

# Hartlepool Aspire Trust (Catcote Academy & Catcote Futures)

## **Equality Information and Objectives Statement**

(updated every 4 years – last updated Mar-22)

### **Opening statement**

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The trust's general duties with regard to equality are:

- Eliminating discrimination
- Fostering good relationships
- Advancing equality of opportunity

We will not discriminate against, harass or victimise any staff member, student, prospective student, or other member of the trust community because of their:

- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

We aim to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with special emphasis on promoting equality and diversity, and eradicating prejudicial incidents for students and staff. Our trust is committed to not only eliminating discrimination, but also increasing understanding and appreciation for diversity.

### **Aims to eradicate discrimination**

We believe that a greater level of success from students and staff can be achieved by realising the uniqueness of individuals. Creating an inclusive environment where individuals feel confident and at ease is a commitment of the trust. This environment will be achieved by:

- Being respectful.
- Always treating all members of the trust community fairly.
- Developing an understanding of diversity and inclusion and the benefits it can have.
- Adopting an inclusive attitude and ensuring that the whole trust community understands what inclusive behaviour looks like in the trust and how this aligns with the trust's values.
- Adopting an inclusive curriculum that is accessible to all.
- Encouraging compassion and open-mindedness.
- Challenging bias and calling it out in order to move the conversation forward.

We are committed to having a balanced, diverse and fair curriculum. We believe that our students should be exposed to ideas and concepts that may challenge their understanding, to help ensure that students learn to become more accepting and inclusive of others. Challenging and controversial concepts will be delivered in a way that prevents discrimination and promotes inclusive attitudes.

### **Dealing with prejudice and celebrating diversity**

We do not tolerate any form of prejudice-related incident. Whether direct or indirect, we treat discrimination against all members of our trust with the utmost severity. When an incident is reported, our trust is devoted to ensuring appropriate action is taken and a resolution is put into place which is both fair and firm.

Our students are taught to be:

- Understanding of others
- Celebratory of diversity
- Eager to reach their full potential
- Inclusive
- Aware of what constitutes discriminatory behaviour

The trust's employees will not:

- Discriminate against any member of the trust community
- Treat other members of the trust community unfairly

The trust's employees will:

- Promote diversity and equality
- Encourage and adopt an inclusive attitude
- Lead by example
- Seek training if they need to improve their knowledge in a particular area

Throughout the year, the trust provides a variety of opportunities to celebrate diversity, including:

- Planning activities for key diversity awareness days
- Inviting guest speakers to talk to students about diversity
- Incorporating lessons about diversity into the curriculum

### **Equality and dignity in the workplace**

We do not discriminate against staff with regard to their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partner status
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief

- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination extends to the treatment of all members of the trust community. All staff members are obliged to act in accordance with the trust's various policies relating to equality.

We will guarantee that no redundancy is the result of direct or indirect prejudice. All disciplinary procedures are non-prejudicial, whether they result in warnings, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action.

## **Diversity and representation**

### **Inclusion**

Students are seen as individuals and each student's education and care is to be developed in direct relation to their needs and abilities. This approach is to be based upon sound knowledge and awareness of an appropriate range of teaching & learning styles, teaching strategies and interventions (i.e. Thrive, SCERTs and transactional support) alongside provision to meet student's medical needs and disabilities. All students regardless of their learning difficulty, medical needs or disability have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and will be supported to participate in educational visits, outdoor learning, sporting and physical activities and residential visits.

Working with our local community we ensure students have equality of access to their communities, and demonstrate to the community and its business partners the abilities of students with SEN, thus reducing the segregation of students in the community. The trust works closely with local employers to improve their understanding of student's disabilities and to therefore provide work placements for students. In addition, the trust operates a retail and catering facility in the community which enables it to educate the community regarding the aspirations and abilities of students with SEN and also to enable students requiring a more supported environment to access real life work place settings.

We monitor the progress of students identified as "vulnerable" to ensure that their needs and aspirations are met to the best of our abilities, and to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in relation to other students.

We review teaching resources and materials to ensure that people of all backgrounds are represented in a positive way. Facilities are provided and adapted, to ensure that we fulfil the needs of those with protected characteristics.

### **Closing statement**

Prejudice is not tolerated and we are continuously working towards a more accepting and respectful environment for our trust community.

The trust's Equality Information and Objectives Policy, Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy further outline the trust's policies regarding equality.

# **Achieving Objectives**

(updated every year – last updated March-22)

## **Eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act**

Equal Opportunities practices are integrated within the curriculum

We ensure positive attitudes towards people with protected characteristics through a robust anti bullying policy and communicate ways to report any unacceptable behaviour through our whistleblowing, complaints and grievance procedures.

Admissions procedures ensure we do not discriminate. Hartlepool Aspire Trust do not permit the protected characteristics to be used as criteria for non-admission. However, as a Special Academy Trust and Specialist College there is a requirement for an EHC plan to be in place. Upon admission we take account of our students needs and provide a curriculum which ensures individuals can meet their potential regardless of their differences.

Recruitment policies and procedures take due regard of the recommendations. Advertisements, short listing and interview procedures are without any hint of direct or indirect discrimination. During employment, there is no discrimination in the way opportunities for promotion, transfer or training are offered.

As a specialist provision, we have a positive culture that focuses on '*what we CAN do and not what we can't*'. *Our mission embodies this; promotes tolerance and respect for individual differences, abilities, needs and beliefs.*

## **Improving equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics**

We actively promote inclusion, in particular for students with array of physical and special educational needs, in all aspects of the curriculum by providing equipment, modifying spaces and training staff. We also consider the needs of other protected characteristics and provide/adapt facilities and resources where necessary.

We ensure that our work force is suitably skilled to support and promote equal opportunities for example; deaf champions, translation support, systems for total communication, well-being team and strong pastoral support.

There is always consideration of the requirements of individuals with race, religion and cultural differences.

## **Fostering good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it**

The Trust intends that our policies, procedures and activities foster good relationships across all characteristics. We strive to ensure we have good social cohesion locally and nationally and that our students are prepared to take an active, relevant and rewarding role in society.

In assemblies and group events, we have opportunities to embrace and celebrate diversity. In addition, we participate in activities and events to promote the students' knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity and current affairs.

We have excellent community links and promote diversity by working closely with local people and employers to develop their understanding of disabilities and other protected characteristics. We also support and train community partners to improve accessibility and equality of opportunities.

Our 'Aspire' film is used to promote within the business community 'not what we can't do, but what we can'. We actively use social media to promote and celebrate diversity.