

SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY

MAY 2021

Effective Date: 17th May 2021

Last Reviewed: 10th May 2021

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Ratified: 17th May 2021

By: Executive Committee

1. Introduction

The College believes that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support its commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting diversity and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that the College continues to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

Our approach to equality is based on the following 6 key principles

- **All learners are of equal value.** Whether or not they are disabled, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual orientation.
- **We respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a key strength.** We take **account** of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith, trans and sexual orientation. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.
- **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and **mutual** respect between groups and communities different from each other.
- **We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- **We have the highest expectations of all our learners and staff.** We expect that all learners can make good progress and achieve to their fullest potential. We expect that staff will facilitate this and maintain the highest standards
- **We work to raise standards for all learners, but especially for the most vulnerable.** We believe that improving the quality of teaching and learning for the most vulnerable groups of learners raises standards across the whole College.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics):

Age

Disability

Gender Re-assignment

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Maternity & Pregnancy

Race
Religion & Belief
Sex
Sexual Orientation

The Act also requires all public organisations, including Colleges, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

This requires all public organisations to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations to:

1. Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
2. Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable.

This policy describes how the College is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance.

This policy was developed by the Equality & Diversity Committee in consultation with learners, staff, governors and stakeholders.

3. Elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- 3.1 The College takes account of diversity issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide teaching and learning and the way we provide access to facilities and services;
- 3.2 The College’s recruitment of learners and staff are fair and transparent and does not discriminate on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity;
- 3.3 Human Resources ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities;
- 3.4 The College ensures that there is full consultation with those who are affected by a policy, decision or activity and they are involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.
- 3.5 The College actively promotes diversity and inclusion through the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect and tolerance for all.
- 3.6 The College is a Secular environment and promotes the British values in all aspects of College life.

4. Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups

- 4.1 The College collects and analyses data on learners to monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of learners and use this data to support their improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age- appropriate literacy and numeracy skills.
- 4.2 The College identifies at admission stage those learners with a disability that will require additional support
- 4.3 The College collects and analyses data on staff and publishes a yearly Equality & Diversity Annual report which is available on the intranet and the College website.
- 4.4 The College provides support to learners at risk of underachieving.
- 4.5 Teaching staff use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all learners.
- 4.6 The College is proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

5. Fostering good relations

- 5.1 The College ensures that its learners are prepared for life in a diverse society through the curriculum and enrichment activities
- 5.2 The College is keen to have their staffing body reflective of the local community.
- 5.3 The College teaches about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through the curriculum , enrichment and promotional activities organised within the College;
- 5.4 Within the curriculum, materials and resources are used that reflect the diversity of the local population across the protected characteristics
- 5.5 In marketing and promotional activity, the College uses images that are reflective of the local population and across the protected characteristics and avoids stereotyping
- 5.6 The College promotes its Secular policy and British Values.
- 5.7 Opportunities are provided for learners to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- 5.8 We promote positive messages about diversity and inclusion through guest speakers, College wide events e.g. Black History Month, LGBT History Month, International Women's day etc
- 5.9 There is a dedicated Equality & Diversity intranet page and a dedicated LGBT+ intranet page available to all staff
- 5.10 There is a well-established Equality & Diversity Committee and LGBT+ Committee to forward the diversity and inclusion agenda across the College
- 5.11 The College encourages the promotion of British Values which are defined as: *'Democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.'*

6. Published Equality Objectives

The objectives which we identify represent our College's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They were fully consulted with staff, students, parents, governors, employers and partners.

Our Equality Objectives are:

Equality Objective 1

Everyone working for and studying at Newham College will promote our values of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and this will underpin everything the College does.

Measures: Bi-Annual Staff Survey; Equality & Diversity Annual report; Equality & diversity goals reflected in all Quality Improvement Plans; Equality Action Plan; Equality Analysis Assessments.

Equality Objective 2

The College will recruit and maintain a staff and student population which is reflective of the local and wider community.

Measures: Recruitment Policy; Student Open Access Policy; Equality & Diversity annual report; Awareness raising events.

Equality Objective 3

The College's vision and values for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be communicated to everyone.

Measures: Student Inductions; Staff Inductions; Teaching & Learning Audit; Marketing strategy; Equality & Diversity Strategy; HR Strategy; Press releases; Communication Strategy.

Equality Objective 4

Newham College will use its monitoring data to assess the impact and effectiveness of its activities in order to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.

Measures: Achievement gaps are explored and actions put in place; Equality & Diversity Annual report; Equality Action Plan.

Equality Objective 5

All staff will be supported by training and development to advance the College's values.

Measures: Mandatory diversity training; Yearly Performance Reviews; Monitoring of Complaints.

7. Awareness Raising

The College provides opportunities for learners to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures. This includes the contribution of different cultures in our lessons. The College provides opportunities for learners to listen to a range of opinions and learn from different experiences.

The College actively promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, poster boards, freshers fayre stands, visitors, guest speakers, whole College events.

The College will provide training and guidance on Equality and Diversity for all new staff as

part of the induction procedure and all existing staff every 3 years.

8. Equality Action Plan

The College has an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives.

9. Role and Responsibilities

9.1 Governing body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the College complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

9.2 Principal and Senior Leadership team

The Principal is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

Senior members of staff have the day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes.

9.3 Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the College's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all learners
- support different groups of learners in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

9.4 Visitors

All visitors to the College, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information to enable them to do this.

9.5 Sub-Contractors

All sub-contractors are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy.

