



# **SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY**

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## **A: POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

Woodhouse College is committed to combating discrimination and disadvantage, to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, to offering opportunities and developing community ethos and values amongst all its students and staff.

The College's mission statement asserts that *“Woodhouse College aims to provide a high quality full-time education for students aged 16-19 who seek a structured and supportive comprehensive mixed Sixth Form College environment from which they can progress to Higher Education or, where appropriate, to other Further Education or to employment with associated training. The College puts emphasis on the value-added achievement of its students across their range of abilities and aspirations, celebrating the success of every individual.”*

The current strategic Plan “Tweak to Transform” includes the following strategic theme and goals:

*Build an Inclusive Community with Learners at the Centre*

- 1. Create a learning community where the culture of the College fosters mutual respect and inclusiveness, high standards of personal behaviour and performance and shared responsibility for the success and safety of every individual.*
- 2. Provide an engaging environment that promotes a well-rounded student experience, enables learning, fosters collaboration and encourages wide ranging student participation.*

This Single Equality Strategy subsumes all previous College equality documents and action plans. It contains the College's principles, policies and priorities.

### **2. College Values**

The College believes that all forms of inequality, prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable. The College aims to ensure that the ethos of equality is integrated within all College activities. The College is committed to promote the practice of fairness and to eliminate inequality on the grounds of the six equality strands:

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Age              | 4. Religion or belief  |
| 2. Disability       | 5. Gender, including gender reassignment and gender identity |
| 3. Race & ethnicity | 6. Sexual orientation  |

See Appendix 1 for further details on these.

The College recognises that it has an obligation to promote a healthy, inclusive environment in which to work and study. Respect for and tolerance of the differences of others is a necessary part of that environment. Staff and students will have a range of views, and it is important not to promote a hierarchy of equality strands. The College's policies seek to

prevent discriminatory views being manifested in a way that offends, intimidates or humiliates, or is hostile or degrading to others.

### **3. Legal Framework**

The College is aware of and responsive to relevant legislation including, but not limited to:

- Civil Partnerships Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003
- Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)
- Equality Act 2006
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003
- Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Note: The new Equality Bill is in Parliament in 2009 and is expected to receive Royal Assent in 2010.

### **4. Scope**

The purpose of this strategy is to establish clear guidance regarding equality and to establish key principles, structures, priorities and monitoring arrangements for the College. This policy applies to and affects the Board of Governors, Senior Leadership Team and all existing and future staff and students of the College.

### **5. Structures**

- 5.1 The Board of Governors is responsible for ensuring that the College meets its legal duties and that the College adheres to its Equality Strategy.
- 5.2 The Principal has overall responsibility for equality issues on behalf of the College. The Vice Principal has designated senior leadership responsibility.
- 5.3 The College will appoint an Equality & Diversity Coordinator.
- 5.4 There will be a College Equality & Diversity Committee chaired by the Equality & Diversity Coordinator. The committee will have membership drawn from teaching staff, support staff and students. The remit of the Equality & Diversity Committee will

be to promote a College environment in which equality flourishes; to monitor evidence of the effectiveness of College policies and practices; to undertake equality audits and impact assessments; and to propose priorities and targets, making recommendations to the Principal and Senior Leadership Team.

5.5 It is the responsibility of all staff and students to uphold the College policy on equality.

## **6. Monitoring**

6.1 The College undertakes to conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring of relevant aspects of staffing and the student body.

6.2 The College is committed to the collection of statistics, analysis of data and publication of data, as well as monitoring on an ongoing basis and as educational and employment policy and practice changes.

6.3 The College monitors both its workforce and its student population against the following categories:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Age

At the moment the College does not monitor on the basis of religion and sexual orientation but all monitoring arrangements are kept under review.

## **7. Reporting**

The College will publish an annual Equality & Diversity Report. This will contain:

- Monitoring data and analyses
- Impact assessments of policies
- A summary of the work of the Equality & Diversity Committee
- Judgements of key areas for improvement and development
- A prioritised action scheme for the forthcoming year

The report will be drafted in the summer and revised in the Autumn, in the light of student achievement data, with a view to publication in December.

