular needs of students in such groups, or to facilitate their participation in activities in which participation by members of their group is disproportionately low.

“**Protected Acts**” include: making a claim or complaint of discrimination under The Act; giving evidence or information in a claim under The Act; making an allegation that the School or someone else has breached The Act; and doing anything else in connection with The Act.

“**Protected Characteristics**” are: Race, Disability, Sex, age, Religion or belief, Sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and Gender reassignment. However, for the School, age is only a protected characteristic in relation to staff. Marriage and civil partnership are also protected characteristics but only in relation to employment.

“**Race**” means a person’s colour, and/or nationality (including citizenship), and/or ethnic or national origin; and a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

“**Reasonable Adjustments**” means the taking of such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by a provision, criterion or practice applied by or on behalf of the School, or by the absence of an auxiliary aid or service.

“**Religion or belief**” includes any religion and religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

“**Sex**” refers to the fact that he or she is male or female. In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men and/or boys or women and/or girls.

“**Sexual orientation**” means the attraction that a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines with whom he or she forms intimate relationships or to whom he or she is attracted.

“**The Act**” means the Equality Act 2010, as amended or updated from time to time.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The School is under a duty to promote equality in relation to all of the Protected Characteristics that are covered under The Act. The duty has two main parts: the ‘general’ equality duty and the ‘specific’ duties.

Under the general equality duty, when making decisions and developing policies, the School has due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation 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, including removing or minimising disadvantages, taking steps to meet different needs and encouraging participation when it is disproportionately low; and
- Foster good relations across all individuals with Protected Characteristics between those who share a Protected Characteristic and those who do not share it.

The School is also under specific duties to:

- Publish information to demonstrate how it is complying with the PSED; and
- Prepare and publish one (or more) specific and measurable equality objective(s).

Discrimination

The Act references the different forms of prohibited conduct and various types of discrimination which the School must address. It is unlawful to subject someone to any of the following:

- Direct discrimination – the School must ensure that it does not treat anyone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic than it treats, or would treat, another. This includes discrimination based on perception or association and pregnancy and maternity discrimination.
- Indirect discrimination – the School must ensure that it does not apply a provision, criteria or practice in the same way for all, or for a particular group, which has the effect of putting those that share a Protected Characteristic within the general School group at a particular disadvantage.
- Discrimination arising from disability – the School must not treat a disabled student unfavourably because of something connected with their disability where it cannot justify such treatment.
- Failure to make Reasonable Adjustments for disabled people – the School must not fail to do something that it would be reasonable to do to ensure that the best possible education is provided for disabled students.
- Harassment – the School must not allow: harassment related to a Disability, Race or Sex; sexual harassment or less favourable treatment because someone submits to or rejects sexual harassment, or harassment related to Sex.
- Victimisation – the School must not subject someone to a detriment or disadvantage because they have carried out a Protected Act (or the School thinks that they have or are going to do so).

What does this mean for the School?

- The School's duty covers everything that the School provides for students and goes beyond just formal education. It covers all School activities such as extracurricular and leisure activities, afterschool and homework clubs, sports activities and School trips, as well as School facilities such as libraries and IT facilities.

- When making a decision or taking action, the School must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular Protected Characteristics.
- It should consider equality implications before and at the time that it develops policy and takes decisions, not as an afterthought, and it needs to keep them under review.
- It should consciously consider each aspect of the duty (having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination is not the same thing as having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity).
- It should assess the risk and extent of any adverse impact that might result from a policy or decision and the ways in which the risk may be eliminated before the adoption of a proposed policy.
- The PSED has to be integrated into the carrying out of the School's functions. The analysis necessary to comply with the PSED should be carried out rigorously and with an open mind; it is not a question of just ticking boxes.
- The School needs to do this itself and cannot delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to anyone else. The steps that the School has taken to meet the duty must be recorded.

