



# ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre

## EQUALITY POLICY

### OUR AIM

Staff members at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre and Directors of ASPIRE: Lifeskills recognise that it is the right of all our students and staff to develop with confidence in a safe environment, free from the emotional and physical distress that can be seen as a result of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

We are opposed to all forms of racism and xenophobia, including those forms that are directed towards religious groups and communities, and against travellers, refugees and asylum-seekers.

We take seriously our gender equality duty to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment and promote equality of opportunity.

We recognise that it is our duty to have due regard to the promotion of equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people; to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; to encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and to take steps to meet disabled people's needs. These are key objectives for the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre.

This policy should be read primarily, but not exclusively, in conjunction with the following policies:

- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Disability Policy
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Admissions and Exclusions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Training Policy

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

At ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre we:

- Are firmly committed to equality and diversity in relation to gender, age, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, transgender and those who may be pregnant or recently had a baby.
- Recognise our responsibilities to both avoid discrimination and to promote equality for students, staff and others using the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre facilities.
- Respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, students and parent/carers; and comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.
- Strive to ensure that our policies and services recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the young people who come to ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre; and that excellent learning experiences are universally available.
- Help every student to develop a sense of personal and cultural identity that, as far as is possible, is confident and open to change.
- Enable every student to be receptive to other identities, to value diversity and understand and respect others.
- Provide personalised learning for all students so that high standards of attainment for all students are secured.
- Aim to create a common sense of belonging and to develop the skills of participation and responsible action.
- Promote a positive and welcoming culture that ensures that all staff members and young people in our care are safe and supported to fulfill their potential.

## **ACTIONS**

ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre follows legislation relating to equal opportunities for employment including those introduced in the Equality Act 2010 and the duties identified in the Public Sector Equality Duties of 2011. We do not discriminate directly or indirectly, harass, or victimise; in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissal, training and employment practices. We do not discriminate towards the employment of staff on grounds of race, religion or belief or of gender, transsexual or transgender status, disability, legal sexual orientation, or age.

Staff may withdraw from teaching religious education and are not discriminated against for their religious opinions or practices.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Directors are responsible for ensuring that ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Head Teacher is responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any case of unlawful discrimination.

All staff share a responsibility for eliminating unlawful sexist, racist or disability discrimination or harassment and promoting equality of opportunity for all. Any incidents involving sexist, racist or disability harassment will be recorded internally, reported via the home-school link books or telephone calls to parent/carers. All staff members are expected to incorporate principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work.

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with as determined by the Head Teacher and Directors in line with current legislation.

Young people may report any racist incidents to any staff member.

### **Ways in which equality is promoted**

We do not discriminate against young people seeking admission with regard to how they are treated on the grounds of disability, sex, relationships, health, race, religion or belief. Our sole consideration is the ability of the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre to meet students' needs. All students currently at the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre have a diagnosis of autism. The ratio of boys to girls on our student role is in line with the gender imbalance generally seen in people who have a diagnosis of autism. Information on other disabilities is gathered through the admissions process in consultation with parents and from past records gathered from professionals.

The students at ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre have difficulties with communication and social interaction. People with autism typically have limited awareness of themselves or others, or of the intricacies of social relationships and the effects of their behaviours. We strive to enable all of our students, regardless of ability, ethnicity, religion or gender to participate fully in the life of the school. Individual differences, needs and abilities are respected and valued. Practical and meaningful opportunities for learning are regarded as essential; and active involvement and collaborative learning is encouraged to develop a sense of individual and group belonging and independence.

We ensure that we do not discriminate in the provision of teaching, allocation to classes, required standards of behaviour, dress or appearance; or in the provision of benefits, facilities or services.

We assess and monitor the achievements and attainment levels of minority groups of students including girls, and students from different racial groups through our monitoring and assessment procedures.

At ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre we respect and acknowledge the rights, feelings, needs and wishes of each student. We strive to maintain a positive environment, conducive to the development of each student's confidence and independence. In particular:

- The ethos of the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre is modelled by staff. Staff members work with the students to develop co-operation, tolerance and respect for themselves and others.
- Collective reflection is recognised as a part of ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre life. Students experience a sense of belonging to a group and aspects of the student's own and other cultures can be embraced e.g. when singing 'Happy Birthday'.
- We respect and are aware of the pace at which individual students work and the effort required by different individuals.
- The PSHE curriculum teaches students to understand and respect diversity and differences. This includes challenging stereotypes in careers and work related learning. Our PSHE curriculum reflects the updated September 2020 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education and works in conjunction with other policies.
- Resources portray a variety of multi-cultural backgrounds and disabilities and do not portray sexual stereotypes.
- We have a rolling programme of cross-curricular, multi-cultural, multi-faith themes.
- We teach about different religious beliefs and practices and learn from religion about the personal and group identity, experiences, values and commitment.
- We have extensive community links e.g. daily/weekly visits accessing the local community. These promote inclusion within the ASPIRE: Lifeskills Learning Centre, but also the wider community.

## **POLICY REVIEW STATEMENT**

This policy will be reviewed every year or earlier should legislative change or other event require it.

SIGNED:... 

POSITION:.....DIRECTOR

DATE:.....1<sup>st</sup> July 2021

REVIEW DATE:....1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

FOR & ON BEHALF OF

ASPIRE: Lifeskills