



The AHS guide to Inclusion and Diversity

At AHS we are proud of the diversity of our students and staff and committed to promoting a positive and diverse culture.

We value all of our community, irrespective of their age, disability, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation.



This guide has been produced by our ID Group to help us all be as inclusive as possible.



Language Matters

As a girls' school we are proud to educate our students in a unique environment and empower them to go out into the world as confident leaders. However, as some of our students don't identify as girls, let's try to use language that respects the variety of gender identities at AHS. We have agreed not to address groups of students as 'girls' but instead to use inclusive language like 'everyone', 'people' or Year 8. We send out a form every September which asks students for their preferred name and pronouns. These are listed on SIMS. If teachers don't use SIMS to take registers, it's a good idea to make a note of this information on seating plans.

We do not use of discriminatory language at AHS. No slurs are acceptable. You can see from our Behaviour Matrix that one off use of discriminatory language will result in education work and an after school detention. If this continues, it will result in an internal exclusion.

Sometimes a discriminatory term may appear in a text that is used in lessons. Equaliteach say these terms should not be spoken, but it is important that we acknowledge that such terms were used historically and to reflect on how far we have moved on.

Some Definitions

People of Colour

is often the preferred collective term to refer to non-White racial groups. It is seen as a more positive term than BAME/BME because it does not assume a majority White race.

Do you know the difference between sex and gender?

Sex: Assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.

Gender: Often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth but many people do not identify with this.

Sexual orientation

A person's sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof.

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'.

Gender identity

A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (eg non-binary), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

Trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

Misconceptions and Microaggressions

Don't assume that people are straight. Don't assume someone's gender or pronouns. LGBTQ+ people don't look a particular way and someone's current or previous partner(s) doesn't define their sexuality (yes, bisexuals, pansexuals and queer people exist!) Someone close to you could be looking for support - not making assumptions will give them the space they need to be their authentic self and open up to you in their own time.

Non-binary people do not need to present in an androgynous way (e.g someone can be female presenting and would still like to be referred to by "they/them" pronouns)

Gender and sexuality are fluid, and subject to change. Don't accuse people of not being able to make up their mind!

Misconceptions and Microaggressions

Hair care is different for people with different types of hair, there is no set routine. See our presentation on Black Hair

Check you know the difference between arranged marriages (a perfectly normal cultural practice) and forced marriage, which is illegal.

It's easy to slip into the mindset that everyone is heterosexual and cisgender. We ask that everybody tries to change the words "when" to "if" in expressions like "when you get married." We ask that any reference to potential relationships be referred to as "partners" as opposed to "husband" "wife" "girlfriend" etc.

Listen:

Discovering who you are is difficult. People need to talk and be listened to.

If you make a mistake - don't panic! Apologise, and correct yourself with something along the lines of: "I'm sorry, that wasn't the word I meant to use. I'm trying to be a better ally and learn the right terminology, but I'm still working on it.

How to be a good ally

Be open minded - don't judge.

Be an upstander, not a bystander. If you see or hear prejudice, then call it out!

Check your privilege. Most of us have some type of privilege - be it racial, class, education, being cis-gendered, able-bodied or straight - means there are some things you won't ever have to worry about.. Understanding your own privileges can help you empathise with marginalised or oppressed groups.

Learn to challenge any bias, stereotypes, and assumptions you didn't realise you had. Think about the jokes you make, the pronouns you use.

Celebrating Our Diversity

We celebrate lots of festivals at AHS, including Christmas, Hanukkah and Chinese New Year. You have asked for some more information on certain traditions, so please see below.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic (lunar) calendar; Muslims believe this was the month during which the Qur'an was first revealed. Ramadan is therefore a time when Muslims try to spend more time in prayer and religious contemplation. We have a space dedicated as a prayer room in L4 and students may make more use of this during Ramadan.

Many Muslims will fast from dawn to sunset for the whole month. The spiritual and moral dimension of fasting involves God-consciousness, exercising self-control, patience, appreciation of food & drink, empathy towards the poor, having appropriate dealings with others, and giving to charity. The whole school community is asked to show respect for students who are fasting.

The day after the month of Ramadan marks the celebration of Eid ul-Fitr, which is an important celebration. A day's authorised absence is given to mark this and we will also celebrate the occasion in school.

Celebrating Our Diversity

Diwali is the five-day Festival of Lights, celebrated by millions of Hindus, Sikhs and Jains across the world. Diwali, which for some also coincides with harvest and new year celebrations, is a festival of new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness. We are also proud to celebrate Diwali in school.

Sikh Customs

Did you know that initiated Sikhs carry the 5 Ks on them at all times?

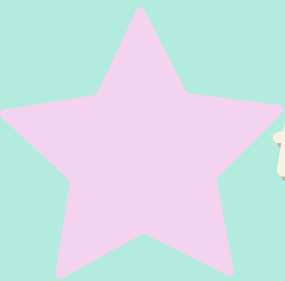
Kesh - uncut hair, which is kept covered usually by a turban (most of our Sikh students plait their long hair, but there is a rise in female turban use).

Kara - an iron or steel bracelet which Sikh students are allowed to wear. It is not classed as jewellery as it is a religious object.

Kirpan - a sword - but our students would wear a symbol around the neck instead;

Kachera - a cotton undergarment; and

Kanga - a small wooden comb.



How to respond to an incident

We must always challenge discrimination, but we need to do this carefully! Which is the best method for each situation?

Direct Challenge can be used in some occasions when something's said or something happens, particularly if you're a teacher where a direct challenge is the right thing to do. but this needs to be done calmly.

Rephrasing can be very effective. 'Did you mean ...' Immediately you've turned back the difficult thing they've said and it's making them think again, providing an alternative way of saying that phrase, but in a much more positive way.

Questioning is a good way of challenging people. Sometimes people repeat facts or figures or information without really knowing where they got them from, and often the information is inaccurate. You can do it in a way without being confrontational.

If you're not sure which method to use, please ask for advice or use our **Report A Concern** form.

There is more advice at www.ahs.bucks.sch.uk/diversity-at-ahs