

Horizon Community College Equality Policy



(Incorporating Accessibility
Policy and Plan)



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EQUALITY POLICY

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Section 1 Introduction

Horizon Community College welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Prevent Duty guidance 2015 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations and positive attitudes in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual orientation/identity (including marriage and civil partnerships).

Our Equality Policy provides a framework for us to pursue these duties and ensure that no person, through their contact with the college, receives less favourable treatment. The principles apply to all members of the extended college community – students, staff, governors, parents, carers and members of the local community.

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by the principles listed in section 2.

Section 2 Principles

Principle 1: All 'learners' are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as being of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their age
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their marital status
- whatever their sexual identity

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Valuing all 'learners' equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities will not discriminate but will nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and of the kinds of barriers and disadvantage people may face, in particular, though not exclusively, in relation to their:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made

- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences are recognised
- age
- gender and gender identity, so that the different needs and experiences of males, females and transgender people are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity
- marital status

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

We intend that our policies, procedures and practice will promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between males and females and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment

Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures support all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development:

- whatever their age
- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity

Principle 5: We consult and involve widely

We engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We aim to consult and involve:

- disabled, as well as non-disabled, people
- people from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of all ages
- males, females and transgender people
- people of all sexualities

Principle 6: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and practices should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and encouraging greater participation in public life by:

- disabled, as well as non-disabled, people
- people from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- people of all ages
- males, females and transgender people
- people of all sexualities.

Principle 7: We base our policies and practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information which shows our compliance with the public-sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This information is used by the college when determining 'next steps' and developing the following year's development plan. Our equality objectives are integrated into this plan and so progress towards achieving them reported termly to governors.

Section 3 Curriculum

The college aims to provide all students with the opportunity to succeed to potential and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

We endeavour to:

- ensure equality of curricular access and prepare students for life in a diverse society
- use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- promote attitudes, values and skills that challenge discriminatory behaviour
- provide opportunities for students to appreciate their own culture, religion and beliefs and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- incorporate 'British Values' within our teaching, including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance
- develop students' analytical skills so that they can detect bias and challenge discrimination
- provide a curriculum that covers issues of equality, diversity, religion, human rights and inclusion
- prepare students for living in a multicultural society and promote good relations between different racial groups
- celebrate diversity
- involve all parents/carers in supporting their child's education
- provide educational visits and extra-curricular activities that involve all student groupings
- take account of the different learning needs of individuals and /or different groups of students, and use an appropriate range of teaching strategies to enable all to progress in line with their potential
- use seating plans to foster effective learning
- take account of the current 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.

As a teaching community, we aim to ensure that:

- there is a consistently high expectation of all students regardless of age, gender, race, disability, ability, social and /or sexual orientation
- our planning reflects a commitment to equality in all subject areas
- students have opportunities to explore concepts and issues relating to identity and equality
- all students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, taking into account their cultural and/or lifestyle backgrounds, their linguistic needs and their learning needs
- all students have access to qualifications which recognise attainment and achievement and promote progression

Section 4 Roles and Responsibilities

The college Governors are responsible for:

- ensuring the college complies with current equality legislation
- ensuring the Equality Policy is properly implemented and monitored
- ensuring related procedures are followed
- assigning a named governor

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it
- ensuring staff understand their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out
- ensuring its procedures are followed
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination
- producing a report on progress for governors annually

All college staff are responsible for:

- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the classroom

- modelling good practice, dealing with discriminatory incidents and being able to:
 - recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
 - promote equality and avoid discrimination against anyone
 - keep up to date with the law on discrimination and undertake training as appropriate

Students are responsible for:

- supporting the college's equality ethos
- sharing concerns with, and reporting issues to, a member of staff

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- supporting the college's equality ethos
- sharing concerns with, and reporting issues to, a senior member of staff

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- following our expectations regarding equality

Section 5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The college will review this policy annually. We will evaluate its effectiveness in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community. Any pattern of inequality found as a result of an impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.

This policy links to other policies and in general the principles of equality will apply to all other college policies.

Section 6 Concerns or Complaints

In the first instance a senior member of staff should be contacted. If issues or concerns remain unresolved these should be raised in accordance with the college's Complaints Policy.

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND PLAN

Section 7 Introduction

On 1 October 2010, The Equality Act replaced all existing equality legislation, such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. It extends protection from discrimination (including the protected characteristics below) and has placed new duties on schools. For further information see the college's Equality Policy (above).

The Act makes it unlawful for Horizon Community College and/or the college's Governing Body to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a student or potential student in relation to:

- the way we provide education
- the way we provide access to any benefit, facility or service
- the way we exclude or subject students to any other detriment

The protected characteristics are:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

There is also a requirement to have an accessibility plan outlining how we continue to improve access for students with additional needs (including disabled students) to the physical environment, the curriculum and 'written' information.

The disability provisions in the Equality Act are similar to those in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

However, there are some minor differences:

- the definition of disability is less restrictive
- direct discrimination can no longer be defended as justified
- failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be defended as justified

- from September 2012, we have also had a duty to make available auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments, where these are not being supplied through an Education Health Care Plan or from other sources

This plan sets out how Horizon Community College and the Governing Body of the college ensure equal access to education for students with additional needs (including disabled students) in the three areas required by legislation:

1. the extent to which students with additional needs (including disabled students) can participate in the school (college) curriculum
2. the extent to which the environment enables students with additional needs (including disabled students) to take advantage of education and associated services
3. the extent to which information is provided for students with additional needs (including disabled students)

The college's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed on a regular basis. The action plan below outlines how we aim to address the requirements identified above.

