

Diversity & Equal Opportunities Statement of Commitment

AUGUST 2024

The college is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, student or other member of the college community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the college community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

We aim to empower our students to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the college community and a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the college's ethos and values, in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy.

Aims and objectives

The college aims to:

- Carry out its legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation (including The Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Employment Equality Regulations);
- Reinforce the college's position as a provider of high quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities;
- Ensure that equality remains high on the college's strategic agenda;
- Establish good people management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organizational response;
- Ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every student;
- Ensure that students and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals;
- Ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the college's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the

disciplinary, grievance or anti-harassment procedure as appropriate). All forms of discrimination by any person within the college's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

Policy and planning

Equal opportunities implications, including race equality, will be considered and recorded whenever college policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

Employment matters

Appointments: in all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

Family-friendly policies: the college is a family-friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, flexitime where appropriate, carers' leave provision).

HIV/AIDS: the college recognises that people with HIV/AIDS suffer not only from the purely medical effects of the infection but may also experience prejudice and misunderstanding leading to unfair discrimination and victimisation. The college therefore will ensure that people with HIV/AIDS do not experience unfair treatment in relation to employment, as pupils or as other members of the college community. The college will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment and pupil admissions set out in Appendix B.

Transsexual employees and gender reassignment: The Sex Discrimination Act now expressly covers discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment.

The college will endeavour to:

- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status;
- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs;
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians and pupils can make;
- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, discriminatory practices and behaviour and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally.

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self- development, encouragement and motivation. The college places great importance on the relationship between team leaders and their teams and will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to

take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of the college's performance management system.

Students and the curriculum

The college follows local authority and/or governing body student admission policies that do not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission. The college's aim is to provide for all students according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin. The Education Reform Act 1988 stated that 'the school curriculum should reflect the culturally diverse society to which pupils belong and of which they will become adult members.' Students should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all students. Equality of opportunity should inform the whole of the curriculum and be reviewed regularly.