



# Equal Opportunities Policy

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Clifton College supports the principle of equal opportunities and aims to create an environment that respects equality and which enables all to contribute fully, achieve their full potential, and derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the College. In the provision of equal opportunities, the College recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the law and opposes discrimination on the basis of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called the *protected characteristics*. The College also opposes all discrimination on the basis that a person has a special educational need (SEN) or learning difficulty, or has English as an additional language (EAL).

## 2. SCOPE

This cross-College policy applies to all members of the College community. This includes all members of school staff (*not just employees*), pupils, contractors, visitors, volunteers, governors and Council members. All are required to abide by its provisions.

It provides guidance and information for parents, carers, guardians, school visitors and other members of the wider school community and sets out the College's expectations and required standards of behaviour with regard to equality issues.



### 3. KEY PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling its obligation under the Equality Act the College will be guided by key principles in the application and implementation of all its policies, procedures and practices.

**1. All members of the College community are of equal value and should be treated with dignity and respect.**

Every member of the community is of equal value whatever their ethnicity, culture, origin, status, gender identity, religious or non-religious affiliation and sexual orientation. All individuals are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and should treat others in the same way.

**2. The College recognises, respects and values differences and diversity.**

The College will take account of differences and the kind of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to protected characteristics. The diversity of people's background and circumstances should be appreciated and valued. Diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all members of our community and by those who visit the College.

**3. The College will actively promote British values**

The College will ensure that equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity is promoted and that pupils respect others and are well prepared to contribute to wider society and life in modern Britain.

**4. The College fosters positive attitudes and relationships.**

The College intends that its policies, procedures and activities should actively promote positive attitudes, good relations and mutual respect between all groups of individuals who are different from each other. The College will take action to prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language, including language that is sexist, racist or homophobic.

**5. The College observes good equalities practice for all members of staff.**

The College will ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including in recruitment, promotion and continuing professional development.

**6. The College aims to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers which may already exist.**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts in its policies and practices, the College will take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers which may already exist in relation to certain groups with protected characteristics.

**7. The College will consult and involve widely in relation to equality issues.**

When tackling equalities issues, the College will consult and engage with those affected by its decision and where possible, with external organisations and agencies who have special knowledge and can inform the College's approach.



### **8. The College will address bullying and prejudice motivated incidents.**

The College takes bullying and prejudice motivated incidents seriously and any such conduct and behaviour will be carefully monitored and dealt with fairly and firmly. Training will be provided to members of staff to ensure they are aware of how to identify and to deal with such incidents.

### **9. The College fosters a sense of belonging and intends that its policies and procedures should benefit society as a whole.**

The College will strive to ensure that all members of the community feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider school community and that they feel respected and are able to participate fully in school life.

## **4. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE**

### **• The Equality Act 2010**

The Act provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, replacing all the previous UK anti-discrimination laws. The Act defines types of unlawful behaviour in relation to people with protected characteristics. The act applies to all schools including private and state schools.

### **• The Public Sector Equality Duty**

The Act also introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (also referred to as the “general duty”). It applies to public bodies, including all schools and academies. The general duty is supplemented by separate specific equality duties which require schools to publish information to show how they are complying with their general duty and to prepare and publish equality objectives.

The College’s equality objectives are specific and measurable and have been arrived at as a result of consultation with stakeholders. The College will monitor and review its equality objectives in consultation with stakeholders as appropriate.

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools; Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities (Department for Education - as updated June 2018)
- What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools.(Equality and Human Rights Commission - April 2014)
- Technical Guidance for Schools in England (Equality and Human Rights Commission - July 2014)

## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All members of College staff, including Council members, governors, visitors, contractors and volunteers are expected to lead by example in embodying the principles of equal opportunities set out in this policy; treating others with dignity and respect and fostering an inclusive environment for the wider College community.



The Council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the College's Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework prohibiting discrimination. The Council has delegated to the Assistant Head EDIB day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its accessibility, availability, maintenance and review.

