Policy/Procedure:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Senior Manager Responsible:	Human Resources Manager
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to say what we mean by equality and diversity, to promote best practice, and to guide our compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and other legislation.

This policy applies to all members of staff and students at the college. It sets out the College's commitment to ensuring equality and embracing diversity and inclusion for staff and students. It allows the College to promote equality of access to learning opportunities for all by raising awareness of equality issues and ensuring they are considered when relevant decisions are made. No student or member of staff will suffer any harassment or victimisation as a result of implementing this policy.

Introduction

Wyke Sixth Form College is fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity and achieving the elimination of negative discrimination within the College. Equality, diversity, and inclusion are important because a high-quality education for students and rewarding employment experience for staff only arises from every individual being given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The College is also committed to providing a learning environment that respects and responds to the diversity of the people within that environment.

This policy explains and responds to the statutory duties to promote equality across all the nine protected characteristics listed below:

- gender
- gender reassignment/transgenderism
- sexual orientation
- race
- religion or belief (or none)
- disability
- age
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity

It also covers poverty and deprivation and other important characteristics that affect people at College. The policy prioritises the welfare and success of young people leaving care, those who are caregivers, and those from very poor homes or whose life circumstances are particularly difficult.

Our College values

Equality, diversity, and inclusion underpin our mission to *'inspire and support all students to achieve exceptional success'*.

Our values promote equality and British values:

✓ *Pride*

We will do the right thing, act with integrity and respect the rights, differences and dignity of others

✓ *Thriving in a caring community*

We will show care for everyone in the Wyke community

✓ *Academic excellence*

We will support everyone achieving their potential, regardless of their background or circumstance

✓ *Ready for the world*

We take responsibility for our individual behaviour

Policy

➢ ***We promote equality and inclusion – because it's the right thing to do***

Research shows that more equal societies are better for everyone (www.theequalitytrust.org.uk). Our College is a reflection of wider society so if we promote equality, that will be better for all of us.

Equality and inclusion is about being valued for who and what we are. This helps us to achieve our best without unfair obstacles or stereotyping, or being restricted by anyone's expectations of our ability.

This means:

Access - Being able to get to, into and around the College, and complete the learning journey or our job role, with equal ease and dignity

Treatment - Having a sense of belonging – where we fit in and can be ourselves

Service - Feeling the place, the programmes and the policies have been designed with us all in mind

➢ ***We value diversity – because it makes the place more creative for learning and working***

We celebrate the fact that our students and staff, our partners and supporters, are from different social and ethnic backgrounds; women, men, non-binary and trans gender; a range of different ethnic backgrounds; of all ages, cultures and faiths; all sexualities; disabled and non-disabled; from nearby and further afield. We believe:

- Diverse teams make better decisions and enrich our learning and working
- Seeing people like ourselves around increases our sense of belonging
- Listening to different points-of-view improves how we do things
- Valuing our differences, as well as the things we have in common, strengthens inclusion

Equality is not just about who and what we are. It is also about inequality - the gap between those who have more than enough in life to get by, and those who haven't got enough. This isn't just about money. It's also about life chances and circumstances such as the well-being and success of young people leaving care, those from very poor homes and those whose life circumstances are particularly difficult. So:

➢ ***We reduce inequality - to make sure those with least resources have an equal chance of success***

Our work on equality and diversity is strengthened by our promotion of British values of democracy and the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

We recognise that everyone is learning about these topics and will aim to re-educate people who get things wrong where appropriate.

Students and studying

Because we champion equality, inclusion and diversity, all our courses give:

➢ As unbiased an insight as possible into the subject
➢ Learning that starts close to home – with your own lives and experiences
➢ A global rather than a narrow perspective

And readiness for a world of work where:

➢ Diverse teams are normal and more creative
➢ Teamwork is highly prized
➢ Tolerance and respect are essential
➢ Flexible, creative, and open minds have the edge
➢ You understand your rights as well as your responsibilities

Equality, diversity, and inclusion mean respect for others, and solidarity with those who may need a bit more looking after. Harassment and bullying are not tolerated - either face-to-face, behind people's backs or on social media - even if you say *'It was only a joke'*.

