


Excellence, Aspiration and  
Care in Partnership

# Equal Opportunities Policy

2025.26

Written by	Ms Foye (HR Director)
Approved by	Mr Sullivan (CEO)
Signed	
Notes	This Equal Opportunities Policy has been approved and adopted by Ashmole Trust for use in all its academies on 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025 and will be reviewed on 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2026.
Date approved	September 2025
Next review date	September 2026

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### DEFINITIONS

- In this Equal Opportunities Policy, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:
- ‘Academy’ means any academy operated by Ashmole Trust and includes all sites upon which the Academy undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- ‘Board’ means the board of Directors of the Trust.
- ‘Head Teacher’ means the most senior teacher in the Academy who is responsible for its management and administration. Such teacher may also be referred to as the Head of School or Principal.
- ‘Local Governing Body’ means, (if appropriate to the context), the Governors appointed to carry out specified functions in relation to the Academy as delegated by the Trust.
- ‘Trust’ means Ashmole Trust, which is the company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Academy.

#### 1. Equal opportunities statement

The Trust is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. All staff and/or any person applying for a role with the Trust will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or



national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics)

### 2. About this policy

- This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of unlawful discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers.
- This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

### 3. Who is responsible for this policy?

- The Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy has been delegated to the Head Teacher.
- All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. Mrs McLaren has overall responsibility for equal opportunities training.

### 4. Discrimination

- You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people including current and former employees, job applicants, suppliers, pupils, parents, carers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with work-related contacts, and on work-related trips or events including social events).
- The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:
  - (a) Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.
  - (b) Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified.
  - (c) Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose



or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.

- (d) Victimization: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
  - (e) Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.
5. Recruitment and selection
- Recruitment, promotion, and other selection exercises such as redundancy selection will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid unlawful discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person and with the involvement of HR, where possible.
  - Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.
  - We take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market
  - Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic unless permitted by law.
  - Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with the approval of the Human Resources Department. For example:
    - (a) Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
    - (b) Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
    - (c) Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
    - (d) Questions to assess an applicant's fitness to practice in accordance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
    - (e) Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the selection or decision-making process).



Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check.

- We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from UK Visas and Immigration.
6. Training and promotion and conditions of service
- Training needs will be identified through regular appraisals. You will be given appropriate access to training to enable you to progress within the Trust and promotion decisions will usually be made on the basis of merit.
  - Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all of you who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.
7. Termination of employment
- We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
  - We will apply disciplinary procedures and penalties without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.
8. Disabilities
- If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
  - If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your line manager or HR to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager or HR may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
  - We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access.



9. Part-time and fixed-term work  
Part-time and fixed-term staff should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent staff and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.
10. Public Sector Equality Duty
  - The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Trust's academies to publish information about equalities. The Equality Act 2010 clearly defines the Protected Characteristics and those individuals and groups have direct protection from the framework of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
  - The three aims of the general Public Sector Equality Duty are to:
    - (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
    - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a Protected Characteristic and those who do not.
    - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a Protected Characteristic and those who do not.
  - Each academy has its own report on the ways that it meets the Public Sector Equality Duty. More information can be found in each school.
11. Breaches of this policy
  - We take a strict approach to breaches of this policy, which will be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination which is not justified may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal.
  - If you believe that you have suffered discrimination you can raise the matter through our Grievance Policy or through our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy as appropriate. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
  - There must be no victimisation or retaliation against staff who complain about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy.

