

Equity Diversity and Belonging Policy

1 Introduction

The College's primary aim is to foster a supportive environment between school and adult life in which it provides high quality academic and general education programmes of study and strong pastoral support that meet the needs of 16- to 19-year-old students living mainly in the Colchester area, and leads to them acquiring the necessary qualifications, talents and skills vital for success in their adult lives.

This policy states how in support of the Mission Statement the College will work to promote equality of opportunity in all its work. The College therefore will encourage and support the continuing development of a community in which:

- people's ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination
- there is respect for and protection of each individual's human rights
- there is respect for the dignity and worth of each individual
- there is mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing diversity and on shared respect for equity, human rights and the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance (including of beliefs, religious or otherwise)
- promotes equality of opportunity so that students and staff thrive together, understanding that difference is a positive, not a negative, and that individual characteristics make people unique
- students are supported to learn in ways which suit them best

2. Principles

The College will uphold its public sector equality duty to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other unlawful conduct as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations whilst recognising and valuing diversity

3. Commitments

The College:

- Is committed to taking account of the diversity of the communities it serves and will continue to develop a learning environment in which each and every individual has an equal opportunity to participate. The College will actively promote community cohesion and a strong sense of belonging.
- Will treat students, staff, applicants, parents / carers and members of the wider communities with dignity, respect and fairness. The College will provide an inclusive, personalised learning environment in which students are treated on the basis of their merits, potential, needs and are valued as individuals.

- Is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all its members and visitors. Students and staff have a right to expect protection from harm. The College does not tolerate bullying, victimisation and harassment, in any form, including hate speech.
- Will prevent unlawful discrimination against any individual or group within the College.
- Recognises that some students have been deprived of opportunities and assistance in early life and will therefore provide services to meet their educational needs and to promote their immediate welfare so that they can achieve their potential into adulthood.
- Will develop students' understanding of the importance of equity and human rights, and will teach a curriculum which promotes moral, cultural, mental and physical development, preparing students to participate fully in, and contribute positively to, life in modern Britain.
- Will develop students' understanding of the wide cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others, and enable them to recognise and appreciate the values which people share.
- Is a safe space in which students and staff can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas.
- Will consult regularly to develop and implement appropriate policies.
- Will monitor the impact of this Equity, Diversity and Belonging Policy. The College is committed to analysing and publishing the results and to taking positive, corrective action where required.

4. Aims

The College is aiming to achieve:

- confidence in the quality and fairness of its provision
- satisfaction among the College community
- awareness among students and staff of the importance of issues surrounding equity and diversity
- equality of educational opportunity
- narrowing of achievement gaps
- equality of opportunity in career development for all staff
- an environment which is free of prejudice, harassment and unlawful discrimination
- effective treatment of complaints
- a representative community of students, staff and Governors
- a College that consults and uses this information to improve its provision

5. Methods

The College will achieve its policy commitments by:

- embedding consideration of equality of opportunity and diversity into all aspects of its provision
 - consulting members of the College and local communities
 - providing opportunities and resources for students and staff to engage with issues relating to equity and diversity.
 - assessing the impact of policies on diverse groups
 - integrating equity and diversity awareness into its quality assurance procedures
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- Collecting data on student success and achievement so that the barriers to progression can be investigated and remedied.
 - regularly monitoring and reviewing performance
 - publicly reporting on achievements
 - taking positive action where necessary
 - providing training for all staff to raise awareness of legal responsibilities and to promote good practice
 - providing equality of opportunity in career development for all staff
 - continuing professional development, through which staff will meet their responsibilities relating to equity and diversity
 - providing effective and trusted complaints procedures
 - treating acts of discrimination as a disciplinary offence
 - Publicising and communicating the College's work on equity, diversity and belonging both internally and externally

6. Responsibilities

All members of the College community including Governors and volunteers share the responsibility to:

- create an environment within which progress can be made on equality and where there is genuine inclusion and respect for diversity, and promotion of opportunity
- comply with the law and work within the College's Equity, Diversity & Belonging Policy

The Local Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the strategic direction of the College supports advancing equity, diversity and belonging
- Ensuring the College meets all its legislative duties, including the general and the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010
- Reviewing progress on advancing equity, diversity and belonging on an annual basis via review of an annual report and through the link governor visits
- Ensuring progress on equity, diversity and belonging are published in an annual report to the Local Governing Body
- Striving to ensure that the membership of the body of governors reflects the diversity of the college community

The Senior Management Team is responsible for:

- Promoting a welcoming, inclusive college for all, showing respect for everyone, valuing diversity, and advancing equity and belonging
- Implementing the Equality Act 2010, including the general and specific duties and the Equity, Diversity and Belonging Policy

