

Ad Astra Academy Trust

Inclusive Principles



Vision for Inclusion

Ad Astra Academy Trust are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where every learner receives the right support and the right provision at the right time in their educational journey. We emphasise the importance of equitable provision, ensuring that all learners, regardless of their starting point or background, have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. Each school in Ad Astra Academy Trust adhere to the 'Trust Ordinarily Available Inclusive Principles'. As a trauma-informed and attachment-aware community, we understand the importance of recognising the impact of past experiences and approach each child with empathy and care. Our mission is to build a strong sense of belonging, where meaningful relationships lay the foundation for personal and academic growth. We aim to meet the learning and social needs of all pupils through an adaptive and responsive curriculum, tailored to individual strengths and challenges. This ensures positive progress and outcomes for every learner, empowering them and preparing them for the next step in their education and beyond.

Trust Core Values:

Our strapline 'STARS IN THE MAKING' ensures every pupil in Ad Astra can achieve their full potential.

Our purpose defines what we do and why we do it.

'Working Together For Children'





BUILDING A SCHOOL AT THE HEART OF ITS COMMUNITY

Our schools are a welcoming, inclusive hubs that reflects and serves their communities—fostering meaningful relationships with families and local partners to strengthen the sense of belonging for all.

VALUING EVERY CHILD THROUGH A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

We recognise and celebrate each pupil's unique strengths, avoiding deficit thinking and promoting dignity, identity, and self-worth in every interaction.



BELONGING

We ensure all pupils feel valued, respected, and included by fostering a culture of trust, belonging, and equality across our school community.

PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR THROUGH DE-ESCALATION AND REINFORCEMENT

We create calm, emotionally safe spaces by prioritising proactive strategies, de-escalation, and positive reinforcement, helping pupils feel secure and understood.

COMMUNICATING WITH RESPECT, INCLUSIVITY, AND INTENTIONALITY

We model and promote inclusive, respectful communication—ensuring every voice is heard and every interaction upholds the value of each individual.

EMBEDDING ATTACHMENT-AWARE, TRAUMA-INFORMED (AATI) AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Our policies and daily practice are guided by empathy, consistency, and emotional literacy—using restorative approaches to repair relationships and support regulation and recovery.

EXPLICITLY TEACHING ORACY AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

We teach oracy, active listening, and social communication as essential tools for connection and inclusion, enabling every child to express themselves and build positive relationships.

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

We engage proactively with specialists, local authorities, and healthcare providers to plan, deliver, and review high-quality support tailored to individual needs. We aim to create links with local charities and community organisations in supporting pupils' development, wellbeing and opportunities beyond the classroom.

PARTNER WITH FAMILIES AS EXPERTS ABOUT THEIR CHILD

We recognise families as essential partners in understanding and supporting their child's needs. We work collaboratively through co-production of plans and promote shared learning experiences that strengthen the connection between home and school.



COLLABORATION

We believe effective inclusion is built on a culture of collaboration, where staff, pupils, families, specialists, and the wider community work together to share responsibility, expertise, and support so that every pupil can thrive

ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE AND REFLECTION

Staff to engage in reflective conversations, coaching, and review of inclusive practice, using data, pupil feedback, and shared experiences to drive improvement.

EMPOWER PUPIL VOICE AND CHOICE

We involve pupils in shaping their learning and support. We value their views through regular feedback, co-planned targets, and personalised approaches that promote independence.

STRENGTHEN CROSS CLASS, PHASE AND SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

We build strong links across classes, phases, and schools to ensure continuity of support, transition planning, and collective problem-solving for complex pupils. We foster opportunities for pupils to collaborate across ability levels, encouraging friendships, empathy, and shared learning.

SHARE EXPERTISE, PRACTICES AND RESOURCES

We develop a culture of openness where staff across year groups and schools regularly share successful strategies, adaptations, and interventions to strengthen provision. Staff attend Trust Hub Meetings across the year and access shared resources through our TEAMS channel.

EVIDENCE-INFORMED, HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING FOR EVERY LEARNER

We commit to consistently excellent teaching, guided by research such as the EEF's "5-a-day" (explicit instruction, cognitive and metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible grouping, and technology use). All teaching is responsive to pupil need, maximising learning for all and ensuring no child is left behind.