Appendix 1

1. Meeting our legal duties

1.1 Recruitment and Selection

The College will not discriminate on grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief in the way it recruits and selects employees.

1.2 Terms and Conditions of Employment

The College should ensure that any benefits [facilities and services] which it offers to heterosexual staff, will be equally available to lesbian, gay, and bisexual staff. This includes offering any benefits available to spouses to civil partners, and any benefits available to unmarried opposite-sex partners to unregistered same-sex partners. This includes offering any provisions for special leave relating to partners, including paternity and adoption leave and pay arrangements, ante-natal leave etc¹.

1.3 Training and Promotion

The College will ensure that all employees regardless of their age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief shall have equal access to training, promotion and other aspects of career development.

1.4 Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief is viewed by the College as a very serious offence, which after full investigation and if upheld, may be treated as gross misconduct which could result in summary dismissal.

If an employee is harassed by a student, this will be dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure which may lead to expulsion. Examples of anti-gay bullying and harassment includes behaviour specifically intended to demean them because of their sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation or because of the sexual orientation of someone with whom they associate. It can also include 'outing them at work'. Biphobic bullying is the intense hatred, fear or aversion towards bisexuals or bisexuality, which may include negative stereotyping or denial of the existence of bisexuals. Transphobia is a range of antagonistic attitudes and feelings against transgender people. Transphobia can be emotional disgust, fear, anger or discomfort felt or expressed towards people who do not conform to society's gender expectations. Examples can be disclosing someone's trans history without their consent or treating someone differently, because of their gender identity, gender expression or gender presentation. The College has a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment.

1.5 Dismissal

The College will ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief in relation to dismissal of employees. In particular, should a redundancy situation occur, it will ensure that age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender

¹For the purposes of deciding if an employee is eligible for paternity leave, a partner is someone who lives with the mother of the baby in an enduring family relationship but is not an immediate relative.' BERR guidance on paternity leave

identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief is not a factor in the selection of those to be made redundant.

1.6 **References**

The College should ensure that any references provided to employees who are leaving are not influenced in any way by the age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief of the departing employee.

1.7 **Positive Action**

In specific circumstances, the Act allows positive action as a way of overcome inequality.

Positive action allows organisations to:

- 1.7.1 provide facilities or services (in training, education or welfare) to meet the special needs of people from particular groups;
- 1.7.2 target job training at particular groups that are under-represented in a particular area of work;
- 1.7.3 encourage applications from groups that are under-represented in particular work areas.

Positive action strategies, where used, are intended to be temporary measures only. They must be kept under regular review and cannot be used once the special needs have been met or if the under-representation no longer exists. The College will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy, it falls within the law.

1.8 **Provision of adjustment of records and issues of support and duty of care for transgender people**

The College will respect any request for anonymity. The College will seek to update its records to include the chosen name and gender identified by the individual at an appropriate time.

The College will provide support through the Employee Health and Well-being department for staff, and the Welfare service for students returning after a break caused by medical and surgical treatment.

For staff with significant medical and surgical treatment returning to work after an absence due to the above, the College should treat sympathetically requests to job share, or to move from a full-time to a fractional contract for a specified period.

The College, when producing timetables for teaching staff or work patterns for support staff, will adopt a flexible approach which endeavours, whenever possible to meet the individual needs of staff with medical and surgical treatment recuperation.

The College will discuss what amendments will be required to the records of transgender staff, and ensure that any records made prior to a change of name or gender change will be updated.

2. Ensuring Equality

- 2.1 The College values all its employees equally, and will endeavour to create an environment in which all employees, whatever their age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief, feel equally valued and welcomed, and where discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.
- 2.2 The College is committed to creating an environment in which everyone is treated equally and with respect. The College aims to eliminate discrimination in its structures and employment practices as well as to encourage change in individual behaviour, and ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for all staff, regardless of their age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief. The holding of religious beliefs which regard homosexuality as a sin will not be a justification for non-observance of this policy.
- 2.3 The College environment, in terms of its pictures, images, publicity materials, literature, use of language etc., should aim to present images that promote diversity.
- 2.4 Abuse, harassment or bullying (e.g. name-calling, derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour and intrusive questions) are serious disciplinary offences, and will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.
- 2.5 Discriminatory propaganda, in the forms of written materials, graffiti, music, emails, text messages, social networking websites or speeches will not be tolerated. The College undertakes to remove immediately any such propaganda whenever it appears on the premises.
- 2.6 The College should provide a supportive environment for employees who wish it to be known that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans. However, it is the right of the individuals to choose whether they wish to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity in the College. To 'out' someone, whether staff or student, without their permission is a form of harassment, and should be treated as such.
- 2.7 Assumptions will not be made that partners of employees are always of the opposite sex.
- 2.8 The College will support the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)

3. Complaints

- 3.1 The College should seek to provide a supportive environment for employees who make claims of discrimination or harassment.
- 3.2 Acts of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or abuse on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.
- 3.3 Employees who feel they are being discriminated against on grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, gender re-assignment, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief should raise the matter under the Grievance Procedure. Employees who feel they're being harassed or bullied on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation,

religion or religious belief should raise the matter under the College's Harassment and Bullying Procedure so the matter can be investigated promptly and sensitively.

- 3.4 If, in the course of their work, College employees feel they are being harassed or discriminated against on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, transitioning, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief by members of the public, the College will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.
- 3.5 Any unacceptable behaviour directed against employees by students should be dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure.