EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Version control	
Equal Opportunities Policy [2025-09-01]	No changes.
Equal Opportunities Policy [2023-11-01]	Removed reference to EU legislation (para 1.3.1).
Equal Opportunities Policy [2021-09-01]	No significant changes.
Equal Opportunities Policy [2019-09-01]	Update to align with revised job titles and changed governance arrangements.
Equal Opportunities Policy [2019-06-01]	Provisional review undertaken. No changes other than to logo.
Equal Opportunities Policy [2017-09-01]	No amendment made pending conclusion of on-going consultations with recognised trade unions about the Trust's HR policies. Despite the absence of joint agreement about the Policy, The Trust has decided to implement the Policy.
Equal Opportunities Policy [2015-08-01]	Changes to previous version (2013-08-01) limited to format and minor amendments, e.g. to reflect changes in organisational structure.

Date of next review:	D**ec**ember 2027	**Owner:**	Director of HR & Compliance
Type of policy:	Network/Statutory	**Approving Body:**	Executive Operational Board

Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

1.1 The Aspirations Academies Trust (Aspirations) is committed to encouraging and achieving a working environment which is underpinned by fairness to all individuals, where equality and diversity is recognised, encouraged and valued, and the concept of individual responsibility is accepted by all.

1.2 It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment on grounds of sex, gender history or gender reassignment, pregnancy, age, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or is a civil partner. It is also unlawful to discriminate unjustifiably on grounds of disability or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to employment caused by disability.

1.3 Legal enactments

1.3.1 A person may complain of being harassed and or unfairly treated under UK legislation. The following are relevant UK statutes:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Part-time Work Regulations 2000
- The Employment Act 2002
- The Fixed- time Work Regulations 2002
- The Work and Families Act 2006

2. Purpose

2.1 Aspirations is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst its workforce. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment and not to discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.

2.2 This policy aims to promote an inclusive culture and working environment where:

- The diversity of all employees is respected and valued
- All employees have the opportunity to receive fair treatment in an environment free from discrimination and harassment
- Opportunities for promotion, training, and continued employment are provided to all staff based on merit and ability in relation the role criteria.
- No employee or job applicant shall be disadvantaged by requirements that cannot be shown to be relevant to the job they applied for or hold.
- All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

3. Scope

3.1 This procedure applies to all employees of Aspirations.

3.2 This policy applies to all aspects of employment from the advertisement of jobs, recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, career development, counselling, training, promotion, grievance and disciplinary procedures, through to reasons for termination of employment.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Aspirations is responsible for maintaining fair, consistent and objective procedures for matters relating to equality of opportunity and diversity and for ensuring that employees are appropriately trained. Accordingly, it shall arrange for the Equal Opportunities Policy to be reviewed periodically consulting as appropriate, including with unions in accordance with the Trust's Trade Union Recognition Agreement. The Trust shall also undertake measures to ensure the policy is appropriately and consistently applied across all Aspirations academies (e.g. training and/or access to specialist professional support).

4.2 Within each Aspirations academy:

1. the Principal has overall responsibility for the internal organisation, control and management of the policy. This includes responsibility for the collation and retention of the records necessary to enable the academy to have in place an effective monitoring system.

2. The members of the SLT (senior leadership team or designated senior manager) have responsibility for the internal organisation, control and management of their area of responsibility.

3. Managers are responsible for:

    - Co-operating with any measures introduced by the academy in relation to equal opportunities
    - Managing their employees in a way which is consistent with this policy
    - Setting a good example and ensuring all employees understand the standards expected from them
    - Following agreed procedures
    - Dealing firmly with breaches in accordance with the Aspirations Disciplinary Policy

4. All employees are responsible for:

    - Co-operating with any measures introduced by the academy in relation to equal opportunities
    - Treating colleagues and others (including pupils, visitors, contractors etc.) with respect and in ways which are consistent with this policy
    - Challenging and reporting breaches

4.3 It is recognised that whilst much can be achieved by legislative measures, real progress in improving equality of opportunity in employment can only be achieved with a continuing commitment, in all disciplines and at all levels of employees, and through training that reflects and supports equal opportunities throughout the academy.

5. Monitoring of Equal Opportunities

5.1 Personnel procedures and conditions of service will be reviewed on a regular basis, to identify and eliminate processes, practices or eligibility criteria which may discriminate (directly or indirectly) against any particular group or category of employees.

5.2 Job applicants will be asked for anonymous monitoring data on a sheet that can be detached from the application form. Monitoring data will be kept separate from the selection process. Job applicants will be informed that the monitoring data will only be used for equality monitoring and not for short listing.

5.3 All information collected will remain strictly confidential. Personnel records will be kept in a format that enables analysis to be made of the numbers of job applicants, appointments and employees in various categories, including:

- gender
- disability
- ethnic origin
- age

Periodically, consideration shall also be given to whether to extend this monitoring to include other protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

5.4 Similarly records will be maintained of the whole workforce to enable analysis (for example: in respect of promotion, training and general employment practices) to promote equality and help guard against potential discrimination.

6. Discrimination and Harassment

6.1 Aspirations will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment, by or against employees.

7. Review

7.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years in consultation with the recognised trade unions and sooner in the event of any significant relevant statutory change.