

# Equality Policy

**PENDLE VALE COLLEGE**



**Approved by: Governing Body**

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### 1. Statement of Principles

This policy outlines the commitment of the staff, students and Governors of Pendle Vale College to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the College community. For our College this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of students in College, celebrating and valuing the equal opportunity achievements and strengths of all members of the College Community. These include:

- Students
- Staff
- Families/carers
- The Governing Body
- Multi-Agency staff linked to the College
- Visitors to College
- Students on Placement

As an organisation we have three values that drive everything we do and every decision we make; they are:

- Ambition
- Determination
- Respect.

#### **Ambition**

Our ambition is to make Pendle Vale a place where all individuals are treated with respect, irrespective of race, sex, age, colour, ethnic origin, ability, religion, sexual orientation, disability or social background.

#### **Determination**

We are determined to promote an inclusive ethos which values individuals from diverse backgrounds; to prepare students for life in a multi-cultural society and world; to encourage an appreciation of the enriching nature of a multi-cultural society; to recognise and challenge all forms of prejudice and racism; to provide equality of opportunity for students in terms of social and academic progress and staff in terms of

professional development; and to take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if it requires more favourable treatment.

## **Respect**

At Pendle Vale College, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. This means ensuring all members of the community feel valued through treating everyone around us with kindness, fairness and honesty. At Pendle Vale College, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all students, staff and families receiving services from the college, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the college feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in college life. The achievement of students will be monitored by race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support students, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. We will liaise with families and value their knowledge of their child and respect the families' and child's right to confidentiality. We will consult and involve all groups of people in the review of this policy.

## **2. Equality and the Law**

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met in line with legislation from the Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006) and the Equality Act (2010).

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a student or prospective student by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic.' The protected characteristics are:

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

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to students, and so the college is free to arrange students in classes based on their age group with materials appropriate to them.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, requiring College to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a prohibited characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

### Race Equality

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

### Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the College's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Plan.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities. Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on College requiring a due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish equality information and objectives which cover the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them.
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

### Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on Colleges to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male students and between women and men and transgender people. Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment.
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish equality information and objectives which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them.
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

### Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 makes discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For Colleges this means admissions, benefits and services for students and treatment of students.

### Community Cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between students from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic

backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007. The duty to prevent extremism became law in 2015 following the Counterterrorism & Security Act 2015.

### **3. Policy Development**

This policy applies to the whole college community and has been shared with staff, governors and students.

#### Roles & Responsibilities

The role of Governors:

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this document and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the College is fully inclusive to students, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our College on grounds of the protected characteristics.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the College environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make College communications as inclusive as possible for families, carers and students.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the College, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our College on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief or the fact that they are pregnant or are undergoing gender reassignment.

The role of the Headteacher:

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the College's equality objectives and he is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the equality objectives, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to the equality information and objectives, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of College life.
- The Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

The role of all staff (teaching and non-teaching):

- All staff will ensure that all students are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the College's equality information and objectives.
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

#### **4. What is a discriminatory incident?**

Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”.

Victimisation occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done (“a prohibited act”) in connection with the Act. For example, making an allegation of discrimination. Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender.
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing discriminatory material into the College.
- Verbal abuse and threats.
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim’s race, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion.
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups.
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g., food, music, religion, dress etc.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

#### **5. Responding to and reporting incidents**

It should be clear to students and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole College. Our procedure for responding and reporting is outlined below:

##### Incident

- Member of staff to investigate further (if incident reported) or challenge behaviour immediately
- Response to victim and family
- Response to perpetrator and family
- Incident form to be completed and filed
- Incidents to be reported to governing body on a termly basis
- Action taken to address issue with year group/College if necessary, e.g., through form time, Personal Development, assembly

As a member of staff, if you believe that you have been discriminated against, you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance procedure. If you are uncertain or need advice on how you should proceed, you should speak to a member of the senior leadership team.

#### **6. Recognising and dealing with discriminatory incidents**

When incidents of a discriminatory nature occur, it is our collective responsibility to challenge and intervene positively.

Manifestations of discrimination may be:

- A student towards another student
- A student towards a member of staff
- A member of staff towards a student
- A member of staff towards another member of staff

- A family or member of the public towards a student
- A family or member of the public towards a member of staff

Actions which are clearly unacceptable and/or hurtful include:

- Derogatory and discriminatory name-calling, insults, comments and jokes.
- Discriminatory graffiti or any other written insult including text messages, websites and social networking sites.
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing discriminatory badges or insignia.
- Bringing materials such as leaflets, comics or magazines into College which are judged to be discriminatory or designed to diminish, including pornography.
- Attempts to recruit others to organisations and groups practising discrimination.
- Making threats against a person or group.
- Offensive and/or hurtful actions against a person or group.
- Physical assault against a person or group.
- Unwelcome suggestions or physical contact including varying degrees of sexual assault.
- Any other instances of discriminatory behaviour.
- Any or all of these actions will be seen as particularly serious when the perpetrator is in a position of power or authority over the victim.

