

# THE ASTLEY COOPER SCHOOL



## EQUALITIES POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

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## **1. Equality and diversity statement**

Respect, value for diversity and teaching to meet the needs of all is at the heart of The Astley Cooper School. We strive to offer learning experiences that are diversified to meet the needs of every student and to offer a curriculum that prepares all students for life in a diverse Britain. Prejudice and discrimination of any sort is unacceptable and every member of the school community must take responsibility for their thoughts and actions and recognise the need to take action to challenge stigma and unconscious or structural bias.

Staff maintain high expectations of all students in terms of their acceptance of and value for diversity. Staff are required to ensure the curriculum they deliver is representative of the protected characteristics\* and of wider student diversity and to be alert to overcoming barriers which may prevent successful learning taking place.

We strive to create a positive ethos in which the characteristics of our diverse learners are recognised to enable them to develop academically and socially. We believe that our role as a school is to help students to develop into confident, responsible and caring individuals who are able to make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. We promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all students and we prepare individuals for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adulthood.

The school is committed to building an environment where:

- All students and staff are treated with dignity and respect
- Diversity is valued
- Stereotypes, bias, bigotry, prejudice, discrimination and racism are questioned and challenged

## **2. Aims**

- To maintain Astley Cooper as a safe and welcoming community and to instil in students, parents/carers and staff a positive awareness of the value of each member of the community
- To establish an active ethos of mutual respect which constantly challenges prejudices and 'hate' and which promotes high levels of self-esteem
- To create an environment for learning which will encourage all students to achieve the highest standards through the provision of a broad, balanced and personalised curriculum.

## **3. Legal background**

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 – including the public sector equalities duties

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'The Equality Act and schools' 2014
- DfE 'Promoting the education of looked after children' 2014
- RSHE statutory orders, July 2019

## 4. Protected Characteristics

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or prospective student, or a staff member or prospective staff member because of their:

- Sex
- Race or ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity or reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Age (adults only)
- Marriage and Civil partnership (adults only)

Discrimination by association will also be prevented, for example, where a detriment is experienced by an individual because of their association with a parent/carer/friend who has a protected characteristic.

Measures will be put in place to overcome any identified barriers to the achievement, progress, participation and belonging of all students and staff who fall under the protected characteristics or who are assumed to do so.

### 4a. Sex

We will ensure that:

- Students of one sex do not receive less favourable treatment than students of the other sexes.
- School practices are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are fair to everyone.
- Where it becomes appropriate to provide specific teaching and support that is differentiated this will be subject to an equality impact assessment.
- Everyone will have equal opportunities to participate in comparable sporting activities.
- Teaching through the curriculum addresses specific pressures, experiences and inequalities that disadvantage men and women in society, including violence against women and girls, sexualised harassment and sexist behaviour, pressures toward toxic masculinity.
- Students will experience a curriculum that represents the achievements of everyone in all aspects of British life and beyond.

### 4b. Race

We will ensure that:

- Students from diverse racial groups and ethnicities, including those for whom English is an additional language and those of mixed heritage, can feel a full sense of belonging within school and receive full access to the curriculum and wider aspects of school life.
- Any part of school life that differentially impacts on or fails to reflect our BAME students will be identified and reviewed, to ensure there is no structural or unintentional discrimination.
- Appropriate steps for positive action to remove structural discrimination will be subject to review through an equality impact assessment prior to implementation
- Teaching through the curriculum addresses specific experiences and inequalities that disadvantage BAME men and women in society, including hate crime and prejudice related incidents, structural racism, opportunity gaps and access to cultural capital.

- Students will experience a curriculum that represents the achievements of diverse BAME individuals in all aspects of British life and beyond.