**The COO has responsibility for:**

- working with the Assistant Head EDIB, making sure this policy is implemented in the College.
- ensuring reasonable adjustments are made in relation to disability, with regard to pupils, staff, parents, carers, guardians and visitors to the College.
- ensuring that the College follows its Disability Accessibility Plan;
- ensuring that appropriate action is taken in cases of discrimination, harassment and victimisation including cases involving bullying and/or harassment related to any of the protected characteristics;

**The Assistant Head Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) has responsibility for:**

- working with the COO, making sure this policy is implemented in the College.
- assuming day to day responsibility for coordinating the implementation of this policy and for monitoring outcomes;
- ensuring the College's equality objectives are published and actively pursued;
- monitoring how and whether the College's equality objectives are being met;
- producing information for pupils, staff, parents, carers, guardians and visitors about the College's equality objectives and how they are working;
- making sure all members of the community are aware of their responsibilities under The Act and receive appropriate training and any support in carrying these out;
- ensuring members of staff and pupils are aware of the procedure for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents;

**All members of staff are responsible for:**

- being aware of their responsibilities under The Act and this policy and recognising that they have a role and responsibility in their day to day work to promote equality, inclusion and good community relations;
- keeping up to date with equality legislation relevant to their work;
- highlighting any training or development they require to carry out their responsibilities under The Act;
- dealing fairly and professionally with any discriminatory incidents;
- being able to recognise and challenge prejudice, bias, discrimination, stereotyping and any inappropriate language or behaviour;
- promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their lessons and being role models for equal opportunities through their words and actions.



**All pupils must be encouraged to recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so they understand and are able to:**

- promote equality, diversity, inclusion and good community relations;
- challenge inappropriate language and behaviour;
- tackle bias and stereotyping;
- work to promote anti bullying strategies;
- respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment and understand the action needed to report these;
- regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect and tolerance;
- support the College's approach and commitment to equality

**Visitors (including parents, carers, guardians, contractors and volunteers) are expected to:**

- support the College's approach and commitment to equality and to comply with the provisions of this policy;
- refrain from engaging in any behaviour which is unlawful under the Act whilst on school premises.

## **6. RELATED COLLEGE POLICIES**

Anti-bullying Policy  
 Accessibility Policy and Plan  
 Admissions Policy  
 Complaints Procedure  
 Dignity at Work  
 Pupils from different cultures policy  
 Recruitment, selection and disclosure policy  
 Behaviour Policy  
 Rewards and Sanctions Policy  
 Special Educational Needs Policy (US)  
 SEND Policy (Preparatory)

## **7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PROCEDURES**

### **● Definitions**

The Equality Act 2010 defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour; direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

### **● Admissions**

The College will treat every application in a fair and open-minded way, and accepts and considers applications from pupils irrespective of their protected characteristics.

Every application will be considered on its merits, within the College's criteria for selection on grounds of the pupil's ability and aptitude, but this will not be done as a way of



excluding pupils with a disability or special educational needs, nor will a successful applicant's protected characteristics be used to determine the terms on which they are offered a place at the College.

Further information can be found in the College's Admissions Policy.

- **Education and associated services**

The College will afford all pupils equal access to all benefits, services, facilities, classes and subjects including all sports, irrespective of their protected characteristics, subject to safety and welfare considerations.

The College may afford pupils with a particular protected characteristic, or pupils with a special educational need, access to additional education or training to meet their needs or alleviate disadvantage, for example, special language tuition for groups whose first language is not English. Such measures will be proportionate in achieving the relevant aim, and not to the detriment of other pupils.

Efforts are made to recognise and raise awareness of the possibility of bias in teaching materials so that this can be eliminated. Materials are carefully selected for all areas of the curriculum so as to avoid stereotypes and bias.

- **Behaviour, discipline and sanctions**

All pupils are encouraged to interact freely with, and have respect for, all other pupils, irrespective of protected characteristics. Positive attitudes are fostered towards all groups in society through the curriculum and values of the College, and pupils will be encouraged to question assumptions and stereotypes.

The College will not discriminate against any pupil by expelling, suspending or subjecting him or her to any other sanction, on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

The College will not tolerate bullying in any form for any reason whatsoever. Further information on anti-bullying procedures and practice can be found in the College's Anti-bullying Policy.

