

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Co-educational Independent Boarding and Day School

Wycliffe College

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Key author	Deputy Head Academic
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Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability & Equality Policy• Reasonable Adjustments Policy for Pupils• Accessibility Plan• Staff Code of Safe Practice• Staff Handbook (Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures)• Behaviour Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy explains how the College is working to ensure it meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and goes beyond these to support equality, diversity and inclusion for the whole College.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to staff, contractors and volunteers; both current or prospective. Visitors to the School will also be expected to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The College recognises it has a role in eliminating discrimination and commits to embedding and supporting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole College.
- 3.2 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination and unfair treatment. It details nine protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). Appendix 2 has further information on these characteristics. This policy explains how the College is working to ensure it meets the requirements of the act and goes beyond these to support equality, diversity and inclusion for the whole college. The College also extends beyond the protected characteristics to include learning ability; other special educational needs or academic or sporting ability; political views; trade union membership; and part-time and fixed-term working.
- 3.3 The whole College will promote equality, diversity and inclusion policy by countering any prejudice on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, gender reassignment, religion or belief, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other such unjustifiable cause.
- 3.4 The whole College will actively seek to:
- 3.4.1 promote tolerance of each other and respect for each other's position within the School community;
 - 3.4.2 promote positive images and role models to avoid prejudice and to raise awareness of related issues;
 - 3.4.3 foster an open-minded approach and encourage pupils to recognise the contributions made by different cultures and to learn to identify any forms of bias;
 - 3.4.4 understand why and how we will deal with offensive language and behaviour; and understand why we will deal with any incidents promptly and in a sensitive manner;
 - 3.4.5 promote a civilised, friendly, compassionate and secure environment for everyone to value and enjoy.
- 3.5 We recognise and value diversity and inclusion and will make every effort to provide a supportive working and learning environment. We aim to give each individual the opportunity to develop skills and talents to their full potential, to learn and work in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment, be fairly rewarded and recognised for their achievements and have a meaningful voice, regardless of identity or background.
- 3.6 Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated, and will be regarded as misconduct which will be dealt with through our disciplinary procedure for staff or our behaviour policy for pupils.
- 3.7 We have high expectations of professionalism from all our staff and those in the wider school community. We expect people to consistently behave in a way that is respectful and inclusive, and in line with this policy.
- 3.8 The school will have regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission "What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools"

- 3.9 The College also has due regard to the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations, even though this duty does not strictly apply to independent schools

Appendix 2 is a glossary of terms, useful when researching and considering issues around equality, diversity and inclusion.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 The Council of Trustees will oversee and monitor the College's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and review reports from management.
- 4.2 The College Leadership Team and the Senior Management Team will promote and champion equality, diversity and inclusion, model behaviours, set policy and procedures and ensure measures are put in place to deliver the policy and address any breaches.
- 4.3 All staff will behave in accordance with the principles and values of this policy, participate in any training provided and raise any concerns about potential discrimination or bias they experience, (or believe others may have experienced) with the relevant person, for example their line manager, HR, the Senior Deputy Head or the Headmaster.

5. Implementation, monitoring and review

The College will use the following measures to implement and review this policy

- 5.1 The ongoing development, implementation and review of College policies and practices to actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and reduce the risk of discrimination.
- 5.2 Provision of appropriate training, induction, education, guidance and awareness raising to enable all members of the school community to act in accordance with this policy. Staff are expected to engage with these initiatives and make a positive contribution to the College environment, with College leaders acting as role models.
- 5.3 The proactive use of the staff appraisal process to embed the culture of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 5.4 Reasonable adjustments to allow full accessibility which enables those with a disability and/or additional needs to overcome barriers and flourish in the learning and working environment.
- 5.5 Clear feedback and complaint routes and prompt action to address any potential or actual acts of discrimination, harassment or bullying under the relevant policy. This is via the Grievance Procedure for staff and the Behaviour Policy for pupils.
- 5.6 Collection, analysis and transparent reporting of data to enable the effectiveness of this policy to be monitored and action identified to make improvements. Examples include reports to the Trustee Body and gender pay gap reporting.
- 5.7 The provision of a building and a curriculum which are welcoming and accessible to all as far as is reasonably possible, including proactive actions to enable participation.
- 5.8 The use of appropriate language, visual material and tools across the whole College to reduce the risk of any discrimination and to increase accessibility.

