ASHLEY COLLEGE

Equality Policy
Information and Objectives

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Next review: Objectives – Autumn 2026

Statement – Autumn 2029

Legal updates/school needs may precipitate changes

Version: Final

Status: Active

Ashley College is committed to creating an environment in which all members of the community are equally valued, treated fairly and with respect and have equal opportunities to achieve their full potential. This commitment runs through our curriculum and recruitment practices.

We are an inclusive school promoting universal values including, respect, equality, tolerance and empathy. We recognise people have differing needs and understand that treating people equally does not always mean treating them the same. Some pupils, and staff, have a need for extra support to help them, achieve and be successful. We try to make sure that people from different groups are consulted and involved in our decisions. This is achieved through staff meetings, student council and parent forum meetings.

No one should experience harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination because of their age; any disability they may have; their ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender; tier gender identity or reassignment; their marriage or civil partnership status; pregnancy or having recently had or adopted a baby; their religion or beliefs; their sexual identity and/or orientation.

Ashley College is legally required to accurately record a child's biological sex wherever it is recorded in school systems and documents. This requirement ensures compliance with safeguarding legislation and supports the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

Facilities and Activities Based on Biological Sex

In accordance with statutory safeguarding guidance, pupils must use toilets, changing rooms, and any boarding or residential accommodation designated for their biological sex. Where PE classes or sports are organised by sex for reasons of safety and fairness, pupils will participate based on their biological sex. These are legal requirements with no exceptions permitted.

Addressing Misogyny and Misandry

Ashley College is committed to addressing both misogyny and misandry as part of our safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring all pupils are protected from gender-based harassment or discrimination.

1. Aims

Ashley College aims to meet all of its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

2. Legislation and guidance

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The management Committee will:

- Ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every 4 years
- Delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a daily basis to the headteacher

The equality link management committee member is Richard Sternberg. He will:

- Meet with the designated member of staff for equality every term, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed
- Ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document
- Attend appropriate equality and diversity training
- Report back to the full governing board regarding any issues

The headteacher will:

- Promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils.
- Monitor success in achieving the objectives and report back to management committee.

The designated member of staff, Mrs Anne Marie Mika, for equality will:

- Support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives among staff and pupils
- Meet with the equality link management committee member every term to raise and discuss any issues
- Support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs, and deliver training as necessary

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

4. Eliminating discrimination

Ashley College is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and management committee members are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act.

Staff and management committee receive annual training online from SSS Learning, on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link management committee member. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate.

Social Transition

Ashley College will not initiate any discussions or actions regarding a child's social transition. The school will only respond if a child or their parent specifically requests support in this area. Given the particular vulnerabilities of our pupil population (children with medical needs), we will exercise particular caution in any such cases.

Any support for social transition will:
- Require parental involvement and agreement, except in exceptionally rare cases where this would pose a greater safeguarding risk to the child
- Be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis
- Be fully documented with clear records of all decisions and the reasoning behind them
- Involve senior leadership and our designated safeguarding lead
- Not include any changes to the use of facilities designated for a specific biological sex

Staff must not adopt any changes relating to a child's social transition without a formal decision involving parents, except in those exceptionally rare safeguarding cases mentioned above.

5. Advancing equality of opportunity

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. pupils/staff with disabilities, or gay pupils/staff who are being subjected to homophobic bullying)
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim pupils/staff to pray at prescribed times)

- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all pupils to be involved in the full range of school activities)

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Analyse attainment data each academic year to determine strengths and areas for improvement and implement actions in response. We are restricted in the data we can publish in relation to this; as being a small school publishing in depth details of information could allow identification of individual pupils
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying)
- Publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils

6. Fostering good relations

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE and personal, social, health, citizenship and economic (PSHCE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures
- Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues. Pupils will be encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies and we will also invite external speakers to contribute
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting speakers to assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community
- Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with any tensions that may arise between different groups of pupils within the school. For example, our school council has representatives from the different year groups, where possible, and is formed of pupils from a range of backgrounds, where possible. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach

7. Equality considerations in decision-making

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:

- Cuts across any religious holidays
- Is accessible to pupils with disabilities

- Has equivalent facilities for boys and girls

The school keeps a written record on the trip forms to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the education visits coordinator and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

8. Equality objectives

Objective 1: *To ensure all children with a medical need are given the opportunity to access as full a curriculum as their medical need allows them to and give them the opportunity to develop life skills and resilience*

To achieve this we:

- provide a KS4 curriculum which facilitates children achieving 5 or more GCSE's
- provide therapeutic support classes in life skills to develop the whole child
- provide wellbeing sessions including yoga
- provide KS3 as wide a curriculum as possible to enable pupils to reintegrate back to mainstream

Objective 2: *To ensure we continue to be an inclusive and diverse school community advancing opportunities for everyone*

To achieve this we:

- ensure all staff undertake equality training
- ensure the recruitment process is fit for purpose and relevant senior leaders and management committee have appropriate training
- ensure that we make necessary adjustments, where possible, to the environment; the curriculum and working practices, where required, to meet the needs of those in our community, both pupils and staff

Objective 3: *To improve and maintain attendance of SEN and disadvantaged pupils*

To achieve this

- the attendance officer makes early morning daily contact with parents
- our SENCo has weekly attendance meetings with Education Welfare Officer to review strategies and concerns
- we promote the importance of attendance, and punctuality, with pupils and parents
- we encourage attendance and punctuality amongst students with weekly award scheme
- we provide therapeutic sessions including counselling, equine therapy etc to help improve our pupils mental health and enable them to improve their attendance
- ensure that we make necessary adjustments, where possible and within legal requirements, to the environment; the curriculum and working practices, where required, to meet the needs of those in our community, both pupils and staff

Objective 4:

- all staff understand and comply with legal requirements regarding facilities usage based on biological sex, accurate recording of biological sex, and procedures for responding to social transition requests, in line with statutory safeguarding guidance

9. Monitoring arrangements

The management committee, or its representative, will update the equality information we publish, described in sections 4 to 7 above, at least every year.

The management committee, or its representative, will, alongside the headteacher/senior leader, review the objectives contained in section 8 above at least every 4 years.

This document will be approved by management committee.

10. Links with other policies

This document links to the following policies:

- Accessibility policy/plan
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Anti- Racist policy
- Behaviour policy
- Code of Conduct
- Family Friendly policy
- Menstruation/Menopause policy
- PSHCE/Citizenship policy
- Risk assessment
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- SEND policy
- Sex and Relationships policy