- **School uniform**

The requirement for pupils to wear school uniform applies equally to all, irrespective of protected characteristics. However, the College will consider reasonable requests to alter the school uniform, for example, for genuine religious requirements and reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

Certain items of jewellery or headwear may be worn by pupils when doing so is genuinely based on manifesting religious beliefs or identity. This is subject to considerations of safety and welfare and the College's existing school uniform principles (in regards to, for example, the College colours). Where there is uncertainty as to whether an item may be



worn, the issue must be referred by the pupil or his or her parents to the Head of College, whose decision will be final, subject to the Complaints procedure.

Reasonable adjustments to the school uniform may be required for disabled pupils who require them. The pupil or his or her parents should refer the matter to the Head of College to ensure all reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate the pupil.

- **Religious belief**

The College's religious ethos is set in accordance with the Anglican tradition, but the College is proud of its long history of religious diversity, and respects the right and freedom of individuals to worship in accordance with other faiths, or no faith.

- **Disability and special educational needs**

We are an inclusive College which welcomes members of the College community with disabilities and special educational needs. We maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of those with disabilities or special educational needs in all the activities of the College and we will not treat a member of the College community less favourably on these grounds. We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that the College's curriculum, culture, policies, procedures and premises are accessible to everyone.

Whether an adjustment is considered reasonable is context specific, depending on the circumstances of each case. The factors which the College will consider when determining whether an adjustment is reasonable will include, but are not limited to: the effect of the disability on the individual; the practicability of the adjustment; the extent to which the adjustment would be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered; the financial and other costs of making the adjustment; the resources of the College and the availability of financial or other assistance; health and safety requirements; the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and the interests of other members of the College community.

Further information can be found in the College's Accessibility Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy (for the Upper School) and SEND Policy (for the Preparatory School).

## **8. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT**

The College aims to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment compared to others on grounds of a protected characteristic. Selection criteria and recruitment procedures are kept under review to ensure that job applicants are judged on their individual merits. Job selection criteria are reviewed periodically to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as essential for the effective performance of the role.

Staff training needs are identified through regular staff appraisals. All members of staff are given an equal opportunity to access training to enable them to progress within the College. All promotion decisions shall be made on the basis of merit.



Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to their access.

If a member of staff is disabled, or becomes disabled in the course of their employment, they are encouraged to inform the College about their disability. This is to enable us to provide as much support as possible and to ensure that they are not treated less favourably because of something related to their disability. Staff may also wish to advise HR/the Assistant Head EDIB of any reasonable adjustments to working conditions or to the duties of their role which they consider to be necessary, or which would assist in the performance of their duties. Please see the section 'Disability and Special Education Needs', above, for further information on requesting reasonable adjustments.

No member of staff will be subject to the College's disciplinary procedures on grounds of a protected characteristic. Similarly, each disciplinary matter will be dealt with on its merits, with procedures applied uniformly regardless of the protected characteristics of staff members involved.

## **9. REPORTING AND RECORDING INCIDENTS OF DISCRIMINATION**

If you believe that you have received less favourable treatment on any of the unlawful grounds listed above, or if you feel that this policy has been breached in any way you are encouraged to raise the matter through the College's formal Complaints Procedure. Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence. For a copy of the Complaints Procedure, and for questions about its content or application, please contact the Head of the College.

We will treat it seriously and urgently investigate every complaint and report. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of the College community who is found to have acted in contravention of this policy.

All reported breaches of this policy will be recorded and this record will be reviewed annually by the Head of the College as part of the College's annual review of complaints.

## **10. MONITOR AND REVIEW**

The Assistant Head EDIB will review this policy annually.

The Assistant Head EDIB will evaluate the success of the equality work using quantitative and qualitative data. An analysis of equality data will inform discussions about the College's equality objectives and the Assistant Head EDIB will regularly monitor whether and how the College is meeting its objectives.





The Assistant Head EDIB will monitor and will regularly review all policies, procedures and practices to ensure compliance with The Act and will assess whether any changes need to be made.