#### Framework for staff dealing with discrimination

It is important to explain to the perpetrators why their actions are regarded as derogatory and discriminatory. The nature of the incident should be considered when deciding on a course of action. For example, it may require action relating to one individual, a larger group or even an entire year group. Staff will need to use their judgement as to the context of addressing the issue. If appropriate and possible, discussion with other colleagues is often helpful.

#### Dealing with incidents

Coherence and consistency of practice are essential for effective action. The following are practical suggestions for dealing with discriminatory incidents:

- Challenge the perpetrator(s) in a non-confrontational manner.
- Remove the perpetrator(s) from the lesson/situation.
- Establish the nature of the incident by obtaining a written statement from the perpetrator(s) and from those suffering the incident (the victim). Other witnesses may also be requested to provide written statements.
- Explain in detail to the perpetrator(s) the wrong done.
- Take appropriate action as determined by the nature of the incident, e.g., whether punishment is appropriate and whether the member of staff feels it necessary to involve the PDL or other senior colleagues.

#### Follow-up and resolution of incident

All discriminatory incidents will be recorded on CPOMS and where staff have a safeguarding concern, should be reported directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff must complete a record of the incident on CPOMS. Families will be informed and, if appropriate, a meeting will be organised. In all serious incidents, the Headteacher and Governors should also be informed.

## **7. Admissions & Exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the College's Behaviour for Learning Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

## **8. Recruitment**

We recognise that by valuing and promoting equality and diversity for all employees and job applicants and avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and delivery of services, we will be able to deliver first class education.

To do this we will:

- Appoint on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.
- Review our recruitment procedures and documents regularly to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant skills and abilities and documents avoid stereotyping or use of words that may discourage groups with protected characteristics from applying.
- Shortlisting will be completed by more than one person wherever possible.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market.
- Ensure that applicants are not asked about a health or disability before a job offer is made others than where necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to reasonable adjustments), to establish reasonable adjustments for fair interview and/or to carry out equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).
- Ensure applicants are not asked questions about protected characteristics.
- Not make assumptions about immigration status based on appearance or apparent nationality. All employees regardless of nationality will be required to produce specified documents before employment to satisfy current legislation.
- Monitor diversity data as part of recruitment to help us avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.
- Consider equality aspects such as 'equality cohorts' when appointing staff to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

## **9. Developing Best Practice**

### Learning and Teaching

We aim to provide all our students with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- Provide equality of access for all students and prepare them for life in a diverse society.
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping.
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people.
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture and religions and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions.
- Develop student's advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality.



- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity.
- All departments, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter.
- Seek to involve all families in supporting their child's education.
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all student groups.
- Take account of the performance of all students when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of students.
- Identify resources and training that support staff development.

### Learning Environment

Pendle Vale College has a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All students are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Families are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light. Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all students. Adults in the College will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity

Our College will place a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We will meet all students' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work. We will aim to provide an environment in which all students have equal access to all facilities and resources.

All students are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning. A range of teaching methods are used throughout the College to ensure that effective learning takes place for all students. We give consideration to the physical learning environment –both internal and external, including displays and signage.

### Curriculum

We aim to ensure that:

- Planning reflects our commitment to equality in all subject areas and cross curricular themes promoting positive attitudes to equality and diversity.
- Students will have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality.
- Steps are taken to ensure that all students have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account their cultural, backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles.
- All students have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression.

### Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials is a high priority for us. These resources will:

- Reflect the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society.
- Reflect a variety of viewpoints.
- Show positive images of males and females in society.
- Include non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context
- Be accessible to all members of the College community.

## Language

Pendle Vale recognises the importance of all members of the College community using appropriate language which:

- Does not transmit or confirm stereotypes.
- Does not offend.
- Creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document.
- Creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem.
- Uses accurate language in referring to particular groups or individuals and challenges in instances where this is not the case.

## Extended Learning Opportunities

It is the policy of our College to provide, wherever possible, equal access to all activities from an early age. We are committed to making a contribution to extended learning opportunities. We try to ensure that all non-staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

## Provision for Bi-lingual

Pendle Vale is committed, within the constraints of our College finances, to making appropriate provision for all EAL/bi-lingual children/groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Students for whom English is an additional language.
- Students who are new to the United Kingdom.
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children.
- Advanced bi-lingual learners.
- Use first language effectively for learning Personal Development and Pastoral Guidance.

