

WYVERN COLLEGE POLICY NUMBER 24A EQUALITY POLICY – TEACHING AND LEARNING (STUDENTS)

Purpose and Rationale

This document sets out the principles under which the College will ensure the fair and equal treatment of all its students.

Responsibility for Implementation

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented. In addition, all staff have a professional responsibility to work within the terms of this policy and to ensure that they treat students fairly and equally.

Accountability

The Headteacher is responsible for drafting the policy based on guidance provided by the Department for Education. The policy is then discussed and ratified by the Curriculum and Standards Committee. The Curriculum and Standards Committee will receive various data annually as indicated in this report and will also discuss how the policy has worked in practice in the previous period and any outcomes that need to be considered.

Supporting Documents

Statutory guidance is also produced by the Department for Education and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

1. Introduction

The College recognises its responsibilities for equality of opportunity for all students. In accordance with those responsibilities it wishes to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all students. This policy sets out the principles under which the College will operate to meet these aims.

2. Statement of Intent

The College is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, parents and carers receiving services from the College, irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith or religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the college feel proud of their identity and **are** able to participate fully in College life.

The achievement of students will be monitored according to race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Wyvern College, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and are part of our wider community.

Wyvern College endorses the Ofsted approach to equality issues and the evaluation schedule, which states that schools and colleges must consider:

- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students at the College;
- the extent to which the education provided by the College meets the needs of the range of students at the College, and in particular the needs of disabled students and those with special educational needs.

Groups of students are defined by Ofsted as follows:

- disabled students;
- students with special educational needs;
- boys;
- girls;
- groups of students whose prior attainment may be different from that of other groups;
- students who are more academically able;
- students for whom English is an additional language;
- minority ethnic students;
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children;
- Looked after Children;
- students known to be eligible for free school meals;
- lesbian, gay and bisexual students;
- transgender students;
- young carers;
- students from low income backgrounds;
- other vulnerable groups.

All principles outlined in this policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- the delivery of the curriculum;
- teaching and learning;
- student achievement and progress;
- policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance;
- care, guidance and support for students and their families;
- policies and practice in relation to student behaviour, including exclusions;
- partnership working with parents/carers;
- relationships with the wider community.

3. Statutory Requirements

The College is bound by law not to discriminate on certain grounds. The Equality Act of 2010 has assembled all the current discrimination laws into one and defines protected characteristics of children and young people in education settings as follows:

- race;
- disability;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- religion or belief;
- pregnancy and maternity.

Duties of schools and colleges as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations [Amendment] Act 2000:

- eliminate racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Duties of schools and colleges as detailed in The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 [DDA]:

- promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- taking reasonable steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Definition of disability:

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

This section should be read in conjunction the college Special Educational Needs Policy and the Accessibility Strategy.

The Gender Equality Duty 2006

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- promote equality between men and women.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

4. Teaching and Learning

Wyvern College aims to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, make progress and contribute to the life of the College community.

To do this, we will:

- monitor progress data by ethnicity, gender, disability and other protected characteristics, undertaking effective interventions to remove barriers to learning or gaps in achievement of different groups;
- set challenging targets for all students;
- ensure equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- deploy resources that reflect the diversity of the college population and local, national and international communities in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education and make reasonable adjustments for parents with protected characteristics;
- ensure that the delivery of teaching and learning embraces approaches that are appropriate for the whole College population and that are which are inclusive and reflective of our students.

5. Admissions and Exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate by race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the College's Behaviour Policy and Exclusion regulations. We will closely monitor exclusion data in order to track impact and to ensure that there is no discriminatory practice.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of governors:

- The Governing Body supports this policy by continuing to ensure that the College is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender, disability, and other protected characteristics.
- The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against at Wyvern on account of their race, gender, disability or other protected characteristic.