6. Breaches of this policy

- 6.1 If a member of staff believes that they have been subject to any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination they should inform their line manager, HR or the Headmaster.
- 6.2 If a pupil believes that they have been subject to any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination, they should inform their tutor, a Safeguarding Lead, the Headmaster or any other member of staff they feel comfortable raising it with.

- 6.3 The College will seek to ensure that the complaint will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.
- 6.4 The College will ensure the person making the complaint is not in any way penalised, whether directly or indirectly, for raising the complaint.
- 6.5 In all cases, complaints must be treated in a serious but sympathetic manner. A person with a complaint may find it difficult to raise it for fear that their response to bullying, harassment or discrimination is interpreted as a lack of sense of humour or an overreaction to what others perceive as normal working or social relationships. There will be no victimisation or retaliation against staff or pupils who complain about discrimination.
- 6.6 We take a strict approach to the policy, which may be dealt with in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. Serious cases of discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal. Making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Appendix 1

Further details on the protected characteristics included in the Equality Act 2010

The following provides further information about the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act, as they are described in the act. It does not reflect the College's view of these characteristics, or the terminology or descriptions used.

Age

An individual's actual age, or the age they are thought to be, whether younger or older. There are limited provisions for different treatment on the grounds of age in, for example, year group allocation or redundancy payments based on length of service.

Disability

Under the act a person is considered disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantially and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal day-to-day activities (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). In the workplace such activities are taken to include things like using a telephone or computer, interacting with colleagues, following instructions, driving and carrying everyday objects.

Gender Reassignment

The act covers someone who proposes to go through, is going through or has gone through a process, or part of a process, to change their gender from man to woman or woman to man. A person making this change is described in the Act as a 'transsexual' person. The Equality Act uses the term 'transsexual', which we consider to be outdated. At Wycliffe, we use inclusive terms such as 'transgender', 'gender diverse' and 'non-binary' to reflect our ethos of supporting all pupils and staff. Gender reassignment does not have to involve any medical supervision. For example, a person who chooses to reassign their gender and lives permanently as the opposite sex without having any hormonal or surgical therapy is protected. Genders outside of man (which includes woman transitioning to man) and woman (which includes man transitioning to woman) are not explicitly protected under UK law.

Marriage and civil partnership

Those who are married or in a civil partnership. Single people and couples in relationships which are not currently legally recognised are not covered by the act.

Pregnancy and maternity

Those who are pregnant or taking/seeking to take maternity leave. A person who is pregnant or on maternity leave must not be treated unfavourably because of their pregnancy or maternity leave. Specific provision is made in redundancy situations for those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.

Race

Includes race, colour, ethnic origin, national origin and nationality, and any combination of these aspects. It does not include local or regional distinctions (e.g. North/South of England).

Religion or belief

Any religion with a clear structure and belief system (any religious or philosophical belief about a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour, worthy of respect in a democratic society and does not conflict with the fundamental rights of others). The act also covers those with a lack of religion or belief.

Sex

The biological sex of an individual.

Sexual orientation

Towards people of the same sex, towards people of the opposite sex, towards people of the same sex and the opposite sex.

Glossary of terms**Bullying**

There is no legal definition of bullying, it can be described as unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is either:

- Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting;
- An abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates, or causes physical or emotional harm to someone.

Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident. An example of bullying could be excluding someone from team social events.

Sometimes bullying might be classed as harassment if it is related to a certain protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation). See the definition of harassment below.

