

Quality System

Policy Number

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Policy Title

Equality and Diversity Policy

| Written / Authorised by: | Equality Impact Assessment: | Date Reviewed: | Next review date: |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
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Equality and Diversity Policy

1.0 Introduction

Bishop Auckland College Group is committed to an equality of opportunity that is intended to be an integral part of College life. To this end, the College Group is committed to equality of process, equality of choice and equality of outcome. In its policies and practices the College Group will seek to enhance the self esteem of the College community and to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfill their potential.

This commitment to equality of opportunity is a fundamental policy that is integral in all college activities and reflected in the mission and values. All members of the college community are expected to uphold the policy and to ensure that their actions embody the commitment.

The College Group promotes equality of opportunity in all aspects of our work, valuing the richness of ideas that diversity brings.

As this policy can involve processing of personal data, data protection regulations will be adhered to. Please refer to the General Data Protection Regulation Policy (ref: POL-DP-01) for further information.

2.0 Scope

Bishop Auckland College strives to promote social inclusion and the development of potential through the provision of quality lifelong learning opportunities for all students. The College Group therefore embraces equality and diversity in all its aspects and aims to employ a workforce which reflects, at every level, the community which it serves. The College Group is committed to promoting equality and diversity to students, potential students, staff and potential staff, stakeholders, contractors and partners, valuing the richness of ideas that diversity brings.

This policy is endorsed by Senior Management, the College's Equality & Diversity Working Group, the Principal/Chief Executive and the Corporate Board or Executive Council for South West Durham Training.

3.0 Context

The College Group, as an employer and provider of education is required to ensure compliance with equality legislation, the Public Sector Duty, the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and British Values.

3.1 Equality Act 2010

The College Group adheres to the Equality Act 2010 which includes a number of duties. It explains the rights and responsibilities of the people that form the College community. It lists the following 9 protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment or gender identity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

The College Group treats everyone fairly and monitor students and staff under the protected characteristics as well as other relevant criteria. The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal to treat someone less favourably because of their protected characteristic. It also outlaws bullying, harassment or victimisation based on their protected characteristic.

3.2 Public Sector Equality Duty

The College Group considers all individuals when carrying out its day-to-day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our staff. As a Public Body the College Group pays due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity.
- Fostering good relations between one group and another or between groups sharing the same protected characteristic

3.3 British Values

British Values are integral to the ethos of equality and diversity. The College Group embraces these values within the college community and the diverse culture within modern Britain. The values cover four aspects:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of others such as people who hold different faiths

4.0 Principles of the policy

The commitment to equality and diversity is supported by Bishop Auckland College's Single Equality Scheme which sets out our commitment to equality and diversity and to demonstrate that equality and diversity permeates every aspect of college life. The operation of the Single Equality Scheme will be monitored by the Equality and Diversity Working Group. The overall responsibility for the implementation of the Single Equality Scheme lies with the Principal/Chief Executive.

In pursuance of commitment to diversity and the elimination of discrimination and harassment, the College Group is committed:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To advance equality of opportunity for all
- To foster good relations across and between the protected characteristics
- To develop an awareness of equality and diversity issues amongst all staff, students, customers, partners and stakeholders
- To embed equality of opportunity in all policies, practices, decision making and evaluation processes.
- To monitor equality and diversity in all aspects of College life and investigate any issues which arise
- To create an environment that values differences and raises aspirations
- To comply with the requirements of the Single Equality Scheme and relevant legislation
- To embed British Values and embed within the College community

Commitments of the College Group:

The College Group believes that Equality and Diversity should permeate every aspect of college life, including workforce and student recruitment, the whole curriculum, guidance and support.

The College Group will make reasonable adjustments to facilities and practices to avoid discrimination on the grounds of disability against students or those employed by the College Group or those legitimately using its facilities.

The College Group is committed to operating a fair and transparent recruitment, promotion and selection process which is free from bias.

The College Group offers training to all staff to ensure that staff have equal access to available opportunities.

To support contractors and service providers to raise awareness of the College Group's Equality and Diversity Policy.

The College Group welcomes and takes seriously, any comments from staff, students or other service users in regard to their treatment at College to ensure that no service user experiences any form of discrimination or harassment.

A Customer Complaints Procedure is available for students, staff and visitors details of which are provided at induction.

A Grievance Procedure is available to staff, details of which are available from Human Resources or the Staff Portal.

Analysis to identify equality gaps will be undertaken and strategies to address these will be monitored through the Equality and Diversity Working Group.

The College Group assesses the impact of its policies and practices.

The College Group will monitor equality of opportunity and British Values in the curriculum delivery through the observation of teaching, learning and assessment process.

The College Group's staff development programme provides appropriate training for all staff in relation to equality and diversity and British values

The College Group supports flexible working to ensure a good work-life balance. The College Group will consider all requests, regardless of family commitment.

Students, staff, stakeholders and partners are duty bound by the remit of this policy. Complaints against them or from them will be processed through the College Group's Customer Complaints Procedure.

The Equality and Diversity Working Group will meet termly to monitor, consider, develop and promote equality and diversity issues.

The Policy will be reviewed annually and the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan will be reviewed at least three times year

The College Group aims to be transparent in all practices and policies, including any staff benefits, family friendly policies which are inclusive of all staff regardless of their individual characteristics.

The College Group is committed to an expected standard of behaviour from both staff and students. These expected standards of behaviour are set out in the Student's code of conduct and staff code of conduct, which every staff member and student are expected to be aware of.

The College Group deals with any breaches of the College Group's Equality and Diversity Policy through the staff Grievance, Procedure, Inappropriate Behaviour/Anti-bullying Procedures, and/or staff or student Disciplinary Procedures.

To support its commitment to equality of opportunity the College Group will assist staff and members of the Corporate Board to meet their professional obligations in respect of the policy. Training and other opportunities will be continually provided to encourage staff to become fully aware of the issues and of good practice in the field of equal opportunities so that they may act with understanding, confidence and integrity. New staff will undertake equality and diversity training within twelve months of joining the College Group.

The right of every student and staff member to equality of opportunity, as embodied in the Single Equality Scheme, is fundamental to all aspects of the operation of the College Group. This means that direct discrimination is not acceptable. The College Group will take appropriate disciplinary action where individuals discriminate or incite others to discriminate against others.

Equally, the College Group will not accept indirect discrimination, in which a regulation or procedure leads to unfair treatment, exclusion or disadvantage in respect of a particular group even though the regulation or procedure itself is not intended to have this effect.

The College Group welcomes views, opinions, suggestions and queries relating to this policy and the Single Equality Scheme. Any person wishing to be involved should contact Student Services.

Anyone requiring support relating to Equality and Diversity matters should contact Student Services.

5.0 Supporting Documents

- Single Equality Scheme
- Single Equality Scheme Action Plan
- Anti-bullying and harassment policy
- Reporting a Discriminatory Incident Form
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Grievance Procedure
- Staff Inappropriate Behaviour Procedure
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Student Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Staff

- Staff Handbook
- Induction documentation
- Promoting British values as part of SMSC in schools (DfE)

**For further information contact:
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