The School's compliance with the PSED and The Act will require it to collate evidence and focus on addressing and improving the following areas:

- Attainment;
- Participation in School activities through our Stretch, Challenge and Enjoy curriculum;
- Ensuring students engage effectively in learning;
- Bullying/racism;
- Careers and progression;
- Exclusion;
- Policy making;
- Effective use of data and information;
- Supporting effective partnerships; and
- Opportunities to reconsider how students are treated.

In addition to having due regard to the PSED and The Act in relation to students, the School must also ensure that any events and communications involving parents and carers are accessible. The School must ensure that the election process regarding parent governors promotes equality and is open to all. The School must also consider its role as a service provider whenever it hires out parts of the premises to third parties.

Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

The School will make Reasonable Adjustments for students, job applicants, staff and other service users to ensure that all can participate fully in the School environment, recruitment and selection procedures and any exclusions processes. As far as reasonably possible, disabled employees should be able to play a full and active role in the life of the School. All reasonable measures will be taken to retain disabled employees in employment, in consultation with the employee concerned and his/her medical adviser(s). This may include (but is not limited to) provision of specialist equipment and training, job redesign, flexible hours, remote working and/or redeployment to a suitable alternative vacancy. Where appropriate, with the agreement of a disabled employee, an external specialist may be consulted.

In the event that there are not any Reasonable Adjustments that the School can make, we will fully set out our reasons for this decision.

Positive Action

Whilst the School is under no duty to take Positive Action, where appropriate, the School may take Positive Action to promote equality provided that any steps have sufficient basis and are not excessive. For example, such action would be to address the needs of students in a group who share a Protected Characteristic, not to give preferential treatment to a particular student (which would be unlawful positive discrimination).

Good Practice Examples

- Increase awareness of the ways in which parents/carers of students with Protected Characteristics can help to support their learning, for example, through workshops.
- Ensure that the talents of those with Protected Characteristics are represented accordingly through the Stretch, Challenge and Enjoy Programme.
- Closely monitoring incidents of harassment and/or bullying and encouraging all to report offenders.
- Use assemblies or mentor group time to investigate and address any issues that have been raised.
- Promote a positive attitude towards Protected Characteristics, for example, via posters, displays and learning materials.
- Celebrate and highlight equality by participating in events such as the Paralympics, Deaf Awareness Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, Learning Disability Week, LGBT History Month and Black History Month.
- Encourage all to participate in assemblies, plays, events and student councils.
- Ensuring all School events, such as open evenings and parent/carer review days, trips, tests, assessments and exams are accessible and open to all.

Learning and Teaching

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- Provide equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour;
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions;
- Develop students' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias and challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality;
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity;
- Ensure all departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different

- cultures to the subject matter;
- Seek to involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education;
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all student groups;
- Take account of the performance of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of students; and
- Identify resources and training that support staff development.

Learning Environment

- There is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of their Race, Sex or Sexual Orientation, Disability, Religion or belief, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All students are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.
- Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students.
- Adults in the School will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.
- The School places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and Disability. We aim to meet all students' learning needs, including the more able, by carefully assessed and administered programmes of study.
- The School must provide an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources.
- All students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.
- A range of teaching methods are used throughout the School to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all students.
- Consideration is given to the physical learning environment, both internal and external, including displays and signage.

Curriculum

At the School, we aim to ensure that our:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes, projects and intervention, promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity;
- Students will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality;
- Steps are taken to ensure that all students have access to a rich curriculum by taking into account their cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles;
- All students have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression; and
- School policy is to provide equal access to all extended learning activities for every student.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within the School is a high priority. These

resources should:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society;
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints;
- Show positive images of males and females in society;
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context; and
- Be accessible to all members of the School community.

Language

We recognise that it is important at the School that all members of the School community use appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes;
- Does not offend;
- Creates and enhances positive images of the particular groups identified at the beginning of this document;
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem; and
- Is accurate in referring to particular groups or individuals or which is challenged in instances where this is not the case.

Provision for Additional Languages

The School will ensure that students from all language groups can access the whole curriculum. This may relate to:

- Students for whom English is an additional language (“EAL”);
- Students who are new to the United Kingdom;
- Children from other such ethnic groups (as defined in the Act); and
- Advanced bi-lingual learners.