## **8. Positive Action**

8.1 The College undertakes to follow positive action measures allowed by law to rectify disadvantages revealed by monitoring. The College, where appropriate, seeks to:

- provide facilities or services (in the form of training, education or welfare) to meet the special needs of people from particular under-represented groups;
- encourage applications from students and employees that are under-represented in the College community.

8.2 Positive action strategies are intended to be temporary measures only and will be kept under regular review. The College will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy, it falls within the law.

## **9. Complaints**

If a student or employee believes they have not been treated fairly, owing to prejudice or discrimination, they should raise the matter under appropriate complaints or grievance procedures.

## **10. Engaging With Stakeholders**

The revision of this policy and the determination of priorities for action and development will be consulted with students, staff, parents, governors and the external community. These consultations will take the form of electronic surveys, small focus groups and publicity on the College website and virtual learning environment. Views will be elicited from relevant special interest groups, such as disabled staff or lesbian and gay students, for example.

## **11. Impact Assessments**

All College policies will be reviewed according to a rolling calendar. As each policy is reviewed, it will undergo an impact assessment. This will be the responsibility of the 'owner' of the policy on the Senior Leadership Team, but will use the impact assessment pro-forma in Appendix 1.

## **12. Review**

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice, using the local consultation/negotiating arrangements within the College.

Policy agreed: May 2002

Last Review: January 2010

Next Review: December 2010

## **B: GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are not meant to be comprehensive. They are meant to act as a prompt for action by all staff and students.

### **B1 EQUALITY STRANDS**

#### **1. Age**

The College is a 16-19 provider and does not offer places to students outside that age range. As an employer, the College will:

- not make judgements about an individual's potential, behaviour or preferences based on age .
- Promote continuing professional development programmes for all those in paid employment .
- Welcome job applications from all age groups and select on the basis of specified skills, abilities and experience, as necessary.

#### **1. Disability**

The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act Part 4 and is committed to making any reasonable adjustments that will promote equal access and opportunity for students, employees and members of the public with disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

The College will ensure that all disabled learners and learners with learning difficulties have access to:

- Appropriate opportunities to disclose disability and/or learning difficulty through their time as a learner at the College.
- Assessment of need to ensure that any reasonable adjustment to College provision is made and is appropriate to the individual.
- Learning support to enable access to College provision including specialist equipment and technology, subject to the availability of resources.
- Information in relevant formats to ensure equal access.
- Information on support available.

The College will ensure that all potential and current employees with disabilities and/or learning difficulties have access to:

- Appropriate opportunities to disclose disability and/or learning difficulty throughout their time as an employee at the College.
- Employment opportunities including promotion.
- Specialist equipment and technology and/or other reasonable adjustments.
- Information in relevant formats to ensure equal access.
- Information on support available.

The College will maintain strong links with external agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective support for staff and students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. It will undertake health and safety risk assessments where appropriate and encourage participation by disabled students and staff in public life.

## **2. Gender**

The College will:

- Oppose sexism and be committed to taking positive action to identify and remove sexism from College life.
- Positively encourage students into non-traditional areas of study and work to minimise gender stereotyping.
- Not tolerate discrimination to transgender staff or students or to those who have undertaken gender re-assignment or on the grounds of gender identity..
- Ensure that policies, procedures and opportunities for staff recruitment and professional development will be family-friendly to encourage full participation.

## **3. Race and Ethnicity**

The College is committed to:

- Promoting good relations between people of different races or ethnic groups .
- Actively tackling racial discrimination and promoting racial equality.
- Working with other institutions, local communities and others to tackle racial discrimination and to encourage and promote good practice in achieving race equality.

## **4. Religious Belief**

The College will:

- Define religion or belief as being any named religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief.
- Not apply a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people of a particular religion or belief unless it can be objectively justified.

## **5. Sexual Orientation**

The College will:

- Take positive action to identify and remove homophobia from College life.
- Encourage positive acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual people amongst the College community.
- Have employment policies and procedures that are family-friendly and will apply equally to households based on same-sex partnerships and to non-traditional parenting and care arrangements where appropriate legislation is in place.