When students enrol, we talk through the whole learning journey, giving opportunity to discuss whether everyone can join in every aspect of the course with ease and dignity.

We will offer a safe, enjoyable, and challenging learning experience.

Ours is a College where, for example:

- People of all genders study together across all study programmes
- Students of all sexualities look out for each other
- Bullying is not tolerated
- Students with disabilities feel safe and included all the time
- Lessons are challenging and enjoyable, inclusive and mature

What does excellence look like?

✓ Students are respected, included and well-looked after by their teachers and by each other
✓ Students know about equality and the environment as it relates to their course
✓ Students can work successfully in diverse teams

Staff and working

Because we promote equality, diversity and inclusion, the College:

- Treats everyone with respect and dignity
- Values everyone's work and takes their concerns seriously
- Promotes a healthy and considerate balance between work and lives outside work

Diverse teams can produce more creative thinking, sharper problem-solving and better results all round. We support action to increase the diversity of the staff.

We know that racism, sexism and any form of discrimination can intrude into the workplace in both blatant and subtle ways. To counter this possibility, we promote a culture where, for example:

- Banter about who or what we are is not acceptable
- Minority ethnic staff are not assumed to be cultural experts
- Sexualised talk about women and men does not happen (unless being examined within context as part of the curriculum)
- Any derogatory language regarding gender or sexual identity will not be tolerated e.g. using 'gay' as an insult or saying someone 'runs like a girl'
- Trans/non-binary staff and students are supported and treated with respect
- No one is put down in public – even when they may be wrong

Harassment & bullying are not tolerated in any form, even under the guise of 'getting the job done'.

Reporting aggressive managers and colleagues is encouraged and valued.

So, ours is a College where, for example:

- Realistic deadlines are negotiated with consideration for others
- Flexible and innovative ways of working are encouraged – for all staff
- Line-management is honest, open and supportive – and staff are accountable
- Opportunities for promotion and development are transparent and fair

Equality, diversity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility and managers take the lead

What does excellence look like?

✓ Staff contribute to an open and honest, supportive and inclusive culture
✓ Policies and ways-of-working which promote equality and value diversity
✓ Staff have the support and the skill to integrate equality into their work

Leadership and managing

Good leadership is supportive and responsive to individual needs and therefore essential in ensuring excellent practice in this area. Places where the gap between the rich and poor is smallest are better for all of us (www.theequalitytrust.org). Inequality is about the social and economic gap between the haves and have-nots. Promoting equality is about helping close this gap and having a more equitable share for all.

Closing the inequality gap

At the College, equality is about the access, treatment and services we provide. It's about tackling inequality where we can – reducing the gap between those who have more than enough, and those who have too little to get by, and making sure everyone has sufficient to work and learn with dignity.

Ours is a College where, for example:

- Resources are used to combat inequality – for both students and staff
- Our website and social media presence express our values and promote equality and diversity
- Our remuneration policy and pay rates reflect our commitment to reducing inequality e.g. fair differentials between pay scales
- Contracts of employment model fair, respectful and equitable practice

Leadership from the top

Senior managers take the lead on equality, diversity and inclusion. They assess the impact of how well their plans and decisions promote equality, diversity and inclusion. They use Impact Assessments to guide and check all policy and project decisions.

This means managers, for example, who:

- Start and finish meetings on time
- Treat others as they themselves wish to be treated
- Meet staff 1:1 on a regular basis
- Do what they say they'll do - and tackle problems swiftly
- Are clear and consistent – because the opposite can be undermining
- Use a collaborative and consultative style of managing – to encourage creative results

We consult with others so our decision-making is inclusive.

What does excellence look like?

