



CROOKHORN COLLEGE

Equality Policy

Date of Policy: October 2023
Review Date: October 2024
Reviewed by: Human Resources Committee

Introduction

Crookhorn College welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as both a provider of education and as an employer.

We believe that all students and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity and circumstances. We are committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and co-operation. We appreciate that a culture which promotes equality will create a positive environment and a shared sense of belonging for all who work, learn and use the services of the College. We recognise that equality will only be achieved by the whole College community working together – our students, staff, Governors and parents/carers.

This document outlines the principles which will guide our approach to working with our College community and enabling an open culture.

National and Legal Context

We recognise that we have duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the College community to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (applicable only to staff), disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, maternity and pregnancy, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership (applicable only to staff).

We also recognise that we have a duty under the Education & Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion, i.e. developing good relations across different cultures and groups.

We also appreciate that these duties reflect the international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Principles

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All students, families and staff are of equal value

We see all students, potential students, their parents and carers, and staff as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their sex
- Whatever their gender identity
- Whatever their religious and non-religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marital status
- Whether they are currently pregnant or have recently given birth
- Whatever their age

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. We recognise that our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must take account of diversity and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage that staff, parents/carers or students may face in relation to their protected characteristics:

- Disability – we understand that reasonable adjustments may need to be made.
- Sex – we recognise that girls and boys, men and women have different needs.
- Gender reassignment – we recognise an individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if they are proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.
- Religion and belief – we acknowledge that reasonable requests in relation to religious observance and practice may need to be made and complied with.
- Ethnicity and race – we appreciate that all have different experiences as a result of our ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- Age – we value the diversity in age of staff, parents and carers.
- Sexual orientation – we respect that individuals have the right to determine their own sexual identity and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of their preference.
- Marriage and civil partnership – we recognise that our staff, parents and carers may make their own personal choices in respect of personal relationships and that they should not experience disadvantage as a result of the relationships they have.
- Pregnancy and maternity – we believe that our staff, parents, carers and students should not experience any unfair disadvantage as a result of pregnancy or having recently given birth.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes and interaction between groups and communities different from each other
- an absence of harassment, victimisation and discrimination in relation to any protected characteristics

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our policies and practices for all staff and potential staff throughout the employment lifecycle, i.e. from recruitment through to the cessation of employment and beyond, are applied fairly and consistently across all groups with full respect for legal rights, taking into account aspects applicable to particular groups (e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff).

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise any possible negative impacts and we aim to reduce inequalities that exist between groups and communities different from each other.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

In our development of policies, we engage with groups and individuals, including students who are affected by a policy or activity, to ensure that their views are taken into account. For policies and activities affecting students, we will take account of views expressed at College council; for parents, through parent Governor representation and for staff, through staff Governor representation. Where necessary, we will consult more widely with specific groups.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

We intend that our policies, activities and curriculum foster greater social cohesion and provide for an equal opportunity to participate in public life irrespective of the protected characteristics of individuals and groups.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish information annually to show our compliance with the public sector equality duty, set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

9. We set ourselves specific and measurable equality objectives

We develop and publish specific and measurable objectives every four years based on the evidence that we have gathered (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7).

The objectives can be found in Appendix A to this policy statement and take into account both National, County and College level priorities.

We will set ourselves new objectives every four years, but keep them under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

Application of the principles within this policy statement:

The principles outlined in the policy statement will be applied and reflected in:

- The delivery of the College curriculum
- The teaching and learning within the College
- Our practice in relation to student progress, attainment and achievement
- Our teaching styles and strategies
- Our policies and practice in relation to admissions and attendance
- Our policies and practice in relation to staff
- Our care, guidance and support to students, their families and staff
- Our policies and practice in relation to student behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Our partnership working with parents and carers
- Our contact with the wider College community

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying

The College is opposed to all forms of prejudice including, but not limited to, prejudice related to protected characteristics. We will ensure that prejudice-related incidents in relation to staff and students are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

Roles and responsibilities

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 and that arrangements are in place to deal with any concerns or unlawful action that arises.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given appropriate training and support and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their practice
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons
- support students in their class who have additional needs

Equality Objectives

Date objectives set: September 2023

Date of review: September 2027

We recognise that the public sector equality duty has three aims, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

We have considered how well we currently achieve these aims with regard to the protected groups under the Equality Act (race, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, marital status, sexual orientation, religion and belief).

We have also involved staff, students, parents and others in the following ways:

- working parties
- involvement of the student council
- staff survey
- contact with parents representing students with particular protected characteristics
- contact with the Local Authority and disability organisations

Having referred to and analysed our equality information, we have set ourselves the following objective(s):

- Objective 1: Through 'Quality First Teaching' we will actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between students and all groups of students especially those eligible for free-school meals, students with SEN and children who are or have been in the care of the Local Authority.
- Objective 2: Increase the attendance of all students especially students eligible for free-school meals, students with SEN and children who are or have been in the care of the Local Authority.
- Objective 3: Increase the parental engagement of students who are eligible for free-school meals, students with SEN and children who are or have been in the care of the Local Authority.
- Objective 4: Promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between students of different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.