St Aldhelm's Academy
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

# Gender Equality Policy

St Aldhelm's Academy
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# 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Statement of Intent

St Aldhelms Academy is committed to promoting gender equality and ensuring that all students, staff, governors, and visitors are treated fairly, with dignity and respect. We believe that every individual should have equal access to opportunities and experiences in a safe, inclusive environment free from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

1. The Academy will not discriminate against people on the grounds of their gender identity or gender expression. Where this policy refers to 'LGBTQ+ this refers to a broad range of people whose gender identity is not expressed in ways that are typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. This includes those who have non-binary, non-gender or gender fluid identities.
2. The Academy is committed to providing a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and students, including ensuring access to the appropriate changing and toilet facilities.
3. We will provide support to those staff or students who identify as non-binary, non-gender or gender-fluid.

**Legal and inspection framework**

This policy reflects statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and aligns with Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework. It also reflects local authority expectations within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council for inclusive and equitable practice.

### 1.2. Aims

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure we meet our statutory obligations.
- Actively promote gender equality and oppose gender discrimination in all its forms.
- Foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality. The Equality Act (2006) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex discrimination Act (1975). It added to the duty to eliminate sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, the duty to promote gender equality. St Aldhelm's Academy is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, students and any others involved in the school community, regardless of gender. We will ensure that neither males nor females are treated less favorably in any procedures, practices or aspects of service delivery.

This Academy will not tolerate harassment of people based on their gender or LGBTQ+ status. We will actively promote gender equality and oppose gender discrimination in all its forms and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

**This policy applies to:**

- All students (including in the classroom, extracurricular activities, pastoral support, and welfare settings)
- All school staff (teaching & support staff)
- Governors, volunteers, contractors, and third-party providers
- Wider school community interactions

### 1.3. Definitions

- Gender Equality: Equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for people of all genders.
- Gender Identity: How individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves.
- Sex: Assigned at birth based on biological characteristics.

- Discrimination: Unfavourable treatment because of gender, gender identity, or perceived gender.
- Harassment: Unwanted behaviour related to gender that violates dignity or creates an intimidating environment.
- **EQUALITY ACT 2010** The act defines nine "protected characteristics". They are:
- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy or maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sex; sexual orientation.

The characteristic "race" includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin.
The characteristic "religion" also includes religious or philosophical belief or lack of religion or belief. The act rules against direct discrimination whereby a person is treated less favourably in relation to one of the protected characteristics than they would otherwise be treated. If the protected characteristic is race for example, less favourable treatment includes segregation from others.

The act also identifies indirect discrimination, whereby a provision, criterion or practice is applied which discriminates in relation to a relevant protected characteristic, and in so doing, puts someone at a disadvantage and is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The act also defines harassment as engaging in unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, due to one of the protected characteristics.

# 2. Section 1

Our Aims

**2.1. Our commitment covers all aspects of school life and includes:**

- Creating a school ethos, which promotes gender equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices
- Taking active measures to investigate report and act on incidents of gender discrimination
- Collecting and analysing school data and other gender equality relevant information
- Monitoring behaviour, discipline and exclusions to remove all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory
- Monitoring all aspects of teaching and learning and the wider curriculum to assess the ways in which they might impact on gender equality
- Admissions and attendance following LEA guidelines
- Staff recruitment and professional development promoting gender equality

**2.2. Taking active measures to investigate, report and act on incidents of gender discrimination.**
All members of staff employed within St Aldhelm's Academy have the responsibility to promote gender equality and to report any incidences of discrimination, which may arise in the Academy.
We understand that eliminating gender discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality is in part an education function and a matter of cultural change. Where possible, breaches of the policy will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the level of the breach, and with the intention of bringing about

the relevant changes. More serious breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our school's anti-bullying and harassment procedures, and the disciplinary procedures for staff.
Where issues based on sex and gender come to the attention of the school, these will be dealt with according to our Child Safeguarding Policy and Complaints Procedure Policy, which outlines the procedures to follow.
St Aldhelm's will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, nor victimise or permit harassment in the following ways:

a. Through their admissions arrangements, or by non-admittance
b. In the way education is provided.
c. In the way the school permits the students access to a benefit, facility or service, or by not permitting access.
d. By not providing education.
e. By excluding from school.
f. By subjecting the pupil to any other detriment.