Our staff will take account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination and the experience and needs of particular groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, refugee and asylum seeker students. All of our students are encouraged to consider the full range of career opportunities available to them with no discriminatory boundaries placed on them due to their disability, gender, race or sexual orientation [whilst acknowledging that a disability may impose some practical boundaries to some career aspirations].

All students/staff/families/carers are given support, as appropriate, when they experience discrimination, we recognise that perpetrators may also be victims and require support. We use positive role models throughout the College to ensure that different groups of students can see themselves reflected in the College community. We place emphasis on the value that diversity brings to the College community rather than the challenges.

## Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

This must include students' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible.

We encourage the career development and aspirations of all College staff.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of students.

Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.

## **10. Equal Opportunities for staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at Pendle Vale College and training and development, opportunity for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits and termination of employment. The policy covers staff working at all levels and includes Governors, Consultants, Contractors, Trainees and Agency Workers.

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment. All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law.

### **Employer Duties**

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination. Actions to ensure this commitment is met include:

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff.
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Monitoring of performance for pay and promotion decisions.
- Review of conditions of service, benefits and facilities to ensure they are available to all employees and there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.
- Monitoring of physical features of premises to consider whether they place disabled employees or applicants at a disadvantage.
- Redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not discriminatory.
- Disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination whether they result in warning, dismissal or other action.
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

What are we doing to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

- We take into account equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled students.
- All appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against in terms of employments or promotion.
- We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment through our values that champions equality of opportunity.
- Our admission arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against students by treating them less favourable on the grounds of sex, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender and other protected characteristics.

What are we doing to advance equality of opportunity between different groups?

- We collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve our attainment targets for students.
- We have procedures to identify children with SEND.
- We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of students and use this data to support College improvement, taking action to close attainment gaps.

What are we doing to foster good relations?

- We prepare our students for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our students.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through Personal Development, Religious Studies and across the curriculum including our form time programme.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the College, the local community and British society.
- We promote a whole College ethos and values that challenge prejudice language, attitudes and behaviour Equalities objectives.
- Continue to diminish the difference in attainment between boys and girls.
- Continue to close the gap between SEN Support (K) and non-SEN students and the expected progress they make based on their attainment on entry.
- Continue to close the in-College variation gap for the % of disadvantaged students who make expected progress at the end of each key stage.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

All members of staff and the Governing Body have the responsibility of implementing this policy. This policy will be reviewed every four years and equalities objectives information will be published annually

## **12. Review of Progress and Impact**

In line with all policy documentation, we review statutory policies annually and others at least every three years or when there are changes to legislation or practice. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our equality objectives annually and review the entire information and objectives on a three-year cycle.

We make regular assessments of students' learning and use this information to track student progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of students are making the best possible progress and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

## Appendix 1 - Equality Objectives

OBJECTIVE	ACTION
<p>1. To strengthen the use of internal data to enhance our equality monitoring and identify any actions required to ensure fair employment policies and practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Making use of available data from recruitment monitoring forms to inform future recruitment strategies</li> <li>▪ Using information available to us on our Management Information System about our staff and student profile in terms of the protected characteristics</li> <li>▪ Introducing an internal equality monitoring questionnaire for staff</li> <li>▪ Ensuring that key statutory policies undergo an equality impact assessment as part of their regular review</li> </ul>
<p>2. To close the gender achievement gap across all year groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Making this a core objective in our College Development Plans for all staff</li> <li>▪ Ensuring this is a key strategic goal sitting under the remit of a senior leader</li> <li>▪ Using regular tracking and monitoring to accurately identify students at risk of underachieving and implementing strategies to help close the gap accordingly</li> </ul>
<p>3. To ensure all students with a special educational need or disability, particularly those with complex emotional and behavioural needs, have access to suitable alternative provision where appropriate, in order to maximise their achievement and learning experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regularly investigating and evaluating all alternative provision routes available locally</li> <li>▪ Planning to enhance our provision and support internally, to ensure all students have equal access to an appropriate curriculum suitable to their needs</li> <li>▪ Introducing support and intervention packages for targeted students from Year 7 onwards</li> <li>▪ Enhancing the transition process with primary Colleges in terms of early information gathering about students identified as having additional needs</li> </ul>
<p>4. To promote students' Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) development, including their knowledge, understanding and tolerance of those who are different from them, to help foster good relations and eliminate discrimination and bullying in relation to the protected characteristics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having clear and consistent behaviour systems across all year groups to deal with instances of bullying or harassment</li> <li>▪ Enhancing SMSC and equality provision and understanding through our curriculum delivery</li> <li>▪ Ensuring that the values and principles underpin these aims</li> </ul>