

Equality and Diversity Policy



Approved: July 2022

Review date: July 2024

Responsible Officer: Chief People Officer

Trust Ethos, Mission, Vision and Values



The Trust believes in the transformational power of education for each individual and that this is enhanced through collaborative working between the academies.



Working together, transforming lives

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Where the words 'Trust' and 'we' are used in this document, it refers to Archway Learning Trust.

Where the word 'Advisory Board' is used it refers to the Academy Advisory Board (AAB) of an individual academy within the Trust.

Where appropriate the AABs of individual academies will publish details of the procedures and practices to implement Trust policies.

The term 'Trust Executive Leadership Team' (ELT) is comprised of the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Corporate Services Officer, Chief People Officer, Director of Education and Director of Safeguarding.

Where the word 'users' is used it refers to staff, future staff issued with ICT access and/or hardware, AAB members, volunteers and regular visitors.

Where the phrase 'Senior Leader' is used, this refers to Principals, Headteachers and local Academy Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Where the phrase 'Principal' is used, this also refers to Headteachers.

Related Policies and Procedures:

- Appraisal & Capability Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Family Friendly Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Grievance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Pay Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Wellbeing, Health and Benefits Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Teacher Standards

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Archway Learning Trust is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity across all aspects of the Trust's work. Our Trust aims to ensure equality of opportunity for all staff, students and stakeholders in an environment in which all individuals are recognised as being of equal value and are able to make best use of their skills through equality of opportunity.
- 1.2. Our Trust values the diversity of the staff and student bodies within the organisation by recognising and celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Our Trust also acknowledges that embracing and valuing diversity is fundamental to securing equality of opportunity for all.
- 1.3. Our Trust's culture and ethos are underpinned by its Christian beliefs. As it says in Mark 12 verse 31 'Love your neighbour as yourself... There is no commandment greater than these...'. Our Trust's desire to embrace and nurture all is rooted in the Christian faith where we are taught to love one another regardless of age, race, culture, sexuality, gender or faith.

2. Scope and Principles

- 2.1. Equality of opportunity and inclusivity are fundamental to the vision and values of our Trust. The commitment to equality and diversity is implemented through appropriate policies, procedures and good practice which reflect the following key principles:
 - equality and social justice;
 - acknowledging and valuing diversity;
 - respect for others;
 - compliance with equality legislation;
 - elimination of all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination;
 - active challenge to stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes;
 - commitment to inclusive education and a working environment which enables and supports all students and staff to flourish and meet their potential;
 - commitment to the positive development of all staff and AAB members;
 - accountability for compliance with this policy by all members of our Trust, academy communities and all those engaged in Trust or academy activities.
- 2.2. Our Trust's commitment to equality is, in part, achieved through the eradication of discrimination. This policy encompasses the following protected characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010:
 - age - a person of a particular age or belonging to a particular age group;
 - race - a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins;
 - disability - a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities;
 - sex - a man or a woman;
 - sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes;

- gender reassignment – a person who has undergone the process of transitioning from one gender to another;
 - marriage and civil partnership – regardless of between a man and a woman or a same-sex couple;
 - pregnancy and maternity - being pregnant or expecting a baby and the period up to 26 weeks after giving birth, including breastfeeding;
 - religion and belief - religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief, which affect life choices or the way a person chooses to live.
- 2.3. All staff, students and stakeholders have a duty to act in accordance with both the content and spirit of this policy and treat one another with respect and dignity at all times. We will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics listed above and will treat all instances of such conduct extremely seriously. Conduct which does not comply with this policy may be dealt with under our Trust’s Disciplinary Policy (staff) or Behaviour Policy (students) as appropriate.
- 2.4. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time following consultation with staff and recognised trade unions.
- 2.5. Archway Learning Trust Public Sector Equality Duty Statement is attached as Appendix A.
- 2.6. Archway Learning Trust Public Sector Equality Objectives are stated in a separate document “ALT Equality Objectives”.

3. Aims of the Equality and Diversity Policy

- 3.1. The aims of this policy are to establish, promote and provide accountability in relation to the Trust’s commitment to:
- a) develop an ethos which respects and values all people;
 - b) actively advance equality of opportunity;
 - c) prepare students for life in a diverse society;
 - d) promote good relations amongst people within each academy’s community and the wider communities within which we work;
 - e) eliminate all forms of unfair indirect and direct discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other oppressive behaviour;
 - f) deliver equality and diversity through our Trust’s policies, procedures and practice;
 - g) make reasonable adjustments and do our utmost, within available resources, to remove barriers which limit or discourage access to Trust provision and activities;
 - h) take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups whose progress has been limited by protected characteristics, stereotyping and cultural expectations;
 - i) monitor the implementation of equality and diversity within our Trust;

- j) ensure that recruitment and selection procedures and practices within our Trust are open and transparent and ensure that fair and equal selection criteria is applied.

4. Communication of the Equality and Diversity Commitments and Policy

- 4.1. We will take active steps to communicate this Equality and Diversity Policy to all students, staff and stakeholders of the Trust.

5. Policies and Procedures

- 5.1. All our policies and procedures will be designed to promote equal opportunity and protection against discrimination for all employees, students and stakeholders. The impact of any policy changes on equality issues will be considered prior to implementation. In some instances of substantial changes to policies or procedures, a formal equality impact assessment will be required.

6. Disability Discrimination

- 6.1. We support the ethos of the social model of disability which attempts to remove barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people. We encourage all employees, students or stakeholders to alert a relevant member of staff if they are disabled or become disabled in order that we can support them as appropriate.
- 6.2. If employees, students or stakeholders experience difficulties at work or school because of their disability, they should speak to their line manager or a senior member of staff to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. It may be necessary for the line manager or senior member of staff to consult with other senior staff, the HR Team, the individual (and their parents/carers in the case of a student) and their medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. In the case of an employee, we may also seek advice and guidance from an occupational health advisor. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate the individual's needs. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, the reasons will be explained and we will try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 6.3. We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, students or stakeholders at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff, students or stakeholders. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled individuals.

7. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

7.1. It is important to remember that each individual is responsible for their acts, carried out both within and outside employment. Any person instructing, inducing or encouraging others by inaction or action to behave in a manner which is inconsistent with this policy will themselves be in breach of this policy and will be dealt with accordingly.

7.2. The Trust Board is responsible for:

- ensuring we fulfil the legal responsibilities of the organisation in relation to equality;
- ensuring Trust policies adopted by the Board are designed to support equality and diversity;
- ensuring the academies within our Trust adhere to the equality and diversity policy and other associated policies and procedures.

7.3. The Executive Leadership Team and Principals are responsible for:

- providing consistent and high-profile leadership in relation to equality and diversity;
- advancing equality and diversity inside and outside our Trust and academies;
- ensuring policies and procedures are in place to comply with all equality legislation;
- ensuring that the academies within our Trust implement the relevant equality and diversity policies and practices and that suitable training is provided to senior staff to aid them to do so.

7.4. Senior Leaders, including Business Leaders are responsible for:

- ensuring they promote and monitor compliance with the relevant equality and diversity policies and procedures. This is achieved by setting an appropriate standard of behaviour, led by example and ensuring that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our Trust's aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities;
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity and receive the support and training necessary to carry them out;
- following the relevant procedures and taking action in cases of unfair discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

7.4. All Employees are responsible for:

- promoting equality and diversity through their own actions and their work within our Trust and avoiding unfair discrimination;
- ensuring students' knowledge and experience of diverse religious and cultural ceremonies, practices and traditions is shared in a positive way where possible;
- actively responding to any incidents of unfair discrimination which relate to protected characteristics perpetrated by students, other employees or stakeholders;
- keeping up-to-date with equality requirements and participating in equal opportunities and diversity training.

7.6 Students are responsible for:

- behaving in a way that is consistent with the expectations of our Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy and other associated policies such as the Behaviour Policy;
- respecting others in their language and actions.

7.7 Stakeholders (including parents, regular visitors and volunteers) are responsible for:

- behaving in a way that is consistent with the expectations of our Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy and other associated policies;
- respecting others in their language and actions and avoiding any discriminatory behaviour.

8. EMPLOYEES

Conditions of Service

- 8.1. We will ensure that employee terms and conditions of service are determined and applied in a fair and consistent manner.
- 8.2. We will also ensure that any facilities, benefits and practical support offered to employees, such as the employee wellbeing package, are developed, promoted and delivered in a manner which secures accessibility for all staff in a fair and consistent manner. Furthermore, we will seek to identify and remove any access barriers where possible.

Training and Promotion

- 8.3. We will ensure provision for employee professional development takes account of the diverse staffing group employed by our Trust and is managed in a way which secures equal opportunities for all employees.
- 8.4. Employee training needs will be identified throughout the academic year and during the staff appraisal process. All employees will be given equal, fair and appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.
- 8.5. Induction training for all employees makes clear our commitment to inclusivity, equality and diversity, and well as our obligations and responsibilities as laid out in this policy.

Discipline, Capability and Termination of Employment

- 8.6. We will ensure that expectations in relation to employee conduct and capability are determined and measured in a consistent manner. Any disciplinary and capability procedures and associated sanctions will be applied on the facts of the case and without discrimination.
- 8.7. We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.