**4c. Disability** (physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on normal daily activities)

We will ensure that:

- Students with a disability or multiple disabilities can feel a full sense of belonging within school and receive the fullest access possible to the curriculum and wider aspects of school life.
- Any part of school life that differentially impacts on or fails to reflect our students with disabilities will be identified and reviewed, to ensure there is no structural or unintentional discrimination.
- Appropriate steps for positive action to remove structural discrimination will be subject to review through an equality impact assessment prior to implementation
- Teaching through the curriculum addresses specific experiences and inequalities that disadvantage people with disabilities in society, including hate crime and prejudice related incidents, structural disability, exploitation of people with disabilities, opportunity gaps and access to cultural capital.
- Students will experience a curriculum that represents the achievements of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of British life and beyond.
- Appropriate reasonable adjustment will be made to support the acceptance of limitations while maintaining high levels of expectation in achievement, progress and participation for all students with disabilities
- We meet our duty to undertake accessibility planning for students with disabilities, and ensure that any accessibility plan is duly implemented, and reviewed where necessary.
- We make reasonable adjustments for parents/carers if we are made aware of their disability.
- We make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for treatment and support of students by external sources. Any such absences will be recorded accurately and sensitively to ensure the privacy of the student.

**4d. Religion and Belief**

We will ensure that:

- Students from diverse religious and non-religious belief systems can feel a full sense of belonging within school and receive full access to the curriculum and wider aspects of school life.
- Any part of school life that differentially impacts on or fails to value the religions and belief systems of our students will be identified and reviewed, to ensure there is no structural or unintentional discrimination.
- Appropriate steps for positive action to remove structural discrimination will be subject to review through an equality impact assessment prior to implementation
- Teaching through the curriculum will address specific experiences and inequalities experienced by people of faith and no faith in society, including hate crime, anti-semitism, islamophobia and prejudice.
- Students will experience a curriculum that represents the achievements of people of diverse faiths and no faith in all aspects of British life and beyond.

- Students are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.
- Two days of absence will be authorised for religious observance

#### **4e. Sexual Orientation**

We will ensure:

- That all LGBTQ students, or the children of LGBTQ parents/carers are valued in their diversity and do not receive less favourable treatment than other students.
- Teaching through the curriculum addresses specific pressures, experiences and inequalities that disadvantage LGBTQ people in society, including hate crime, homophobia and biphobia, LGBTQ rights and protections in law, and safety when travelling abroad.
- Students will experience a curriculum that represents the achievements of LGBTQ people in all aspects of British life and beyond.
- That an LGBTQ (and allies) group is facilitated.

#### **4f. Gender Reassignment** (a student taking steps to live in the opposite gender)

We will ensure:

- That students who are gender questioning, gender reassigning or who reject gender designation, or the children of parents/carers who are Trans, are valued in their diversity and do not receive less favourable treatment than other students.
- Teaching through the curriculum addresses specific pressures, experiences and inequalities that disadvantage gender questioning and Trans people in society, including hate crime, transphobia, gender dysphoria, Trans rights and protections in law, and safety when travelling abroad.
- Students will experience a curriculum that represents the achievements of Transgender and gender non-conforming people in all aspects of British life and beyond.

#### **4g. Pregnancy and Maternity**

We will ensure:

- Students are not singled out, stigmatised or treated less favourably because they become pregnant, or have recently given birth, or because they are breastfeeding.
- We make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of students who are pregnant, or just given birth.

### **5. The Curriculum**

We will ensure:

- That the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way as to prevent discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.
- We respect the right of parents/carers to withdraw their child from religious and sex education classes.

### **6. Inclusion**

We will ensure that:

- We will promote inclusion and equality

- We call our students by their preferred names and pronouns, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- We provide an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- We instil in students an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.
- We provide a variety of educational and residential visits which expose students to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- We take care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- We value the cultural experiences and contributions of all students, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.
- We communicate our policy to parents/carers to gain their understanding, agreement and support for its provisions.
- We discuss equality issues as an agenda item for the school council

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

Governors will:

- Provide leadership and drive for the development and regular review of the school's equality and other policies.
- Provide leadership and ensure the accountability of the Headteacher and senior staff for the communication and implementation of school policies.
- Highlight good practice and promote it throughout the school and wider community.
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and students.
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents.
- Ensure that the school carries out the letter and the spirit of the statutory duties

Headteachers and Senior Staff will:

