



# Equality Policy

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**September 2025**

<b>Signed (Chair of Trustees):</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>September 2025</b>
<b>Date of Review:</b>	September 2026

*The Arbor Academy Trust reviews this policy annually. The Trustees may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Trust receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This document is also available in other formats e.g. e-mail and enlarged print version, on request to the School Offices and is displayed on the schools' websites.*

## **1 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.1 It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of any of the nine "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act 2010. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 1.2 Arbor Academy Trust does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone, be they staff or pupil, on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- 1.3 Arbor Academy Trust does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, by association. Associative discrimination, in the Equality Act 2010, is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- 1.4 Arbor Academy Trust does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone if they are perceived to have a protected characteristic. Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he or she has a particular protected characteristic when he or she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.
- 1.5 Arbor Academy Trust ensures that pupils and staff are not harassed because of a protected characteristic. Harassment refers to unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which may violate a person's dignity or create a hostile, degrading or humiliating environment. We do not tolerate third-party harassment, where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties. We take reasonable steps to ensure that harassment is prevented from happening again.
- 1.6 Arbor Academy Trust ensures that pupils and staff are not victimised because of a protected characteristic. Victimisation occurs when an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he or she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he or she is suspected of doing so, or about to do so.
- 1.7 Arbor Academy Trust promotes the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.
- 1.8 Arbor Academy Trust ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school and our extended services. We constantly strive to eliminate any forms of direct and indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning and where possible we make reasonable adjustments.
- 1.9 Arbor Academy Trust promotes equality and ensures that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- 1.10 Arbor Academy Trust fosters good relations by challenging stereotyping and prejudice whenever it occurs. We are aware that prejudice and stereotyping is caused by low self-image and ignorance. Through positive educational experiences and support for each individual's point of view, we aim to promote positive social attitudes and respect for all.
- 1.11 Arbor Academy Trust celebrates the diversity of our community and shows respect for all groups.
- 1.12 Visitors to the school, or those who use the premises, are aware of the Equality Policy.

## **2 Anti-Racism**

- 2.1 It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the schools can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the schools. We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident. Incidents of racism are recorded in the incident book and are reported to the local governing board on a termly basis.

- 2.2 We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. For example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find in the schools. We promote an understanding of different cultures through the topics studied by the children and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the schools.
- 2.3 Within Arbor Academy Trust, the curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. For example, the history curriculum gives due emphasis to ancient African traditions and cultures and on the Ancient Egyptians. In the religious education curriculum topic of religious festivals, the children study the importance of Diwali to Hindus.
- 2.4 Should anyone at our schools be a victim of racism, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

### **3 Disability**

- 3.1 The Act defines disability as when a person has 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.'
- 3.2 It is the right of all pupils to receive the best education the schools can provide, with access to all educational activities organised by the schools. We do not tolerate any forms of discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment or victimisation towards a disabled member of our Trust. Should an incident be reported, we will act immediately to ensure that it is rectified and is not repeated.
- 3.3 Arbor Academy Trust endeavours to consider adjustments that may need to be made in order to support disabled members of the Trust (See Health and Safety Policy). We aim to treat disabled staff and pupils favourably by making reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are not disadvantaged and on a more level footing with pupils and staff without disabilities (See SEN Policy).
- 3.4 Within Arbor Academy Trust, the environments and curriculum content reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for disabled people. Similarly, the delivery of the curriculum promotes equality. For example, we adapt the curriculum to ensure accessibility (see SEN Policy) and encourage visitors to the schools with disabilities to share experiences.
- 3.5 Arbor Academy Trust endeavours to ensure that disabled staff and pupils can play as full a part as possible in school life by making reasonable adjustments where possible. Where appropriate, we will supply auxiliary aids to support the needs of disabled pupils to ensure that they have equal access to the curriculum and the schools' facilities.
- 3.6 We monitor and plan for accessibility on a regular basis in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can access the curriculum and to improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education and facilities in the school (see Accessibility Plan).
- 3.7 Arbor Academy Trust ensures that disabled pupils have accessible information available to them.

### **4 Religion and Belief**

- 4.1 Within Arbor Academy Trust, we respect all staff and pupils in our schools regardless of their religion or belief. We do not discriminate against someone on the grounds that they do not adhere to a particular religion or belief. Should an incident of discrimination occur, whether directly, by association or perception, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident.
- 4.2 Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for all religions and beliefs and the lack of religion or belief. For example, in the religious education curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children study the importance of different festivals to different religions. Similarly, when teaching creation stories, the theory of evolution is taught to pupils.
- 4.3 We accommodate the needs of pupils and staff and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to follow beliefs and customs. For example, we serve Halal meat for Muslim children.

Similarly, school uniform adjustments are made to suit all religions and faiths (see School Uniform Policy).