The School will ensure that such students use their first language effectively for learning.

Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance

- Staff take account of Race, Disability, Religion or belief, Sex or Sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as refugee and asylum seeker students.
- All students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their Disability, Race, Sex or Sexual orientation.
- All students/staff/parents/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination.

- We recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support.
- Positive role models are used throughout the School to ensure that different groups of students can see themselves reflected in the School community.
- Emphasis is placed on the value that diversity brings to the School community rather than the challenges.

Staffing and Staff Development

- We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This includes students' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible.
- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all School staff.
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of students.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.

Staff Recruitment

- All those involved in recruitment and selection are trained and aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Equality policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices.
- Employment policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Partnerships with Parents/Carers/Families and the Wider Community

- We will work with parents/carers to help all students to achieve their potential and all parents/carers are encouraged to participate in the full life of the School.
- All stakeholders are involved with matters relating to equality duties.
- Members of the local community are encouraged to join in with School activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The School's governing body will ensure that the School complies with statutory requirements in respect of this policy and action plan.
- The Head teacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy, and will ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and report progress to the School's governing body.
- The Head teacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of this policy.
- Our staff will promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the School, challenge inappropriate

language and behaviour, respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment, ensure appropriate support for students with additional needs and maintain a good level of awareness on equality issues.

- All members of the School community have a responsibility to treat each other and staff with respect, to feel valued, and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We will take steps to ensure all visitors to the School adhere to our commitment to equality.
- The School is required by law to make sure that when we buy services from another organisation they will help us to provide high quality education, and will comply with equality legislation. This will be a significant factor in any tendering process.
- This policy will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on students, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our School. An action plan will be published to enable an impact assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate time within a given time frame.

Involvement and Consultation

Students, staff and those using School services with Protected Characteristics shall be involved in the production and development of the School's Equality Scheme through:

- Focus groups/student council;
- Free to Speak questionnaires;
- Regular open communications.

Alsop High School Equality Objectives

Our Equality objectives are chosen in response to the Act which established nine Protected Characteristics.

The objectives chosen by the School will support the School's three main aims:

1. Promoting equality of opportunity of identified groups;
2. Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and
3. Fostering good relations between the different groups identified.

Chosen objectives: (also detailed in School Development Plan)

1. Narrow gaps in attainment between groups of students e.g. boys/girls/EAL/SEN etc
2. Open new doors of opportunity by increasing participation in School activities through the Stretch, Challenge and Enjoy Programme.
3. Respond effectively to prejudice related bullying and derogatory comments.
4. Promote a happy and collaborative ethos with a culture of high demand and high expectations through **Respect, Responsibility & Resilience**.
5. Improve attendance of students with historical low attendance and promote a **preference for attending school**.
6. Students and staff appreciate and value difference and diversity such as **race, gender, disability, sexual orientation and religion**.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Head teacher will report the effectiveness of all policies as a regular feature of the termly updates to governors. It is expected that governors will challenge the School to ensure policies are relevant, up to date and implemented appropriately and consistently. This reporting will be informed through monitoring and evaluation on a regular basis by the Senior and/or Extended Leadership Team. Views of stakeholders will also be sought through on-going consultation events, questionnaires, team meetings, training and informal discussion. The review of policies will be embedded within the School's self-evaluation process and will be related to the strategic development plans of the School. The review cycle will ensure that every policy is checked at least once in a two (2) year period. The effective monitoring of policies will involve each member of the Senior Leadership Team being allocated specific responsibility for reporting back the monitoring, evaluation and review of certain policies.

The School will update its published equality information at least annually. This may include School performance data, anti-bullying policies, a School development plan and equality milestones, curriculum materials, governing body minutes, equality training materials, and parent and student surveys. The School may also refer to national surveys and other relevant information from the DfE, OFSTED, the teaching unions and the voluntary sector. The School will publish its objectives at least once every four (4) years.