✓ Clear and vocal leadership by managers on equality, diversity and inclusion
✓ Collaborative management throughout the College
✓ Accountable plans to promote equality, increase diversity and reduce inequality

Our environment

We champion inclusive design as this is how equality is applied to the built environment – our buildings and the spaces around them.

Inclusive design is about making sure places and spaces are welcoming and easy to use.

This means we involve as many different people as possible in the planning and design, maintenance and management of our places and spaces.

It's about being an organisation that values collaboration and uses diverse perspectives to improve how we do things.

We embrace the slogan from the international disability rights movement:

'Nothing about us without us'

An inclusive environment means, for example:

- Staff who think-through the whole of your learning journey before enrolling you
- Strong use of assistive technologies
- Entrances designed for people with sight and mobility impairment
- Classrooms with excellent acoustics
- Dyslexia sensitive web-site
- Inclusive toilet facilities
- Adequate space for the number of learners to study with ease
- Classrooms laid-out for people using wheelchairs
- A wide range of people are engaged in plans for refurbishment and the design of new buildings

Not every space will be accessible to everyone but we will do our utmost to make it so.

What does excellence look like?

✓ Wide consultation and acting on what we hear - with inclusive results
✓ Creative and imaginative solutions to design dilemmas
✓ State-of-the-art places and spaces which work for everyone

Our equality priorities

Each year we agree at least one overarching equality aim as part of our Public Sector Equality Duty and maintain an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan. Input into what this/these aims should be, determining the contents of the plan, and carrying out the agreed actions is welcome from all students and members of staff.

The action plan also covers poverty and deprivation and other important characteristics that affect people at College.

All these characteristics and situations are covered by this statement

The legal context

Because the College receives public funds, we are pleased to be bound by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. This requires us, in all we do, to have due regard to the need to:

1) *Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.*

Examples bad practice and remedies from other places:

- A pay audit reveals significant differentials in take-home pay between two staff teams doing different jobs but jobs of equal worth: one team – mostly men, and another team – mostly women. An action plan is drawn up to change the women's pay rate

- A transgender student is recommended not to join a local firm as an apprentice because 'she is likely to be bullied'. The College works with the firm's managers to make sure there is a safe and supportive environment

2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Examples of good practice and remedies from other places:

- Focus groups of disabled staff, students and others advise us on how to make the design of the new College building inclusive and accessible
- Additional learning support time helps close the gender success rate gap on particular courses

3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Examples of good practice:

- Unbiased information is included in some courses about the history and lives of Traveller communities and the ways in which they are excluded and stigmatised – follow a series of negative reports on local TV
- Activities take place involving both staff and students during World Mental Health Week to counter stereotypes of mental illness

How we organise equality and diversity in the College

Equality, diversity and inclusion are led by the Principal and Senior Leadership Team. The H.R. Manager and the Vice Principal (Pastoral) have responsibility for overseeing work in this area for staff and students respectively and the Head of Additional Learning Support also plays a leadership role in taking appropriate action. This group researches and promotes best practice and helps write the annual Equality Action Plan. Students and members of staff are invited to join task forces to lead on particular areas of equality that they feel passionate about. The communication method of these groups is largely via Microsoft Teams and their operation is coordinated and supported by the Learning Support Manager.

Anyone wishing to learn more or become involved in a taskforce should contact the Learning Support Manager or the H.R. Manager.

Dealing with Complaints

The College has a complaints procedure that should be used by students, parents or visitors to deal with any complaints received.

The College will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment. Acts of discrimination (direct, indirect or associative), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Staff who feel they are being discriminated against in any way should raise the matter in the first instance with the H.R. Manager who will then follow the appropriate College procedure and

investigate the matter further. This may be the Grievance Policy or the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Related Policies

Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in policies and procedures across the College and the impact of each policy is assessed. However, policies directly related to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are as follows:

Disciplinary Policy (Staff)
Grievance Policy (Staff)
Bullying and Harassment Policy (Staff)
Complaints Procedure (Students)
Behaviour Management Policy
Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy
SEND Policy