St Aldhelm's Academy will make reasonable adjustments to ensure discrimination does not take place. St Aldhelm's academy has a duty to have due regard to equality of opportunities, but also a specific duty to ensure that outcomes reflect the promotion of anti-discriminatory practice. Not only do we have a responsibility to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, but also to be proactive in the following ways:

1. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
2. Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.
4. Take steps to meet the needs of students who share a protected characteristic if their needs are different to those who do not share that characteristic.
5. Encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low, by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

To fulfil this responsibility, St Aldhelm's Academy has adopted a strategic approach to the promotion of equality and to the way their equality policies and procedures are implemented.

This is done through:

1. Actively promoting positive attitudes and behaviour for all staff, students and parents.
2. Valuing diversity of every kind within the whole school community. Taking steps to show that diversity is valued.
3. Removing disadvantage and discrimination of any kind, including that which may have been historically practiced and perhaps previously even considered to be acceptable.
4. Monitoring ethnic data to ensure students from ethnic minorities are achieving as they should be.
5. Examining the effect of school policies and procedures on all staff, students and parents; is diversity considered and are appropriate adjustments made?
6. Ensuring that methods of communication reflect and accommodate the diversity of the school community.
7. Recognising and challenging discrimination and encourage all members of the school community to do likewise.

8. Ensuring compliance to these policies and monitoring through reporting of discriminatory bullying or hate crime recording.
9. Developing and promoting positive approaches to community cohesion.

# 3. Section 2

**3.1. St Aldhelm's supports gender equality through:**

1. Have a named person with specific responsibility for equality issues – this person is Megan Pike (Designated Safeguarding lead).
2. Have an action plan which reflects our school community and is frequently monitored. This is through our School Action Plan and can be requested through our Principal.
3. We feel we have a positive, whole school commitment to eradicating racism and discrimination and share this with students and parents.
4. Education around Equalities is important in all curricular areas, not just PSHE.
5. Collect, monitor and evaluate the use of accurate information about all students regarding ethnicity, religion, home language, naming system – this is through our My Concern online logging system
6. Ensure names or nouns are spelled and pronounced accurately and that preferred names or nouns are used.

**3.2. Procedure around name or Noun changes:**

a. Staff are advised if a student requests a name or noun change, they make the safeguarding team aware as soon as possible.
b. Megan Pike will then meet the student to discuss their preferences. The student is supported fully through this process.
c. If it is felt it is appropriate to make the parents/ carers aware of the name or noun change it is then done in conjunction with the preferences of the student.
d. The student is supported with telling their parents/ carers in an environment that they feel comfortable.
e. It may be that the student is present or is absent while parents are made aware of the requested name or noun change. This will be agreed prior to parents / carers being contacted.
f. There may be instances where it is felt inappropriate to make parents /carers aware of a name or noun change.
g. Teachers are then made aware of the name or noun change and the students name or noun is changed on Arbor and on the class registers.
h. Each case is treated individually, taking into account the students wishes and their home situation. Value home language and culture.
i. Develop positive self-identity and self-esteem alongside respect for others, making all students and staff feel positive about differences.
j. Use resources, books, toys, displays and music which reflect and celebrate cultural and other forms of diversity, including disability.
k. Offer students a secure environment in which to explore their own culture and identity and that of their peers – this is supported by our Pride club that has was set up in October 2022 and still on-going provision.
l. As a school we regularly evaluate the outcomes of all our policies including our equality policy and the practice linked to it.

# 4. Section 3

**4.1. Progress, attainment and assessment**

Assessment analysis takes place half termly. Any findings related to the underachievement of any gender group is highlighted and they are targeted appropriately.

**4.2. Behaviour, discipline and exclusions**

Our procedures for disciplining students and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all students irrespective of gender. All procedures for excluding and reintegrating students are free from gender discrimination. We aim to develop positive attitudes in students, challenge stereotypes and promote positive role models.

