



Arun Court School: Policy Number 6C

Arun Court School – Anti - Homophobic Policy and principles for the promotion of LGBT rights – last updated January 2021

Ratified by main EMAT meeting:

Signature (+ date) Chair of EMAT: Mr Paul Phillips

Signature (+ date) Proprietor:Mrs Beverley-Sarah White

Signature (+ date) Principal of SchoolVicki Williams

Date of next review: January 2022 (Reviewed annually). This policy is part of a suite of policies that deal with discrimination and they should be read in unison.

Context & Curriculum

Arun Court will always actively promote equality and tackle discrimination. We work with a great variety of young people and this currently includes or has included in the past, those who identify as gay, bisexual, transgender and gender neutral. For the purposes of this policy we have included issues around sexual orientation and gender, however as a school we recognise that these are two different and distinct scenarios and work within our curriculum to address misunderstandings around this; sadly the abuse towards both groups in society is similar in nature hence why they are both within our policy.

Within our curriculum we include lots of opportunities to students to grow in confidence and to speak out about concerns or issues within solution-focussed coaching. We focus heavily on valuing everyone and promoting the individual for the benefit of the group. Our school has no uniform and allows young people to express and celebrate their individuality, through dress, hair colour and presentation provided outfits are safe. Students through SRE, are educated about all forms of sexuality and the challenges some groups face. Students are encouraged in SRE to be open about issues that affect them and are reassured that it is OK to not know what sexuality you may yet be as everyone develops at different stages. Within our staff and stakeholder body we welcome those who are bisexual, gay, transgender or gender neutral and as such we are blessed with a varied and understanding school community. Through topics such as history we explore notions of discrimination including an annual study – for every child - linked to the rise of Nazi ideals and the suffering this caused to different religions, races and sexual orientation groups.

Legal framework

Arun Court welcomes our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to disability, ethnicity, sex (gender), religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender identity (and where applicable: age, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity).

These duties and intentions reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The duties to promote equality in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity are relatively new to many in our community. This policy is provided to support the school community in moving forward to fulfil these duties.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations we are guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: All learners and other members of the school community are of equal value.

All members of our community have the right to feel safe and valued. There are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and those who experience some degree of gender dysphoria in every community, including every cultural and religious group. The leadership of all faith communities in Britain confirm that they do not condone or encourage homophobia, biphobia or transphobia.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.

We must take account of differences and provide a welcoming and inclusive community for all, including in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are welcome as employees, governors, parents, visitors and students in our school community.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards diversity including with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity
- positive interaction and good relations between different groups and individuals in an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents, including specifically homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and the stereotyping of gender behaviours.

Principle 4: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We will challenge all instances of homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying or derogatory language. We will work towards removing any inequalities and barriers that may exist in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, including challenging stereotyping. The senior leadership and governing body will monitor progress towards equality and inclusion in relation to sexuality and gender identity. No-one within our

community has the right to discriminate against any other member of the school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff are expected to:

- promote a fully inclusive ethos in the classroom, curriculum and playground in which different families are represented
- teach students that it is unacceptable to be hurtful or negative about any aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- teach and support students to respect and understand gender diversity
- provide a curriculum that meets the needs of all, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. The EMAT is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
- The EMAT has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy in relation to staffing, employment and recruitment practices, well-being and whistle blowing, school site, visitors, and the learning environment. .

The Principal of School is responsible for ensuring the implementation of 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 prejudice related incident or unlawful discrimination.

Parents are expected to support the equality and diversity principles of the school and actively ensure their children do not discriminate against others on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, including supporting the school to prevent the use of derogatory language, any forms of social exclusion and to challenge gender stereotyping.

Ensuring young people can get help

We promote the work of local charities and groups, ensuring that literature is available to our students. Step By Step in Aldershot provides a support service for young people who may be confused about gender or sexual issues for example.

Within our school child protection policy, we also ensure that specific staff members have carried out specialist training in supporting and protecting young people who are gay, bisexual, transgender or gender-neutral.

We ensure that within the school library there is a variety of literature, at various reading abilities, around these issues and that authors who identify within these groups are fairly represented.

What happens if someone engages in discriminatory behaviour?

The incident is written up as a serious incident within the incidents folder. It is reported to the authorities (police) if it meets the threshold. If staff are unsure whether it meets a threshold, they should contact the Surrey LADO for advice.

Parents of both the perpetrator and the victim are informed.

The victim will receive support such as counselling, confidence boosting sessions and a holistic space in which to relate and explore their feelings. If they wish to discuss their feelings with the perpetrator, and the school feels this would be beneficial, they may be able to do so in a safe and facilitated meeting.

The perpetrator will be asked to carry out a series of lessons around changing the root causes of their behaviour and may also be placed on a behaviour plan. Repeated actions may lead to us feeling we can't meet need and the student carrying out only online learning whilst a suitable alternative provision is found. The needs of the victim must be given priority.

All incidents of this nature are reported annually to the DFE / LEA

Cases are always discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Leaders as behaviours of this nature can be an indicator of difficulties at home and other concerns.

What happens if a staff member or EMAT member engages in discriminatory behaviour?

They would be dealt with under the staff grievance and disciplinary policy. Where a criminal action is believed to have taken place they will be reported to the police. They risk dismissal and being reported as unfit to work with young people to the relevant authorities.

MONITORING OF THIS POLICY

This policy is ratified by full EMAT meeting and is reviewed Annually.

This policy is constantly monitored on the ground by the DSL Team, Well-being Team and the SLT. discrimination is a safeguarding issue first and foremost, the Chair of EMAT and all safeguarding EMAT members should monitor this aspect to a high degree on their visits. The Proprietor / Executive Head also monitors the use of this policy.

All staff have a responsibility to monitor their own practice and ensure they are following polices. They risk disciplinary action if policy is not followed. They risk criminal prosecution if their actions, as a result of not following policy, endangers the welfare of a child.