

Equality & Diversity Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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 equality, 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

- 2.1 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

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The College 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.
- 3.3 The College 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.
- 3.4 The College will prevent unlawful discrimination against any individual or group within the College. The College values diversity in respect of race, ethnicity or national origin, gender, religion and belief or none, socio-economic background, gender re-assignment, marital status, family circumstances, pregnancy, parenthood, political opinions and affiliations, physical attributes or appearance, disability, sexual orientation and age.

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The College will develop students' understanding of the importance of equality 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.
- 3.7 The College 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.
- 3.8 The College 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.
- 3.9 The College will use all means at its disposal, including the procurement of goods and services, to promote equality and it is mindful of existing duties to prevent political indoctrination and secure a fair presentation of political issues.
- 3.10 The College will consult regularly to develop and implement appropriate policies.
- 3.11 The College will monitor the impact of this Equality & Diversity Policy. The College is committed to analysing and publishing the results and to taking positive, corrective action where required.

4. Aims

4.1 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 equality and diversity issues
- 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. Benefits

5.1 The College community gains multiple benefits from continuous progress on equality and diversity. These include:

- enabling greater awareness of possible issues before they arise and helping the College to develop better policies
- more informed decision making
- appropriate targeting of policies and resources
- improving educational provision and meeting varied needs
- greater openness in policy making
- increasing confidence in the College's provision
- eliminating incidents of discrimination
- improved morale, inclusion, satisfaction and productivity

- a population of students, staff and Governors that is representative of the local communities
- being recognised as an educational institution and employer of choice

6. Methods

6.1 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 equality and diversity related issues
- assessing the impact of policies on diverse groups
- integrating equality and diversity awareness into its quality assurance procedures
- 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 equality and diversity
- providing effective and trusted complaints procedures
- treating acts of discrimination as a disciplinary offence
- Publicising and communicating the College's work on equality and diversity, both internally and externally

6. Responsibilities

7.1 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 Equality & Diversity Policy

7.2 The Governors are responsible for:

- reviewing and approving equality of opportunity and diversity related policies and objectives
- championing equality and diversity, both internally and externally

7.3 The Principal is responsible for:

- providing leadership, acting as overall leader to ensure the policy is developed and implemented
- ensuring the development and fulfilment of the Equality & Diversity Policy and action plans which are integrated within the College's strategic priorities
- publicising and communicating the policy, externally and internally
- strategic engagement with, and accountability to, the wider community for delivery on equality and diversity in all relevant activities
- ensuring that all staff fulfil their responsibilities with regards to equality and diversity

7.4 Assistant Principals are responsible for:

- ensuring that equality and diversity issues are embedded in their areas of responsibility

- ensuring the practical implementation of the policy
- ensuring students and staff act in accordance with the policy, providing necessary support and direction

7.6 The Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- enabling the College to translate this policy into action
- monitoring and reviewing the operation of the Equality & Diversity Policy
- drafting policies and strategies related to equality and diversity

7.7 Each staff member is responsible for:

- actively addressing equality and diversity issues in their day-to-day work
- ensuring her or his own behaviour meets appropriate standards

7.8 Each student is responsible for:

- ensuring their own behaviour does not contravene the principles of this policy

8. Monitoring, reviews and reporting

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

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

- an annual equality and diversity monitoring report
- the College's annual Self-Assessment Report

8.3 The equality and diversity monitoring reports are available at:
<http://www.colchsfc.ac.uk/equality/> or on request from the College.

8.4 The Equality & Diversity Policy will be reviewed regularly or when required to comply with any changes in legislation.

What to do if things go wrong

9.1 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.

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

9.3 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.

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

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

9.6 If you would like to ask a question or make a comment regarding the College's equality and diversity provision, please email equalitymatters@colchsfc.ac.uk

10. Consultation

10.1 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

10.2 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

Approved by Governing Body	17 th May 2021
Review Date	Summer 2025
Author/ Responsibility	AP – Equality and diversity;

Annex A

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