- Initiate and oversee the development and regular review of equality policies and procedures.
- Consult students, staff and stakeholders in the development and review of the policies.
- Collect and analyse monitoring information
- Ensure the effective communication of the policies to all students, staff and stakeholders.
- Ensure that managers and staff are trained as necessary to implement the policies.
- Oversee the effective implementation of the policies.
- Hold line managers accountable for effective policy implementation.
- Provide appropriate role models for all managers, staff and students.
- Highlight good practice from departments, individual managers, staff and students.
- Provide mechanisms for the sharing of good practice.
- Ensure a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents.
- Ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties effectively

Line Managers will:

- Respond to consultation requests by creating opportunities for students and staff to share their comments, suggestions and feedback, ensuring that all voices are heard.

- Implement the school's equality scheme, holding staff accountable for their behaviour and providing support and guidance as necessary.
- Be accountable for the behaviour of the staff team, individual members of staff and students.
- Use informal and formal procedures as necessary to deal with 'difficult' situations.
- Behave in accordance with the school's policies, leading by example.
- Respond appropriately to the behaviour of students and staff, as a whole, and of individuals (praising/challenging as necessary).
- Contribute to managing the implementation of the school's equality scheme.

All Staff: Teaching and Non-Teaching will:

- Contribute to consultations and reviews.
- Maintain awareness of the school's current equality policy and procedures. Implement the policy as it applies to staff and students.
- Behave with respect and fairness to all colleagues and students, carrying out the letter and spirit of the school's equality scheme.
- Provide a consistent response to incidents, e.g. bullying cases and racist incidents
- Contribute to the implementation of the school's equality scheme.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) help the school to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. It is a way to ensure the school meets diverse needs of its students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

### **8a. Student Assessment**

Regular assessments of students' learning are made and this information is used to track students' progress. As part of this process, the school regularly monitors the performance of different groups, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress. This information is used to adjust future teaching and learning plans, as necessary. Resources are available to support groups of students where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The Governing body receives regular updates on student performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and Local Authority data, to ensure that students are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools, and to schools in similar circumstances.

### **8b. Other Factors**

As well as monitoring student performance information, the school also regularly monitors a range of other information which might have relevance for equality issues including:

- Exclusions
- Incidents of racism, sexual and religious harassment and all forms of bullying
- Parental involvement
- Attendance
- Participation in school trips/visits/sport/music etc.
- Complaints

We view stakeholder consultation as an integral part of the impact assessment process. We consider the views and suggestions of relevant participants crucial to the school finding out how well we are achieving our objectives whether at the beginning of the scheme development process or at any other appropriate monitoring moments both during and after the schemes implementation.

## **9. Equality Duty**

The school will meet its duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Equality objectives (at least every four years)

Our school is committed to encouraging everyone to contribute to the development and review of all policies and practices affecting the life of the school and its impact within the wider community. We have involved a number of staff, students, parents and others with particular interests in the development of this policy

## **10. Linked Policies**

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- RSE Policy



| Equality Objectives*   | Protected Characteristic  | Responsibility   | Success Indicator   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise the attainment of vulnerable groups</li> </ul>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sex</li> <li>Race and ethnicity</li> <li>Disability</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vulnerable groups achieve in line with other students</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition and celebration of difference</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Race and ethnicity</li> <li>Gender identity</li> <li>Disability</li> <li>Sexual orientation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assemblies</li> <li>Tutor activities</li> <li>Publications</li> <li>School displays</li> <li>School events</li> <li>Curriculum diversity review</li> <li>Diversity week</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed recording of prejudice related incidents</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SLT</li> <li>HoY</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of reporting in logs</li> <li>Actions from logs inform future topics and practice</li> <li>Reduction in prejudice related incidents</li> </ul>                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote cultural and LGBTQ awareness</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender Identity</li> <li>Sexual orientation</li> <li>Race and ethnicity</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student views</li> <li>Assemblies</li> <li>Bullying &amp; Discrimination Log</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure diversity is well represented in the curriculum</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum diversity review</li> <li>Assemblies</li> <li>Tutor activities</li> <li>Publications</li> <li>Diversity Week</li> </ul>   |

\*all objectives will be reviewed annually