Inclusion Policy

July 2020

1. School vision statement

At Ashwood Spencer Academy pupils are supported and nurtured to ensure they reach their full potential as learners and positive contributors to society. We expect every pupil to follow our DREAM expectations to create a culture that has respect, resilience, aspiration, determination and positive relationships at its core. We offer a safe and enjoyable learning environment where excellence is promoted.

2. Scope of this policy

At Ashwood Spencer Academy we recognise that educational success is promoted in schools which are genuinely inclusive in their nature and are welcoming to difference and diversity (Shaefer, 2019). The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN 2016), states an inclusive education means:

- A fundamental right to education
- A principle that values students' wellbeing, dignity, autonomy, and contribution to society
- A continuing process to eliminate barriers to education and promote reform in the culture, policy, and practice in schools to include all students

As a school it is important that we promote a culture that enables **all pupils** to access the possibilities of achieving their potential. We want to support the development of an inclusive society by ensuring that each child has the confidence to develop their own social identity. As a school we strive to move beyond tolerating social and educational differences but by recognising the worth of each pupil and family can bring to enrich our school community (O'Hanlon, 2003).

3. Aims and Objectives

The Principal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) support UNESCO-IBE (2016: 47) recommendations to successfully implement an inclusive education at Ashwood Spencer Academy. We aim to provide an inclusive and welcoming educational environment to all pupils by ensuring the following objectives;

- ➤ Everyone is made to feel welcome
- ➤ Pupils are equally valued
- ➤ There are high expectations for all pupils
- ➤ Staff and pupils treat one another with respect
- ➤ There is a partnership between staff and families
- ➤ The school is accessible to all pupils
- ➤ Senior staff support teachers in making sure that all pupils participate and learn
- ➤ The school monitors the presence, participation, and achievement of all pupils

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The local governing body will be responsible for:

➢ Overseeing the implementation of this policy
➢ Reviewing this policy with Senior Leaders on an annual basis to ensure its effectiveness

The Principal will be responsible for:

➢ The overall implementation of this policy
➢ Delegation of roles and reasonability's to other Leaders or staff members to implement the policy

Staff will be responsible for:

➢ Supporting the Principal in carrying out the procedures outlined in this policy
➢ Promoting inclusion, equality and diversity within school and in the wider community
➢ Undertaking any training arranged by the Principal or SLT to develop their inclusive practice
➢ Seeking support from the Vice Principal (Inclusion, Engagement, Well-being), SENCO or DSL as appropriate
➢ Supporting their colleagues and pupils to promote inclusion, equality and diversity

5. A warm welcome

At Ashwood Spencer Academy it is important to us that everyone is treated fairly, and with dignity and respect. We adhere to Spencer Academy Trust Equality & Diversity Policy which encompasses the following protected characteristics as set out in equality law;

➢ Age
➢ Disability
➢ race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
➢ sex (including transgender)
➢ gender reassignment
➢ pregnancy and maternity
➢ religion or belief
➢ sexual orientation
➢ marriage and civil partnership (for employees)

The 'Protected Characteristics' within equality law are defined as;

Age - relates to a person of a particular age (e.g. 32 year old) or a range of ages (e.g. 18 -30 year olds). Age discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.

Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has, or has had, a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It includes discrimination arising from something connected with their disability such as use of aids or medical conditions. HIV, Multiple Sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

Gender reassignment - A person (usually with 'gender dysphoria') who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (the process of changing physiological or other attributes of sex, therefore changing from male to female, or female to male). 'Trans' is an umbrella term to describe people with this 'Gender Identity'. 'Intersex' or 'Third Sex' is not covered by the Act but the School will treat Intersex children with the same degree of equality as children with gender dysphoria. Children as young as five may begin to show signs of gender dysphoria and therefore it is relevant in any school environment.

Marriage and civil partnership - Marriage and civil partnership discrimination does not apply to the provision of education, but it does apply to work.

Pregnancy and maternity - Maternity refers to the period of 26 weeks after the birth (including still births), which reflects the period of a woman's Ordinary Maternity Leave entitlement in the employment context. In employment, it also covers (where eligible) the period up to the end of her Additional Maternity Leave.

Race - A person's colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. It includes Travellers and Gypsies, as well as White British people.