Fixed-term Employees, Casual and Agency Workers

- 8.8. The conditions of service in relation to fixed-term employees, casual and agency workers, will be monitored to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities.

Part-time Employees

- 8.9. The conditions of service in relation to part-time employees will be monitored to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately in accordance with our Trust's Flexible Working Policy.

Training and Guidance in relation to the Equality and Diversity Policy

- 8.10. Questions in relation to the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Principal, Deputy CEO or HR Team to request training or further information.
- 8.11. Employees will be given appropriate training in relation to equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice where applicable to role. This includes induction training and ongoing training where required and/or appropriate.
- 8.12. Employees have access to further training on Equality and Diversity through our online learning platform, and can request further training through their line-management.

Breaches of this Policy

- 8.13. If an employee believes that they may have been treated in a way that is inconsistent with this policy, they are encouraged to raise the matter informally with the individual concerned where possible. If this is not possible, they should raise the matter through our Trust's Grievance Policy. If an employee believes that they may have been subject to bullying or harassment, they are encouraged to raise the matter informally with the individual concerned where possible. If this is not possible, they should raise the matter through our Trust's Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- 8.14. If an employee believes the treatment of a colleague, student or stakeholder by another member of staff constitutes a breach of this policy or the Bullying and Harassment policy, they should raise this directly with the individual whose conduct is of concern, or with their line manager or through our Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.
- 8.15. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and will be investigated in accordance with the relevant policy and procedure. Employees who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.
- 8.16. Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination, bullying or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy.

Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal.

9. STUDENTS

Access to Education and Curriculum

- 9.1. All students in the care of our Trust, regardless of any protected characteristics, ability or circumstance, are expected to become individual, independent learners and fulfil their potential through high attainment and achievement.
- 9.2. We are committed to operating admissions arrangements which reflect a fair and equitable process, ensuring admissions applications are assessed in accordance with our Admissions Arrangements Policy.
- 9.3. We are committed to delivering a high quality of academic, vocational and enriched education and curriculum for all its students, taking into account our Trust Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy. This is with the aim of enabling each student to fulfil their potential academically, socially, morally, spiritually and physically.
- 9.4. We are committed to providing opportunities for our students to learn about equality and diversity within the curriculum, including diverse cultural backgrounds and histories, diverse faiths and religions and the experience of those with protected characteristics.

Access to other opportunities

- 9.5. We will ensure that access to wider opportunities at the academies will be made available to all students in a fair and equitable manner and one which is consistent with the principles of this policy. This includes ensuring fair and equitable access to enrichment opportunities.

Recognition of Positive Behaviour and Behaviour Sanctions

- 9.6. We will ensure that any recognition of positive behaviour is based on merit and determined and applied in a consistent manner in order that all students have opportunity to be rewarded, recognised and motivated as appropriate.
- 9.7. We will ensure that expectations in relation to student behaviour are determined and measured in a consistent manner. Any behaviour sanctions will be applied in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and on the facts of the situation and without discrimination.

Training and Guidance

- 9.8. Students are offered a wide range of opportunity to deepen their knowledge about all aspects of their local, National and wider community. This is achieved through high quality teaching, Acts of Worship sessions and assemblies, utilising outstanding resources, delivered by both academy staff and outside speakers. We ensure that the PHSE curriculum is underpinned by the celebration of equality and diversity.

Breaches of this Policy

- 9.9. Students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff that they trust if they feel that they or anyone else is being treated in a way that is inconsistent with this policy. Regular Acts of Worship, assemblies and other activities promote the roles of the Safeguarding, Pastoral and Chaplaincy Teams.
- 9.10. If a student's behaviour is not consistent with our expectations in relation to equality and diversity, then action will be taken in line with the Behaviour Policy. Ensuring a fair investigation, and an educative approach should be the focus for dealing with any student who breaches the expectations.

10. Review of the Policy

- 10.1. This policy will be reviewed by the Board to ensure legal compliance and effectiveness every two years, save for circumstances in which an earlier review is necessary.
- 10.2. The Trust's Public Sector Equality Duty: Equality Statement will be reviewed and updated annually.
- 10.3. The Trust's Public Sector Equality Duty: Equality Objectives (separate document) will be updated every four years and will be subject to interim review.

Appendix A

Archway Learning Trust Public Sector Equality Duty: Equality Statement

Archway Learning Trust is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity across all aspects of the Trust's work. In order to achieve this, we are collecting and using evidence on equality to develop our policy and decision making and to inform the Trust's Equality Objectives.

We are committed to operating as an equal opportunities employer and recognises that a diverse workforce enables us to serve our students and communities more effectively. This commitment is embedded in our recruitment material, policies and practices.

We are also committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all students in an environment in which all students are recognised as being of equal value and are able to make best use of their skills to fulfil their potential.