Disability Inclusion

Disability inclusion means enabling people with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to access services and opportunities. It involves addressing the physical, communication, legal and attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities face.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably directly because of a protected characteristic. For example, a job advert asks only for people in a certain age group to apply.

Associative Discrimination

Associative discrimination occurs where someone is directly discriminated against because of the protected characteristic of someone they are associated with, such as a friend, family member or colleague. For example, an individual is not offered promotion because they care for a relative with a disability and it is thought this will impact on their performance.

Discrimination by perception

Discrimination by perception occurs where someone is directly discriminated against because they are thought to have a protected characteristic, regardless of whether the perception is correct. For example, an individual is not offered a role because they are perceived to be pregnant.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs where a provision, criterion or practice is being applied equally to a group of employees/job applicants, but it has the effect (or will have the effect) of putting those who share a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared to those who do not have that characteristic. For example, a job advert asks for ten years' experience, which excludes younger candidates.

Diversity

Diversity is about recognising, celebrating and valuing difference, people's different backgrounds, knowledge, skills, and experiences, and encouraging and using those differences to create a productive and effective workforce which benefits from a range of perspectives.

Equality

Equality is about having a consistent, fair, flexible approach to ensure everybody has as equal opportunity, based solely on merit and free of any direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Gender and transgender

Although the words 'gender' and 'sex' both have the sense of 'the state of being male or female', they are typically used in different ways. 'Sex' tends to refer to biological differences, while 'gender' tends to refer to cultural or social ones. A transgender person is someone who feels that the sex they were assigned at birth (male or female) does not match or sit easily with their sense of their own gender. Transgender people include those who may describe themselves as transsexual, transgender, a cross-dresser (transvestite), non-binary and anyone else who may not conform to traditional gender roles. It includes those who have transitioned from male to female (transgender women) or from female to male (transgender men) as well as those who do not have a typically 'male' or 'female' gender identity (non-binary)'.

Harassment

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic or of a sexual nature. It must have the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

It can be harassment if the behaviour:

- has one of these effects even if it was not intended;
- intended to have one of these effects even if it did not have that effect.

The law on harassment also applies if a person:

- is harassed because they are thought to have a certain protected characteristic when they do not;
- is harassed because they're linked to someone with a certain protected characteristic;
- witnesses harassment, if what they've seen has violated their dignity or created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for them.

It can still be against the law even if the person being harassed does not ask for it to stop.

Inclusion

An inclusive approach enables a diverse range of people to have opportunities, where everyone feels valued, contributions matter and all are able to perform to their full potential, whatever their background, identity or circumstances.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the recognition that all have multiple, overlapping and interconnected identities and characteristics, such as race, gender and sexuality. These can be regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Positive action/positive discrimination

Positive action is when an employer takes steps to help or encourage certain groups of people with different needs, or who are disadvantaged in some way, access work or training. Positive action is lawful under the Equality Act. Positive discrimination is recruiting or promoting a person solely because they have a relevant protected characteristic. Setting quotas to recruit or promote a particular number or proportion of people with protected characteristics is also positive discrimination. Positive discrimination is unlawful in the UK.

Protected Characteristics

There are nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Reasonable adjustment /accommodation

Employers must make reasonable adjustments to enable workers with disabilities to undertake their roles effectively.

Unconscious Bias

Everyone has unconscious biases. The brain receives information all the time from our own experiences and what we read, hear or see in the media and from others. The brain uses shortcuts to speed up decision-making and unconscious bias is a by-product. There are times when this sort of quick decision making is useful, for example if faced with a dangerous situation, however it is not a good way to make academic or work-based decisions in a school. Unconscious thoughts can be based on stereotypes and prejudices that we may not even realise we have.

Victimisation

Victimisation in the Equality Act is when an employee suffers a detriment (something that causes disadvantage, damage, harm or loss) because of making an allegation of discrimination, supporting a complaint of discrimination, giving evidence relating to a complaint about discrimination, raising a grievance concerning equality or discrimination or doing anything else for the purpose of the Equality Act.