Religion and belief - Religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition. Religion and belief discrimination does not prevent a school from carrying out collective worship or other curriculum based activities, but pupils may withdraw from acts of collective worship.

Sex - A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation - A person's sexual orientation towards the same sex (lesbian or gay), the opposite sex (heterosexual) or to both sexes (bisexual). Although children may not identify as gay or lesbian when very young, promotion of sexual orientation equality is as relevant in a primary school environment, as it is in a secondary school. For

example, a child may have an older sibling or parent who is gay. Children may experience friends 'questioning' or 'coming out' when they are in secondary school or college. Schools with a particular religious ethos cannot discriminate against lesbian, gay or bisexual pupils.

It is important that as a school we provide a model of respect and dignity to all.

6. Pupils are equally valued

It is important that all pupils are equally valued within our school. At Ashwood Spencer Academy we promote a principle that values pupils' wellbeing, dignity, autonomy, and contribution to society. Inclusion means that we are committed to ensuring that there is a continuous process to eliminate barriers to education and promote reform in the culture, policy, and practice in our school to include all of our pupils. Research suggests that to implement an inclusive education, the school must adopt the assumption that all children have a right to be in the same educational space (Cobley, 2018; Florian, Black-Hawkins & Rouse, 2017; Hehir, et al., 2016). At Ashwood Spencer Academy we are committed to promoting inclusion and providing an inclusive education.

To ensure that all pupils feel equally valued it is important that all pupils feel part of their class Team and wider DREAM Team. We implement this through ensuring that all pupils have opportunity to participate in a range of activities whilst at Ashwood Spencer Academy. These experiences equip our pupils with the relevant knowledge and cultural capital that they need to succeed, enabling them to achieve a set goal or target that they aim for not only during their time spent with us, but throughout their life. This is underpinned by our DREAM values.

Pupils ideas and thoughts are valued as we encourage them to be determined risk takers who want to succeed. We promote the development of resilience, a characteristic required to embed challenge and to develop self-confidence. We provide a supportive learning environment where pupils are respectful of others and value one another. The use of working wall and internal screens or class books is used to promote this and is a thread which is seen across the whole school.

7. High expectations for all pupils

Our DREAM curriculum encourages all pupils to be ambitious achievers. Staff have high expectations and challenge pupils to be the best that they can. Pupils are supported to develop confidence to take risks in their learning and to see mistakes as an opportunity to develop new skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to develop positive self-esteem through celebrating work and efforts and through the regular opportunities to reflect on achievements and learning.

8. Respecting others

Our key purpose is to ensure the well-being and success of all our pupils. All adults have a responsibility for the behaviour of pupils and to adhere to the staff Code of Conduct. Staff must be fair and consistent, and as a positive role model they need to promote respectful relationships. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and there are a variety of strategies and rewards in place to recognise and celebrate when pupils are following the DREAM expectations. To ensure success for all we have a range of interventions to support pupils to develop positive relationships.

Our DREAM Curriculum is designed to introduce and explore British values across subject areas, while RE, SMSC, PSHE and Citizenship lessons provide opportunities to deepen and develop understanding. At Ashwood Spencer Academy, we actively promote British Values in order to prepare all children to be responsible and respectful members of the community. Through our newly designed creative curriculum, we embrace and celebrate such values, providing valuable knowledge and understanding of important concepts, whilst developing a set of life-long skills within each and every individual. Our curriculum and assembly themes are carefully designed to consolidate the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. This approach not only helps prepare our children for their future life, but it enriches the daily life for everyone teaching us to understand, enjoy and respect the differences in our community and the wider world.

Please refer to our **Behaviour Policy & Anti-bullying Policy** for further information on supporting pupils.

9. Partnership between staff and families

At Ashwood Spencer we believe passionately that children, parents/carers and staff belong to a learning community. Each half term parents/carers and visitors from the local community, including local businesses, will be invited to share the children's learning. Classes will showcase their best learning with children explaining what they have learnt over the half-term.

We ensure that there is strong communication with parents and carers. We publish half termly newsletters to keep you up to date with goings on within school and throughout the year we will provide opportunities for parents/carers to come into school to see how their child is progressing. Such opportunities include parents' evenings, activity days and open afternoons. As well as our newsletter, we also tweet and post all the latest information and exciting events from school.