## **5 Gender**

- 5.1 Arbor Academy Trust understands that despite thirty years of individual legal rights to sex equality there is still widespread discrimination and persistent gender inequality. Both sexes suffer from the stereotyping of their roles and needs and such stereotyping has to be understood, challenged and overcome.
- 5.2 We endeavour to eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination. By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly.
- 5.3 We do not tolerate and aim to eliminate, sexual harassment. By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator. (See Behaviour/Anti-Bullying policy).
- 5.4 Through our schools' values and aims we promote gender equality. We understand 'sex' to refer to the biological differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider social roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognize and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.
- 5.5 We ensure that pupils of one sex are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils. Where single sex classes (e.g. sex education) or single sex sports do occur, we ensure that the schools allow equal entitlement for both sexes.
- 5.6 Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for gender equality. Where a positive action initiative is run within the schools in order to raise attainment, it will not be to the advantage of one sex over the other.
- 5.7 Incidents of sexual/gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Behaviour/ Anti-Bullying policy.

## **6. Pregnancy and Maternity**

- 6.1 We will not treat anyone less favourably because she becomes pregnant or has recently had a baby. We have a duty of care to our pupils and will not exclude them from the school as a result of being pregnant or recently having a baby.

## **7. Sexual Orientation**

- 7.1 Within Arbor Academy Trust, we do not tolerate any forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation against pupils or staff who are gay, lesbian or bisexual, or of the pupils of gay, lesbian or bisexual parents. Should a pupil or member of staff be discriminated against, victimised or harassed, we will act immediately to prevent any repetition of the incident.
- 7.2 We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils and staff. For example, we will immediately remove any offensive graffiti that we may find in school. We promote an understanding and respect towards people of different sexual orientation through our Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education programme in PHSE (See Sex and Relationships Education Policy).
- 7.3 Should anyone at our schools be a victim of discrimination due to their sexual orientation, we will do all we can to support that person in overcoming any difficulties they may have.

## **8 Gender Reassignment**

- 8.1 We do not tolerate any forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of gender reassignment or associated or perceived gender reassignment. Gender variant staff and pupils, or pupils of transgender parents are not treated less favourably. Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will be dealt with immediately and issues raised will be handled sensitively.

## **9 Employment Provisions**

- 9.1 We do not discriminate against potential employees or existing employees in respect of the benefits facilities and services offered (e.g. training, promotion and dismissal).
- 9.2 We endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantaged staff and aim to provide auxiliary aids and services where necessary and reasonable.
- 9.3 We regularly consider reasonable alterations to physical features of the schools in order to avoid disadvantages caused by disability.
- 9.4 Recruitment processes ensure that questions relating to health are directly linked to the job on offer.
- 9.5 We will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where we are uncertain whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice.

## **9. The Role of the Arbor Academy Trust Local Governing Board**

- 9.1 Arbor Academy Trust Local Governing Board has set out its commitment to the Equality Act in this policy statement and it will continue to have due regard to the equality considerations in all schools' policies and practices. The Local Governing Board will ensure that all members of the schools' community are treated fairly and with equality.
- 9.2 The Local Governing Board seeks to ensure that disabled people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school. The Local Governing Board take all reasonable steps to ensure that the schools' environment gives access to people with disabilities.
- 9.3 The Local Governing Board welcome all applications to join the schools, whatever background or disability a child or adult may have.
- 9.4 The Local Governing Board ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our schools on account of their sex, race, religion or belief. For example, all children have access to the full range of the curriculum and regulations regarding the schools' uniform will be applied equally to boys and girls. If a child's religion affects the schools' uniform, then the schools will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's cultural traditions.
- 9.5 The Local Governing Board ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our schools on account of their sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy/maternity. The schools will deal with each case sensitively and with respect for the child's individual circumstance.

## **10 The Role of the Headteacher/ Head of School**

- 10.1 It is the Headteacher/ Head of School's role to implement the Trust's Equality Policy and Equality Objectives and they are supported by the Local Governing Board. In so doing the Headteacher/ Head of school monitors all incidents of discrimination and treats all incidents of unfair treatment with due seriousness.
- 10.2 It is the Headteacher/ Head of School's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the schools' policy on equality and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- 10.3 The Headteacher/ Head of School ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training.

- 10.4 The Headteacher/ Head of School promotes the principle of equality in developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life, for example, in the assembly, where respect for other people is a regular theme, and in displays shown around the school.

## **11 The Role of the Class Teacher**

- 11.1 The class teacher ensures that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect. We do not discriminate against any child.
- 11.2 When selecting classroom material, teachers' pay due regard to all members of the class and do not provide material that is racist or sexist in nature. Teachers strive to provide material that gives positive images of disabled people, ethnic minorities and that challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.
- 11.3 When designing schemes of work, we use this policy to guide us, both in our choice of topics to study, and in how to approach sensitive issues.
- 11.4 All our teachers challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any serious incidents in the incident book, and draw them to the attention of the Head of School/ Headteacher.

## **12 Monitoring and Review**

- 12.1 It is the responsibility of our Local Governing Board to monitor the effectiveness of this Equality Policy. The Local Governing Board does this by:
- Monitoring the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by other pupils in the school.
  - Monitoring the progress of boys and girls and comparing it to the progress made nationally.
  - Monitoring the staff appointment process, so that no-one applying for a post at the schools is discriminated against.
  - Requiring the Headteacher/ Head of School to report to the Local Governing Board on an annual basis on the effectiveness of this policy.
  - Taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding equality issues from parents, staff or pupils.
  - Monitoring the Behaviour and Discipline Policy, so those pupils from minority groups are not unfairly treated.