**4.3. Personal development and pastoral care for our students**

Through our PSHE curriculum and tutor programme. Our students are comprehensively supported and guided. We actively encourage boys and girls to respect each other as equals and to challenge sexist behaviours and language.

**4.4. All aspects of teaching and learning and the wider curriculum**

Curriculum planning takes account of our commitment to gender equality. The criteria used for setting and other grouping are fair for all students. We endeavour to use assessment materials that are free from any unfair bias. Our aim is not only to encourage all students to oppose discrimination, but also to make sure they have the skills to challenge stereotyping as and when it occurs. Our School Council gives all students a voice, regardless of their gender; a gender balance in the composition of the Council is always aimed for.

**4.5. Admissions and attendance**

We follow Local Authority guidelines on admission, which are fair to all gender groups. The school monitors pupil attendance and uses data to develop strategies to address poor attendance and is aware in some cases absenteeism may be linked to gender.

**4.6. Staff recruitment and professional development**

Recruitment and selection procedures are consistent with the Gender Equality legislation and operate within the framework provided by the Local Authority. Steps are taken to identify, support and provide opportunities for the professional development of staff and governors from all groups.

**4.7. Partnership with parents and communities**

All parents are encouraged to be part of the life of the school and can join the governing body or become a helper in school. All opportunities to provide positive role models for the students are taken, especially if they challenge stereotyping of male and female behaviour. Visiting speakers who are able to challenge gender stereotyping are welcomed into school and a balance of male and female visitors is aimed for. A programme of off-site visits by students avoids gender bias and broadens the interests of both girls and boys.

**4.8. Roles and responsibilities**

Promoting gender equality is the responsibility of the whole school community, including support staff, students and parents. At the beginning of each academic school year, school induction procedures will highlight the duties implied by this policy in the same way as child protection, health and safety and behaviour policies form part of the induction process. New and temporary staff to the school will be made aware of this school policy. At the beginning of the academic school year, all students will be reminded of their roles and responsibilities regarding equality. Parents will be made aware of their roles and responsibilities through the school prospectus and newsletters.

**4.9. The Principal and Line Managers**

Will demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of this policy.
They will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and understand their role and responsibility in relation to it.

- Ensure that, where additional funding is available for raising the achievement of gender groups, the additional resources are used appropriately and targeted on the basis of identified need for this purpose.

### 4.10. Curriculum Leaders and Heads of Years

Will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring curriculum policies and Schemes of Work to ensure that gender equality is promoted, and bias addressed immediately.

# 5. Section 5

### 5.1. Reviewing the Gender Awareness/Equality Policy

Review of the gender equality policy will form the basis of an action plan where appropriate. It may also link to other action plans the school is obliged to produce, such as the School Improvement Plan. Subject leaders should refer to this policy when reviewing and updating their curriculum schemes of work. This policy will be reviewed within the school's policy cycle.

**Related Policies:**

- Anti-bullying
- Complaints
- Disability and Accessibility
- SEND
- Teaching & Learning
- PSHE
- Race Equality
- Safeguarding Students

### 5.2. Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities Statement

All students have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. St Aldhelm's Academy is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Policies are available on each of these that expand on this further. All staff have equal access and inclusive rights to their work regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability or ability. St Aldhelm's Academy is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential. Policies are available on each of these that expand on this further.

### 5.3. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Academy Leadership team as part of the Academy annual review process.

This policy will be actively promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

### 5.4. References

- *Equality Act 2010: guidance (2010)* - *https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance*
- *Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges*. Department for Education, (2015) - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE_July_2015.pdf

- *Policy Paper: Safeguarding children and young people*. The Charity Commission, (2014) - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people
- *Code of Practice for Schools – Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Part 4* (Disability Rights Commission, 2002). Ref: COPSH - http://www.drc-gb.org/thelaw/practice.asp Order: Disability Rights Commission Tel: 08457 622 633.
- *What to do if you think a student is being abused: Every Child Matters, Change For Children*. Department for Education, (2006) - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417685/Archived-DFES-04320-2006-ChildAbuse.pdf
- The Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) are always happy to assist with any of these issues - http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Council/Schools-Portal/g/Guidelines-for-writing-a-school-equality-policy.pdf