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of the school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for later life. To support all pupils, the school will operate an Attendance Policy within which staff, pupils, parents, local

community and Educational Welfare Support Service can work in partnership. Please refer to the **Attendance Policy** for more information.

Where a pupil is receiving SEN support, we will talk to parents regularly to set out clear targets and review the progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help them to achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, pupil and school. Please refer to our **SEND Policy** for more information.

Our Pastoral Team provide bespoke support to families. Where parents, carers or children tell us that they require support, or Academy employees identify that there may be emerging needs and that services might be required, an early help assessment (EHA) is likely to be beneficial. In such cases employees will have an open discussion with the parents / carers and child about the support and services that might help and agree how they would be accessed. An Early Help Assessment form (EHAF) may need to be created. If early help is appropriate, the DSL (or deputy DSL) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Please refer to our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** for more information.

10. Accessibility

We implement accessibility through our environment and our curriculum ergonomics. We promote an environment that views each child as an individual. We place great emphasis on developing children's mental wellbeing, physical health and social skills, whilst working to ensure that all children receive challenge and support in line with their specific needs. It is our aim that pupils with disabilities should have access to a full and broad curriculum similar to that followed by their peers.

The school has successfully supported pupils with a range of disabilities – hearing and visual impairment, physical disability and learning difficulties of varying degrees. Decisions are taken on an individual basis following a full assessment of a child's needs. Such assessment is carried out in terms of the school's SEND Policy and guidelines on assessing pupils who may have Special Educational Needs,

Access to the curriculum is a key issue for consideration at the stage of admission, transition within the school or when a disability develops. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the pupil will address the issue, which will therefore be kept under constant review. Advice is sought from the appropriate national and local agencies. Within school we have staff who are trained in Paediatric First Aid to support pupils who have medical needs. Please refer to our **Accessibility Policy and Plan** or read our **SEND Policy** and **Administration of Medicines & Medical Conditions Policy** for further information.

Our Creative Curriculum is designed to provide a clear coherent sequence which builds on prior knowledge and there are frequent opportunities for pupils to revisit and develop

sticky knowledge. This supports the curriculum to be accessed by all pupils. Our working walls have been redesigned to promote live modelling and the consistent use of these across the school means that children know and understand how these can be used to support their learning. We promote inclusion through a tiered approach in our provision mapping, considering the individual needs of all of our pupils. The school dedicates time to specialist training for staff CPD to support the inclusion of all pupils The SENCO and Vice Principal support staff to implement the SEN&D policy and support inclusion of all our pupils so that they are equally valued as members of our school community.

Communication is embedded into our DREAM core values. We support all pupils to become expressive communicators, providing pupils who have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and those with English as an additional language (EAL) with tools to develop and make progress in their communication and language. Our Communication Practitioners are Elklan and Makaton trained and offer more targeted support to pupils with SLCN. Pupils access Speech Link and Language Link to identify SLCNs and other speech, language and communication interventions or programmes are used to enable all pupils to develop their communicative skills. Some pupils may require additional support, including the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) if they have more complex communication difficulties and fall into one of the following categories:

Expressive language group - Characterised by a large gap between the understanding of language and expression of spoken language. Their alternative forms of communication may become the preferred means of expression.

Supportive language group - The augmentative system is intended to function as a 'scaffold' to the development of a normal mastery of speech, and to reduce the negative effects of language disorders.

Alternative language group - Characterised by both using and understanding little or no speech – these children will need to be taught language through alternative means of communication and to be taught to use this means of communication expressively.

To support inclusion, pupils in our EYFS unit, and pupils in our Team Friendship and Team Courage classes, are supported by a Total Communication approach. Total Communication reflects the differing types of interaction between pupils and staff. A Total Communication approach takes varying forms and must be at appropriate developmental levels, such as; eye-contact, gesture, vocalisations, signing, visual support, singing and talking. A Total Communication Environment will use a range of communication strategies, which may include;

Makaton Signing - This is a communication programme that uses manual signs, symbols and speech to develop a pupil's understanding of language and their ability to

express themselves. The use of signing throughout the school day by staff greatly enhances a child's ability to be an effective communicator.

<u>Objects of Reference</u> - Some pupils will need to use objects of reference to aid their communication and understanding of language. An object of reference will be a real object that represents an activity or a place.