## **B2 STUDENT ISSUES**

### **1 STUDENT RECRUITMENT & INDUCTION**

- 1.1 All persons responsible for recruitment and induction of students will ensure:
- The College's admission systems are free from prejudice and discrimination.
  - Pre-course guidance is available to all students to ensure students enrol on appropriate courses.
  - Initial assessment procedures fully take into account the various experience, qualifications and backgrounds of students.
  - Advice is provided to students potentially eligible for financial help from the College.
  - Ethnicity, gender and disability data are used to review applications and admissions and to identify trends that may become established.
  - Students undergo an induction process in which they are made aware of the full range of support available, the location of the welfare services, their rights and responsibilities under the College codes of conduct, and the College's Equality Policy.
  - Staff involved in interviewing prospective students are adequately trained for the role with full supporting documentation.

### **2 CURRICULUM**

- 2.1 The College aims to make the curriculum consistent with the mission and ethos of the College.
- 2.2 The College strives to support the diverse needs of students via the content of courses and the styles of teaching and learning. Departments will:
- Audit their materials to both ensure balance and appropriateness of content and to promote and celebrate diversity and difference.
  - Ensure that staff are aware of the need to promote inclusive learning and to use differentiation to ensure all students are given the opportunity to learn.
  - Challenge the use of discriminatory language, stereotyping or behaviour by staff and by students.
  - Ensure staff fully utilise learning support systems for their students where appropriate.
  - Analyse achievement data, both raw and value added, to identify patterns of under achievement amongst different groups of students
  - Address equality and diversity themes in self assessment and development planning
  - Ensure through surveys, focus groups and other consultative mechanisms that the students have a means of expressing their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and priorities for improvement.

### **3 STUDENT GUIDANCE AND PROGRESSION**

3.1 The College aims to enable all students to achieve their potential by offering appropriate guidance and support. The College will:

- Ensure all students have an entitlement to a learning experience which includes, tutorial support, educational advice, careers guidance, special needs support, enrichment activities and work experience.
- Ensure support is available where special circumstances arise that impair a student's overall progress at the College.
- Ensure all students have access to clear progression routes within the College and to higher education, further training or employment.

## **B3 STAFFING**

### **1 KEY PRINCIPLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1.1 The College policy towards human resources will aim to ensure equality of opportunity for the recruitment, selection, appointment, and promotion of teaching and support staff, recognising that this may need proactive action in the case of minority and disadvantaged groups.
- 1.2 The College will treat all employees with respect and dignity and seek to provide a working environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. The College will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against its employees, either from other employees, students, or members of the public.
- 1.3 The College will ensure that no employee, job applicant or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged, or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the job. Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for disabled staff or potential staff.
- 1.4 In order to ensure that all staff and potential staff are treated with equality and fairness at all stages of employment, and that their treatment is based solely on objective and job related criteria, the College will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all its policies and procedures.
- 1.5 The Vice Principal will be responsible for ensuring that fair and adequate arrangements exist for the effective handling and recording of all aspects of the employment relationships, including recruitment and selection.
- 1.6 All managers have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is carried through effectively, by giving active support to the policy and ensuring that the employees they manage understand and implement the policy.
- 1.7 Managers have a responsibility to encourage employees to inform them of any instances of discrimination, and to ensure that all allegations are investigated.
- 1.8 Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who does not comply with these requirements.
- 1.9 In ensuring that this policy is fully effective, and that all College staff are committed to it, the College undertakes to work locally in partnership with the recognised trade unions, and with staff in general, in its development and implementation.

### **2 STAFF RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION**

- 2.1 Recruitment to all posts within the College will be conducted in a manner which accords with equitable employment practices and procedures.
- 2.2 Personal details including those related to age, gender, race, disability will be withheld from short-listing panels.

- 2.3 All posts will be advertised to all staff.
- 2.4 The College will promote itself as an employer that offers equality of opportunity.
- 2.5 Induction programmes will be designed to ensure that all new staff and governors are made aware of their responsibilities under the College's Equality Policy.