The role of Wyvern staff:

- All staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will share responsibility for safeguarding the college's Equality Plan.
- All staff will strive to provide material and resources that convey positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenge stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents.
- Teachers will support the work of support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

7. Specific Issues

i. Race

The College is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic or national origin of our students and parents/carers. Any direct or indirect incidents of discrimination or harassment will be challenged and recorded. Positive messages about cultural diversity will be conveyed through the taught curriculum and student interactions, language and behaviour will be monitored as part of daily supervisory duties outside lessons.

ii. Disability

The College is opposed to any discrimination against students or parents with disabilities. Reasonable adjustments will be made in order for a disabled student to access all curriculum and extra-curricular provision, and in order for parents/carers to access College information, meetings and other community events.

iii. Sex

The College is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on the gender of students or parents/carers. Students will have access and encouragement to follow any available curriculum pathways, irrespective of gender. Positive images and examples of equal opportunities will be promoted as part of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

iv. Sexual orientation

The College is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on perceived or actual sexual orientation of students or parents/carers. Any direct or indirect discrimination will be challenged and recorded.

v. Gender reassignment

The College is opposed to any discrimination as a result of a student or parent/carer proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process [or part of a process] for the purpose of reassigning the person's gender.

vi. Religion or belief

The College is opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination based on religion or beliefs of students and parents/carers. Students will learn about diverse religious,

spiritual and cultural beliefs through the taught curriculum and staff will challenge prejudicial or discriminatory language encountered in and out of the classroom.

vii. Pregnancy and maternity

The College is opposed to any discrimination against a student because of pregnancy and/or maternity leave. Students who become pregnant, are on maternity leave or give birth to a child during their time at College will receive support for childcare in order to access their curriculum provision complete their secondary education and public examinations, in line with statutory responsibilities to young people in education.

8. Tackling Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice against, and stereotyping of, any persons or groups with or without protected characteristics; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a student's individual circumstances.

Discriminatory practices, harassment and bullying will be dealt with in line with the Equality Policy and the College's Behaviour Policy. Incidents of discrimination, harassment and bullying against any student will be recorded and kept on file.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as: 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur may include:

- physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- bringing discriminatory material into College;
- verbal abuse and threats;
- incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

9. Positive Action

The College recognises that avoidance or absence of discrimination is not sufficient to ensure that equality exists in the College. Staff therefore undertake measures of positive action which will work towards achieving the aims of this policy. Staff will not discriminate in favour of particular

protected groups except in so far as it will enable members of these groups to participate on an equal basis with all opportunities offered. Positive action measures may include:

- encouraging active participation of under-represented groups in extra-curricular or enrichment activities and visits;
- flexible accommodation – e.g. rooming lessons on the ground floor for a wheelchair user – where reasonably possible;
- providing additional support with language learning – e.g. for a student with English as an additional language;
- providing alternative methods of communication for children or parents – e.g. electronic devices, braille or interpreters/translations of documents;
- access arrangements for public examinations for students who qualify, arising from learning difficulties, disabilities or neurological differences.

10. Monitoring Equality

Information and the Equality objectives will be reviewed on a regular basis in line with this policy. The following data will be collected for all students and also those in groups with protected characteristics:

- progress data of all students;
- attendance levels;
- exclusions and behaviour records;
- incidents of bullying or harassment;
- participation in extra-curricular activities and visits;
- participation in student voice groups, including College Council, prefect teams, peer support teams etc.;
- curriculum pathways and option choices;
- parent/carer attendance at meetings, review days and parents' consultation or information evenings/events;
- participation in praise events/prize giving events;
- rates and trends in positive behaviour points.

Other quantitative and qualitative information regarding Equality will be collected via:

- staff surveys;
- parental survey;
- focus groups;
- Wyvern Advisory Group;
- student voice/attitude surveys.

Further qualitative information regarding Equality and progress towards the Equality objectives will be derived from the day to day life of the college and particular initiatives, which may include some of the following:

- minutes of meetings [staff/governors];
- calendared events - e.g. Arts Days;
- partnership events with other schools or institutions;
- assemblies;
- curriculum content;
- SEN provision;
- alternative provision;
- pavilion behaviour management programme and records of restorative justice

- comments from visitors to the college – e.g. Open Evening;
- training and induction for new teaching and support staff
- professional development of staff.

11. Monitoring this Policy

Equality issues will be reported to the Curriculum & Standards Committee as part of the cycle of meetings, in order for the college to account for its Equality Duty and to assess the extent to which the objectives have been met. Records and information about Equality will be stored in an appropriate and confidential format in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Review Schedule

Any amendments to this policy should be done in conjunction with policy 24B Equality Policy – Employment of Staff to ensure consistency across the two policies.

Revised & Adopted by Governing Body: September 2017

Next Review Date: September 2018 (Annual)

Ratified by Curriculum and Standards Committee on 18th September 2017