

Equal Opportunities Policy

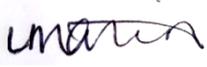
Aspire Federation

'Let your light shine!'



Reviewed and updated: Oct 2023

Next review: Oct 2026

Signed: 

Name: Laura Martin
(Executive Headteacher)

Date:15.11.23.....

Signed: 

Name: Peter Hilton
(Chair of Governors)

Date:15.11.23.....

1 Introduction

1.1 The Aspire Federation is committed to promoting understanding amongst all its stakeholders of the principles and practices of equality. It aims to equip children with an awareness of the diverse world in which they live and to appreciate that everyone is able to make a positive contribution to society.

1.2 The policy forms part of a group of policies relating to the safeguarding of children.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 Every member of our school community is regarded as of equal worth and importance, irrespective of their socio-economic background, ethnicity (race and/or culture), gender, nationality, sexuality and/or disability.

2.2 The school promotes the principles of equal opportunity for all through the education it provides. It ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full range of learning opportunities provided. It constantly strives to remove any forms of direct or indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning. Stereotyping and prejudice are challenged whenever they occur. This is achieved through all aspects of the curriculum including through the teaching of British Values, Protected Characteristics and Valuing All God's Children.

2.3 The governing body ensures that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.

2.4 The school celebrates the cultural diversity of its community – local, national and worldwide - and shows respect for all groups. Through positive learning experiences, The Aspire Federation aims to promote positive attitudes and respect for all.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the governing body

3.1 The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and will continue to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

3.2 The governing body seeks to ensure that adults with disabilities are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at The Aspire Federation. The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to stakeholders with disabilities through its Accessibility Plan.

3.3 The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against on account of their socio-economic background, ethnicity (race and/or culture), gender, nationality and/or disability. For example, expectations regarding school uniform will be applied equally to boys and to girls. If a child's religion affects the school uniform, then the school will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.

3.4 The governing body will review the policy biennially to ensure it reflects current legislation and good practice.

The role of the Executive Headteacher and senior staff

3.5 It is the role of the Executive Headteacher and senior staff to implement the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and is supported by the governing body in so doing.

3.6 The Head of School ensures that all staff, parents/carers and volunteers are aware of the school policy on Equal Opportunities and that class teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.

3.7 The Head of School promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, during worship, where respect for other people is a regular theme and also in displays shown around the school.

3.8 The Executive Headteacher – or in his/her absence, a senior member of staff - treats all reported incidents of discrimination and racism with due seriousness, determines appropriate actions with the guidance of the Local Authority and reports all such incidents and their outcomes to the governing body. Should anyone be a victim of discrimination, support will be given to that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

The role of the class teachers and support staff

3.9 Class teachers and support staff ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. No child is discriminated against.

3.10 When selecting classroom material, class teachers and teaching assistants pay due regard to the sensitivities of all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Class teachers and teaching assistants strive to provide material that challenges stereotypes and that gives positive images of minority groups.

3.11 When planning delivery of the curriculum, the policy is used to guide choices of topics to study and in how to approach sensitive issues.

3.12 Staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism and draw them to the attention of the Executive Headteacher. As line managers, class teachers support the work of support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any occurrence of discrimination.

When approached by a pupil, they should tackle the incident appropriately and report to the Executive Headteacher, the Head of School or, in his/her absence, a senior member of staff.

The role of parents/carers and pupils

3.13 Parents/carers and pupils respect the diversity of the school community and the work of the school in promoting equality for all. Parents/carers should inform the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or governing body of any incidents of discrimination. Pupils should speak to any member of staff.

4. Policy into Practice

4.1 Admissions

The Aspire Federation does not permit socio-economic background, ethnicity (race and/or culture), gender, nationality, and/or disability to be criteria for selection for admission.

4.2 Registration

Names of pupils and staff will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Children will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

4.3 Discrimination

All cases of discrimination or prejudice should be taken seriously and dealt with according to existing sanction procedures. A record of incidents is kept. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes.

4.4 Language

The school views linguistic diversity positively. Children and staff must feel that their natural language is valued.

4.5 Socio-economic background and ethnicity

The Aspire Federation acknowledges that members of the school may come from diverse cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds and endeavours to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect in order to help to promote a school and a society in which there is harmony. The school recognises the inequalities of opportunity which exist within society for individuals and groups and takes action to enable every individual to achieve economic well-being later in life. Racist behaviour in any form is not tolerated.

4.6 Gender

The school regularly reviews its curriculum, procedures, policies and materials for gender bias or inequality. It is committed to providing a curriculum which avoids unnecessary gender divisions.

4.7 Religion

Whilst being a Federation of Church of England Schools, we acknowledge that members of the school community may come from diverse backgrounds: some have no religious faith; others may be committed to a religion other than Christianity. The school seeks to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of, and respect for, the beliefs and practices of others. With regard to the teaching of RE, the role of the class teacher is that of educator. The school does not seek to make pupils religious but to teach them about religion and encourage them to develop their own sense of spirituality.

4.8 Resources

The Aspire Federation's aim is to nurture positive values. Resources are to reflect backgrounds of children to support positive self-imagery. Resources include non-sexist books which value everyone's achievements. Displays will similarly reflect a range of cultures and races.

4.9 Relationships

Relationships between staff, children, parents/carers and the governing body should be such that any member of the school community acting in a manner contrary to the spirit of the policy is made aware of the unacceptable nature of his/her behaviour. This should be done in a supportive manner to encourage change and reinforce the aims of the policy. When it is uncomfortable or inappropriate to address the issue between staff then senior staff must be made aware of the incident and address it with the staff or child involved with supervision. In extreme circumstances formal procedures may be taken by the Executive Headteacher in line with guidance from the Local Authority.

4.10 Appointments

In recruitment procedures any advertisements, shortlisting and interview procedures are without any hint of direct or indirect discrimination. In all staff appointments, the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

4.11 Awareness of policy

Parents/carers and pupils should know that the school has an equal opportunities policy and is committed to equality of opportunity for all. A copy of the policy is made available to parents/carers on the school's website and as a paper copy, on request.

5. Monitoring and review

5.1 The effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy is monitored and reviewed by the governing body through;

- monitoring the progress of groups of pupils and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school
- monitoring the staff appointment process so that no-one applying for a post at the school is discriminated against
- requiring the Executive Headteacher to report to governors on an annual basis on the effectiveness of the policy
- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equal opportunity issues from parents/carers, staff or pupils
- monitoring other policies relating to safeguarding

The policy will be reviewed every three years, or more frequently should legislation and government guidance change.