Section 8 Principles

Horizon Community College, part of Hoyland Common Academy Trust and a secondary school with a Sensory Resourced Provision supporting students with visual and/or hearing impairments, is dedicated to:

- supporting all students to achieve their full potential and prepare them to live as well-adjusted, independent and valued members of society
- ensuring students with additional needs (including disabled students) are educated in an inclusive environment alongside their peers
- providing a broad and balanced curriculum, which is relevant, differentiated and demonstrates both progression and coherence
- ensuring all teaching staff share responsibility for the progress of all students in their care, including those with a disability.

The college promotes equality for the whole of its community, believing everyone has equal value. It is inclusive of those with physical or sensory impairments, communication, learning, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. It aims to meet the needs of each person's unique, intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional or social needs.

We aim to build an environment in which each individual is able to develop and thrive regardless of gender, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, socioeconomic background,

disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation or other relevant distinction. Positive relationships are fostered in a climate of high expectations and respect for individual achievement.

Section 9 Accessibility Plan

THE EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS (INCLUDING DISABLED STUDENTS) CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL (COLLEGE) CURRICULUM:

Students with SEND (special educational needs or disability) access the curriculum supported by the college's specialist SEND provision. Every effort is made to educate students with SEND alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom setting. Where this is not possible, the SENDCO consults with the student and parents about proposed adjustments to these arrangements.

The college curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to students of all levels and abilities and supports the learning and progress of all students as individuals. This includes learning outside the classroom.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy outlines the provision the college already has in place to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes:

- a) identification of SEND at a very early stage through close liaison with primary feeder schools, and support through inclusion on the SEND register, individual support plans and thumbnails
- b) keeping staff fully informed of the special educational needs/disability of any student in their charge, including (as relevant) the sharing of data, medical reports and student/parent feedback
- c) listening to student and parent/carer views and considering them in all aspects of college life
- d) regular training opportunities for staff on SEND and appropriate teaching and learning strategies
- e) increasingly specialised in-class support or guidance from trained LSAs (Learning Support Assistants)
- f) specific specialist intervention to build core skills in small groups and/or through 1-1 support
- g) specialist advice from other professionals (e.g. speech and language therapist, CAMHS, educational psychiatrist, occupational therapist, hearing impaired service, physiotherapist) on how to adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies for individuals

- h) special access arrangements for internal and external exams
- i) specific monitoring to ensure all students with SEND make progress in line with their ability
- j) a structured and dedicated Y6/7 transition programme for vulnerable students
- k) specialist advice and guidance to support the KS4 options process and post-16 transition
- l) multi-agency support, coordinated by the college, Inclusion and/or SEND Team

The following opportunities to improve this aspect further will be explored:

- a) how to further develop our inclusive community through awareness raising programmes for all students and staff about the range of disabilities in the college
- b) how to further develop classroom practice through enhanced training opportunities for staff about SEND and appropriate teaching and learning strategies
- c) how to further develop partnerships through ready access for parents to staff, with planned structured conversations and ongoing home-college liaison.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ENVIRONMENT ENABLES STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS (INCLUDING DISABLED STUDENTS) TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EDUCATION AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES:

The college environment already incorporates many features to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities. These include:

- a) flat access to the college, with extra wide doors at all entry/exit points
- b) internal lifts and bridges, giving access to all floors in all areas of the college
- c) customised furniture available for all classrooms, to ensure appropriate access or the facility to stand as you work (dependent on the needs of a Care Plan or EHCP)
- d) accessible toilets on all floors and in all areas of the college
- e) accessible showers in the PE block
- f) a medical room and a personal care room (with electronic hoist) located on the ground floor
- g) a portable hoist, for use across the college
- h) all emergency exits fitted with push bars
- i) an evac chair in all rear stairwells, with a call-point through to Reception on every floor – to support the safe evacuation of students who cannot use stairs in the event of a fire

The following opportunities to improve further will be explored:

- a) an accessibility audit undertaken by the Health and Safety Committee as part of their regular Health and Safety review of the college

THE EXTENT TO WHICH INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS (INCLUDING DISABLED STUDENTS):

Teachers and LSAs consider the needs of each SEND student and work to provide accessible learning resources for everyone. The use of digital technologies has greatly diversified the ways in which information is presented to all students; visual and audio information is now as common as written information.

In addition, the college makes the following available as appropriate:

- a) differentiated resources, paying particular attention to reading age, clarity of English, images and layout. Braille resources are also created where appropriate
- b) laptops and other digital technologies, for use in lessons and examinations (in line with exam board and national guidance)
- c) coloured overlays for text or resources printed on appropriately coloured paper
- d) tactile resources
- e) readers and/or scribes in exams, as appropriate
- f) specific information noted in the student planner.

The following opportunities to improve further will be explored:

- a) how to further develop effectively differentiated resources and ensure they support individual needs.

Section 10 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The college will review this policy annually. We will evaluate its effectiveness in eliminating discrimination and promoting equality.

Section 11 Concerns or Complaints

In the first instance a senior member of staff should be contacted. If issues or concerns remain unresolved these should be raised in accordance with the college's Complaints Policy.