- Ensuring staff and students understand their responsibilities and are given appropriate support and training to enable them to carry out their duties.
- Ensuring equity, diversity and belonging monitoring is integrated into quality assurance processes and the College's strategic priorities

The Equity, Diversity and Belonging Steering group is responsible for:

- Agreeing and monitoring implementation of the college's annual Equity, Diversity and Belonging Quality Improvement Plan developed as part of the College SAR process.
- Reviewing, agreeing and monitoring the impact of the College's Equity, Diversity and Belonging policies for students and staff.
- Ensuring that staff receive regular Equity, Diversity policy updates and recommending appropriate staff training.
- Monitoring student and staff data relating to equity, diversity and belonging.
- Proposing the development and implementation of initiatives and activities for staff, students and relevant local communities in order to help progress and meet key equity, diversity and belonging priorities and objectives.
- Reviewing national developments to keep our own policies, procedures and practice up-to-date and in line with good practice in the sector.
- Promoting cooperation within, and between, and the involvement of a diverse range of staff and students in College life to foster cohesion and eliminate discrimination.
- Working collaboratively with other staff and student diversity groups (such as the Culture Committee, LGBT group etc.) and hearing regularly from representatives on collective views and progress on their actions.
- Engaging with curriculum and support areas as required to ensure relevant equity, diversity and belonging matters are on their agenda

All staff members are responsible for:

- Promoting a welcoming, inclusive college for all, showing respect for everyone valuing diversity and advancing equity and inclusion
- Behaving in a way which does not discriminate against, victimise, bully or harass any individual or group; this includes on social media
- Challenging inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour
- Reporting incidents of discrimination, victimisation, bullying and harassment.
- Contributing to self-assessment reporting on how equity, diversity and belonging are advancing in their areas.
- Participating in equity, diversity and belonging training.
- Fully integrating and embedding equity, diversity and belonging in their delivery of services.
- Fully integrating and embedding equity, diversity and belonging within curriculum planning and teaching, learning and assessment.
- Regularly reviewing the promotion of equity, diversity and belonging in individual subject areas and improving the opportunities identified in Curriculum Maps.
- Developing Curriculum Maps, lesson content and resources which recognise and promote inclusion
- Encouraging students to respect other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010
- Each student is responsible for:

- Promoting a welcome, inclusive college for all, showing respect for everyone, valuing diversity and advancing equity and inclusion
- Behaving in a way which does not discriminate against, bully or harass any individual or group; this includes on social media.
- Reporting incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment to their tutor or other member of staff.

Our expectations are that all who work with us in any capacity (for example, parents/carers, contractors, external speakers and trainers) agree to:

- Show respect for everyone, valuing diversity and advancing equity and belonging
- Behave in a way which does not discriminate against, bully or harass any individual or group.
- Behave in a way that does not contravene the college's Equity, Diversity or Belonging Policy or the law
- Behave in line with expectations outlined in the College Code of Conduct.

7. Monitoring, reviews and reporting

The College has a specific duty to monitor, review and report on its equity and diversity-related policies and practices, in order to measure progress in achieving agreed objectives.

The College will publish reviews of its equity and diversity provision in:

- an annual Equity, Diversity and Belonging monitoring report
- the College's annual Self-Assessment Report

The equality and diversity monitoring reports are available here [The Sixth Form College Colchester - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) or on request from the College.

The Equality, Diversity and Belonging Policy will be reviewed regularly or when required to comply with any changes in legislation.

What to do if things go wrong

The College regards very seriously any allegation of discrimination or harassment. The appropriate disciplinary action may result in sanctions up to and including expulsion or dismissal from the College.

If you are a student and you feel that you have experienced unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, intimidation or abuse then please raise the matter with your Personal Tutor, Senior Tutor or the Assistant Principal (Pastoral).

If you are a member of staff, please raise the matter with your line manager, the Assistant Principal (Pastoral), or the Human Resources and Administration Manager.

If you are a parent / carer or other member of the wider communities, please raise the matter with the Assistant Principal (Pastoral).

If necessary, you can make a formal complaint. If you wish to do so, please follow the Complaints Procedure on the College public website.

8. Consultation

The effectiveness of this policy is dependent on the support and co-operation of all members of the College. This version has therefore been agreed in consultation with the Student Council, staff, Governors, trades unions and other relevant parties. This policy is, however, a working document and therefore is subject to constant review

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding Policies, including Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe Guidance
- Recruitment and Selection Policy

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Author/ Responsibility	AP – Teaching and Learning

The legal context

1. Under the general duty of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, the College is required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different races.

2. Under the Disability Discrimination Act, the College is required to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others

3. Under the Equality Act, the College is required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act, and discrimination that is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women