### **3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 Staff development and appraisal will support the career progression of under-represented groups at all levels of the College.
- 3.2 Equality & diversity training and awareness-raising will be incorporated into College training processes, including induction of new employees.
- 3.3 The College will provide regular training opportunities for staff to help them recognise the different needs of students in order to promote the highest level of achievement.
- 3.4 Targeting and recruitment to staff development activities will take into account equal opportunities issues.

### **4 GENERAL ISSUES**

#### **4.1 Marketing**

The College will:

- Ensure that all marketing materials reflect the College's Equality Policy.
- Devise strategies, within the context of the mission and strategic aims of the College, for marketing and targeting under-represented groups.
- Ensure that all departments will consider equal opportunities issues in marketing, access and recruitment.

#### **4.2 Environment & Resources**

The College will:

- Apply the Equality Policy in the use of all College facilities and resources.
- Maintain good access around the College for all staff, students and visitors with a physical disability.
- Ensure the appropriateness of visual displays and encourage those that challenge stereotypes and promote positive non-stereotypical role models.

#### 4.3 **Discrimination and Harassment**

The College will:

- Challenge discrimination or harassment in any form.
- Consider allegations of harassment under any of the equality strands listed above (Section A2) as legitimate grounds for complaint under its complaints and grievance procedures.

#### 4.4 **Procurement & Contractors**

We will take steps to ensure that our contractors adhere to our commitment to equality in their employment and service delivery policy and practices. We will do this by:

- Making contractors and service personnel aware of the College's Equality Policy
- Ensuring compliance with the College's Equality Policy is part of the contractual agreement with contractors
- Any breaches of the policy by contractors and service providers may result in cancellation of the contract.

**C: APPENDIX: IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE**

**The impact assessment process**

The College has a two stage approach to Equality Impact Assessment:

**Stage 1 - Initial Screening:**

This identifies potential impacts based on existing information or evidence.

**Stage 2 - Full Equality Impact Assessment:**

This involves full consideration of information and evidence, including involvement of stakeholders, where appropriate. The outcome of the process is to identify potential impacts and develop an action plan to address negative impacts and to further enhance the opportunity for positive impact.

The template and guidance refers to a policy, but applies more generally to College policies, strategies, procedures or any project that aims to change practice with an impact on students and/or staff.

**Stage 1: Initial Screening**

Name of policy	Named individual responsible for policy	Name of person conducting initial impact assessment

**What are the aims of the proposed policy?**

**1. What data is available in relation to the impact of the policy?**

**2. Analysis of data – what does the data show?**

**3. Is it likely that there will be a negative impact on one or more of the groups named above?**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Impact (explain)</b>
Race	
Gender (inc transgender)	
Disability	
Religion/belief	
Sexual orientation	
Age	

**4. If there is likely to be a negative impact, what plans could be built in to address this?**

<b>Strand</b>	
Race	
Gender (inc transgender)	
Disability	
Religion/belief	
Sexual orientation	
Age	

**6. At this stage, how will or could the policy promote positive impacts for any of the groups named above?**

**7. Is a full impact assessment required? YES / NO (use box to explain rationale behind decision)**

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<b>Signature of named individual responsible for policy</b>	<b>Signature of individual responsible for carrying out initial impact assessment (if different from previous)</b>	<b>Date of completion of initial impact assessment</b>

**Date of next review:**

**Stage 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment**

**Q1. Summarise primary and/or secondary research evidence to show the current situation for those groups where an impact has been initially assessed:**

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**Q2. Where the initial impact assessment indicated that there is potential for this policy to have a negative impact on one or more group, provide further information:**

Race	
Gender (inc transgender)	
Disability	
Religion/belief	
Sexual orientation	
Age	

**Q3. Outline consultations with relevant stakeholders. Please note any important issues.**

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**Q4. Given your answers to the previous questions, how will your delivery plans be revised to reduce/eliminate negative impact and to enhance positive impacts? What targets will you set?**

**Q5. How will the real impact of this on groups be monitored to ensure all targets set are met?**