<u>Symbols / Photographs</u> - The use of symbols/photographs provides valuable support and is encouraged even if pupils are not using PECS. It is the responsibility of class staff to provide symbol/photo vocabulary as appropriate.

<u>Physical Structure</u> - The organisation of the room is set up to minimise auditory and visual distractions. It provides clear physical boundaries allowing the child to understand routines and structures.

<u>Sensory Cues</u> - Sensory cues support children to understand daily routines. By using sensory processing skills, it supports children to tune into everyday routines through auditory (such as music clues), olfactory (smell of the day) and tactile (use of tactile objects) clues.

Pupils are supported across the school with their SLCNs and teachers and Teaching Assistants are provided with bespoke training to support inclusion within their class, breaking down barriers in communication.

To support inclusion, individual pupils are supported with appropriate behaviour plans and risk assessments. Staff consider the reasons for behaviours and the SENCO, Vice Principal and other professionals from outside agencies provide plans to support their individual needs. The Vice Principal leads the Pastoral and SEND Team to implement this across the school. This supports accessibility and inclusion and benefits our pupils by ensuring that they have access to:

> ➤ A responsive curriculum and pedagogical approach that are reflective to the pupil's needs
> ➤ Resources that support pupils with structure and routine
> ➤ A supportive environment which promotes self-esteem and self-regulation of behaviours This may mean that they have access to sensory equipment to support their self-regulation or activities and interventions to support their well-being and mental health

11. The curriculum, teaching and learning

Our Creative Curriculum is well-planned and sequenced, taking account of pupils prior learning to support them to make links in their learning enabling them to remember more

(see Curriculum Policy and Teaching, Learning and Feedforward Policy). Our Creative Curriculum provides;

➢ Teaching that is planned with all pupils in mind
➢ Lessons that encourage the participation of all pupils
➢ Motivation so that pupils are actively involved in their own learning
➢ Encouragement so that pupils support one another's learning
➢ Appropriately supportive to the pupil if they are experiencing difficulties
➢ A culture of mutual respect through underpinning the principles of our behaviour policy
➢ Pupils have an understanding that they are in a safe environment where they are able to speak to an adult if they are worried or upset
➢ Assessment that contributes to the achievement of all pupils

12. Monitoring

Staff will remain vigilant to behaviours which are unlawful as set out in The Equalities Act (2010):

➢ Direct discrimination
➢ Indirect discrimination
➢ Harassment
➢ Victimisation

The Spencer Academy Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy provides clarity on the differing types of unlawful behaviours as;

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat or would treat other people: for example, if a pupil was refused a place in the choir because of their race.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a "provision, criterion or practice" is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. An example might be holding a parents' meeting on a Friday evening, which could make it difficult for observant Jewish parents to attend, or arranging the weekly CPD sessions for teachers on days when no part time staff are available for work.

It is a defence against a claim of indirect discrimination if it can be shown to be "a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim". This means both that the reason for the rule or practice is legitimate, and that it could not reasonably be achieved in a different way which did not discriminate.

Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act. It is "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person".

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a protected act") in connection with the Act. A protected act might involve, for example, making an allegation of discrimination or bringing a case under the Act, or supporting another person's complaint by giving evidence or information, but it includes anything that is done under or in connection with the Act.

13. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Trust, the local governing body and the school's Principal. The next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2021. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff members.

14. References and Links to Research

Cobley, D. (2018). *Disability and international development: A guide for students and practitioners.* London: Routledge.

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change (4th ed.).* New York: Teachers College Press.

Hehir, T., Grindal, T., Freeman, B., Lamoreau, R., Borquaye, Y. & Burke, S. (2017). A summary of the evidence on inclusive education. *Report prepared for Instituto Alana, in partnership with ABT Associates.* Retrieved from: https://alana.org.br/wpcontent/uploads/2016/12/A_Summary_of_the_evidence_on_inclusive_education.pdf (Accessed: 11/07/2020)

Shaefer, S. (2019) Inclusive education: a prerequisite for equity and social justice. *Asia Pacific Education Review* (20) pp. 181-192

UNESCO-IBE (2016). Reaching out to all learners: A resource pack for supporting inclusive education. Geneva: UNESCOIBE. Retrieved from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002432/243279e.pdf (Accessed: 9/07/2020)