INCLUSIVE VISION THAT RAISES ASPIRATIONS FOR ALL

We believe every child deserves the opportunity to thrive. Our inclusive vision ensures high expectations and equal access to learning, promoting diversity, equity, and belonging. We actively dismantle barriers and champion every pupil, regardless of background or need.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We aim to design learning that challenges and supports every pupil, with a belief that all can achieve, regardless of starting point or need.



OPPORTUNITIES

We aim to ensure that every child can access a rich, inclusive, and high-quality educational experience—through excellent teaching, an engaging and representative curriculum, supportive environments, and meaningful enrichment that reflects and extends their lives and aspirations.

A CURRICULUM THAT REFLECTS ALL LEARNERS

Our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive, and reflects the identities, interests, and local contexts of our children. It promotes engagement through purposeful content and offers multiple pathways to success, ensuring all pupils see themselves in what they learn and are motivated to achieve.

INCLUSIVE ENRICHMENT THAT EXTENDS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

All children are offered meaningful enrichment opportunities, including clubs, the arts, sports, residential and wider learning experiences. These are accessible to all, regardless of background, and designed to extend learning, build confidence, and deepen engagement.

CALM, ORGANISED AND SENSORY-FRIENDLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

We create safe, welcoming, and structured classroom environments that reduce cognitive overload and meet diverse sensory needs. We ensure there are spaces in school that pupils can retreat to if the classroom environment becomes too overwhelming. Sensory factors are taken into consideration when planning areas of the school. This ensures pupils feel secure, regulated, and ready to learn.

ANTICIPATING AND PLANNING FOR BARRIERS TO LEARNING

We proactively identify and plan for potential barriers by knowing our pupils well—including their SEND needs—and designing inclusive learning that starts with accessibility in mind, not as an afterthought. Recall of prior learning is checked to ensure the curriculum meets pupils where they are.

EMBEDDING INCLUSIVE DESIGN FROM THE START

Our lessons are built on the principles of universal design for learning, ensuring all pupils can access and engage with content through multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression.

USING EFFECTIVE DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT TO INFORM TEACHING

We use questioning and low-stakes checks for understanding to gain real-time insights into pupil thinking—allowing us to address misconceptions and adjust teaching responsively.



ADAPTATION

We aim to ensure all pupils make progress by anticipating barriers, using inclusive and responsive teaching strategies, and making informed adjustments through effective assessment, staff development, and meaningful data.

APPLYING ADAPTIVE AND RESPONSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES

We use a range of evidence-informed strategies—including scaffolding, modelling, direct instruction, and guided practice—to meet diverse needs while maintaining high expectations for all.

MONITORING, ADJUSTING, AND REFLECTING OUR STRATEGIES

We continuously monitor the impact of adaptations in lessons to ensure they remain effective and through close monitoring of pupil performance, adjust these as required.

DEVELOPING STAFF EXPERTISE AND ASSESSMENT LITERACY

Through impactful CPD and assessment systems that produce meaningful, actionable data, we equip staff to make informed decisions that drive inclusive, adaptive teaching and improve outcomes for all learners.

TEACHING ASSISTANT DEPLOYMENT THAT PROMOTES INDEPENDENCE

Teaching assistants are strategically deployed to scaffold learning, not replace it—gradually reducing support to build confidence, ownership, and independence in every pupil.

EMBEDDING SELF-REGULATION AND METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES

We explicitly teach pupils how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning, equipping them with the tools to think independently, solve problems, and take responsibility for their progress.

PREPARING PUPILS FOR ADULTHOOD THROUGH REAL-LIFE SKILLS

Our curriculum and wider provision include opportunities to develop key life skills—such as communication, collaboration, decision-making, and self-care—that lay the foundation for future independence.

INDEPENDENCE

We empower pupils to become confident, self-regulating learners by promoting resilience, gradually reducing support, teaching real-life skills, and nurturing aspirations through carefully planned teaching, transitions, and enrichment.

ENCOURAGING RISK-TAKING AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

We create safe environments where mistakes are seen as part of learning, encouraging pupils to take risks, persevere through challenge, and develop a growth mindset.

ENSURING SMOOTH, SUPPORTED TRANSITIONS

We plan all transitions—between year groups, key stages, and settings—with care, ensuring pupils feel secure, prepared, and increasingly capable of managing change independently.

INSPIRING AND NURTURING CAREER ASPIRATIONS FROM AN EARLY AGE

We expose pupils to a wide range of careers and ambitions, helping them link learning to future goals and believe in their ability to shape their own futures.