



# ABLE Education Policy Document

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

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## 1. Introduction

ABLE Education is committed to being a provision where no student, staff member, parent or carer is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of any protected characteristics<sup>1</sup>, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice. ABLE will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed.

We will actively support diversity and inclusion and strive for all our students, staff and parents to be valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone at ABLE to reach their full potential.

This policy has been written as part of the efforts to work towards achieving these aims and should be read alongside ABLE's related/supporting policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Access to our policies and guidelines can be requested via email at [admin@able-education.co.uk](mailto:admin@able-education.co.uk). Our policies are regularly reviewed in line with the provisions policy review schedule at which time all aspects of equalities are considered and reviewed to ensure compliance with legislation each year.

Opportunity to offer an opinion is made available through a range of established routes, including pupil and parent voice activities; staff questionnaires and through other direct contact with the provision's staff.

## 2. Aims

The Equality Act 2010<sup>2</sup>, which came into force in April 2011, has consolidated a combination of discrimination legislation into one all-encompassing act. All schools have duties to promote race, disability, and gender equality. Schools also have a duty to promote community cohesion, developing good relations across groups within the community.

The general duty has three main aims:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation by removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

- To advance equality of opportunity between people who shared a protected characteristic and those who do not, by taking steps to meet their needs where they are different from the needs of others.
- To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by encouraging participation in activities where it is disproportionately low.

ABLE Education fully understands the principles of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities.

The protected characteristics, under the Act, are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Sex (including transgender people)
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnerships (for employees)
- Religion and belief

For further details please see <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>.

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a teaching environment to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- In relation to admissions
- In the way it provides education for pupils
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility, or service
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

ABLE's aims in relation to the Act are:

- That every individual within our learning community should be given equal opportunity to achieve and succeed.
- To provide a wide range of learning experiences and development opportunities for all students and staff

### 3. Leadership, management and governance

ABLE Education is committed to meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and aims to follow the good practice set out within the statutory codes of practice and guidance which support the legislation. While the provision has overall responsibility to ensure that equality is promoted throughout the organisation, it is the responsibility of all staff, including those helping on a voluntary basis, to promote equality.

- ABLE recognises that all staff need to be aware of, and understand, their responsibilities regarding equality legislation and guidance.

- ABLE recognises that discrimination may occur on more than one of the grounds at the same time and that equality of opportunity cannot be achieved by treating all people alike.
- ABLE acknowledges that it has a key leadership role in promoting equality and community cohesion and recognises the need to work with school staff and partner organisations, including the local authority.

## 4. Policy planning, implementation and review

ABLE Education will endeavour to ensure that all relevant policies reflect the provision's commitment to the principles of equality and that this commitment is reflected clearly in all its work.

All staff are encouraged to contribute to the formulation, development, and review of policy documents. Where appropriate, we will take steps to enable the contribution of pupils and their parents/carers and other relevant parties.

All policies, procedures and strategies are regularly monitored, reviewed, and evaluated for their effectiveness in promoting equality. As further equality requirements come into force policies, procedures and strategies will be monitored, reviewed, and evaluated for their effectiveness in fulfilling the requirements of new legislation.

## 5. Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2006<sup>3</sup> defines a disabled individual as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'

ABLE will make every reasonable adjustment to accommodate disability to ensure that everyone can access education. Changes, where necessary and reasonable, are made to ensure that access to provision is available.

## 6. Pregnancy, maternity and parenthood

Any student who is pregnant during their statutory education years will be supported to complete their education. The provision has a protocol which clearly sets out how we will support a student who becomes pregnant, both in the provision, during their maternity leave and to encourage them back into education after the birth.

Equally, the provision will offer similar support to any student who faces the prospect of becoming a father.

## 7. What is a discriminatory incident?

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated unfavourably due to a protected characteristic. This can be displayed in many forms including:

- Being excluded from groups or activities
- Physical assault because of a protected characteristic

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/3/contents>

- Use of derogatory names, insults, or jokes
- Ridiculing an individual because of race, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation
- Racist, sexist, or homophobic graffiti
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, or homophobic badges or insignia
- Bringing discriminatory material into the provision
- Verbal abuse or threats
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to race, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations or groups
- Refusal to cooperate with others on grounds of race, gender, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation.

## 8. Staff development including CPD and performance management

All staff at ABLE will be encouraged to develop and achieve new skills whilst working with the provision. We are an inclusive provision which means that we work towards every member of staff having equal opportunities to progress.

We will keep staff performance records for each staff member and will have regular meetings to discuss any concerns and help with further development, if requested. This may be by attending workshops or other training courses.

Staff members are encouraged to speak to the Head of Provision regarding staff development. If a staff member feels that they are being stopped from progressing within the provision, they can take their concerns to the Head of Provision, and we will work with them to resolve the issue.

## 9. Conclusion

ABLE Education is fully committed to provide a learning and working environment that includes individuals from all demographics. We believe that to promote a more equal society, it is important that the staff team model to pupils that our provision includes people from varied backgrounds and with different characteristics, yet work in unison to achieve a common goal.

There will be zero tolerance towards any discrimination of any person within ABLE, and if this does occur, it will be dealt with immediately and firmly.