



SOUTH MOLTON
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
— supporting success —

Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy

Adopted by the Governing Body: May 2015

Rationale:

This policy describes the way in which South Molton Community College will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. This Act replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Sex Discrimination Act. The policy will be applied to all staff and learners, as well as any volunteers working in the college.

Employees, learners and volunteers are made aware of the existence of this policy

It can be found :

- On our Learning Platform ~ <https://smcc.itslearning.com/>
- On our website ~ <http://www.smcc.devon.sch.uk/>
- Or on request from The College

The centre agrees to:

- adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against learners, staff, volunteers or anyone involved in external agencies the organisation may be working with on the grounds of:
sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.
- In addition, there will be no discrimination against:
pregnant females or new mothers
staff, learners or volunteers undergoing gender re-assignment
learners due to the behaviour of their parents and/or siblings

Aims

1 To establish and implement good practice in equal opportunities across all areas of college life

2 To eliminate unlawful discrimination promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of the college community and visitors to the college.

3 To educate pupils about their rights and responsibilities regardless of their background.

This policy overarches a portfolio of related policies which include:

Disability Equality Scheme
Gender Equality Policy
Attendance and Admission Policy

Many of these policies will be referred to in other policies and it is important to note that the college's anti bullying policy applies to all areas where discrimination of any kind has taken place.

South Molton Community College is committed to promoting equality and fostering respect for people irrespective of sexual orientation, gender, race, physical attributes and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The college values and encourages involvement of people from all sections of the local community. The college is opposed to all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Language or behaviour that is homophobic, sexist, racist, and offensive to the disabled and prejudicial language that is potentially damaging to any person or group will not be tolerated and will be challenged. The college recognises that British society, and the college itself, is made up of people from many different backgrounds. It is important that all pupils, staff and visitors to the college can enjoy life in such a diverse society.

Principles

A fundamental principle of our college is that it cultivates a very positive, inclusive ethos that this policy will support and help to maintain.

In adhering to this principle, the college aims to:

- make the college a place where visitors, staff and pupils feel welcome and valued
- ensure that all pupils achieve their best
- ensure that all staff are able to contribute fully to the college's work
- meet the diverse needs of pupils and prepare all pupils for life in a diverse society
- respect and value differences between people and promote good relations between everyone within the college and the wider community
- ensure that equality of opportunity is an integral part of planning and decision-making across all areas of the college
- be proactive in tackling and eliminating discrimination,
- protect the rights of all pupils, staff, parents, governors and visitors to the college
- comply with and uphold the spirit of the relevant all relevant legislation:

On 1 October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It has consolidated this legislation and also provides some changes of which colleges need to be aware.

Key points

- The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law. It simplifies the law and it extends protection from discrimination in some areas;
- The effect of the new law is the same as it has been in the past – meaning that we cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation;
- The exceptions to the discrimination provisions for colleges are all replicated in the new act – such as the content of the curriculum and collective worship

Procedures

Commitment

The governing body and leadership of the college will work in partnership with others to be proactive in promoting equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and in promoting good relations. They will encourage, support and enable all pupils and staff to reach the highest standards.

Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the college fulfils its legal responsibilities including those arising from relevant legislation. With assistance from the Principal, the governing body will ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies, are implemented. The Governing Body includes equal opportunities issues as regular items on the agenda of Governing Body meetings and Mr Andy Comerford is the governor with responsibility for equal opportunities.

Principal

The Principal is responsible, with the governing body, for ensuring that the Equal Opportunities Policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Principal ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and that they are given appropriate training and support to enable them to fulfil these responsibilities.

The Principal will take disciplinary action against staff or pupils who are found to have discriminated on homophobic, disability, gender religious or racial grounds.

People with specific responsibilities

The named person with responsibility for dealing with reported incidents of racial discrimination is Mr DJ Lewis (Vice Principal) The named person ensures that all reported racist incidents are recorded in a register and that Racist Incident Report forms are completed and sent on to the LEA.

The equal opportunities coordinator is Mr DJ Lewis (Vice Principal). The Equal Opportunities Coordinator ensures that the college regularly reviews and evaluates all policies and practices in relation to equal opportunities leading to the setting of targets which promote equality and address apparent aspects of inequality or disadvantage in all of the college's activities.

The SLT member responsible for Pastoral matters ensures that all equality and cultural diversity issues raised in this policy are addressed in the implementation of the PSHE delivery throughout the college, developing attitudes and values which promote understanding of diversity and equality, which encourage positive, healthy relationships and which challenge prejudice and discrimination.

The SMSC coordinator is Mrs P Fletcher, who ensures that religious education within the college is in line with SACRE guidance. RE is taught in a positive, balanced way, different viewpoints are always valued and respected and stereotypical views of particular faith groups are not perpetuated but examined in an objective, relevant way.

All teaching and non-teaching staff

All college staff have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation, including attending appropriate training and information events. The college aims to give staff any necessary training to deal with equal opportunities and to promote familiarity with the Guidance on Promoting Equal Opportunities in order to identify and challenge racial and other forms of bias and stereotyping.

Teaching staff and classroom-based assistants

Teaching staff and classroom-based assistants ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to

have full access to the curriculum and are included in all activities. Through their teaching and relations with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community, staff promote equality of opportunity and understanding of diversity.

Visitors and contractors working on site

Every effort is made to ensure that all visitors are made aware of the college's policies on equal opportunities, race equality and racial harassment. All contractors are required to commit to adhering to these policies during initial contract negotiations.

Complaints procedure and breaches of policy

General complaints about the college's non-compliance with this policy are dealt with in accordance with the college's Complaints Procedure. Specific complaints about members of staff or governors breaching this policy are dealt with in accordance with the college's Discipline Procedures. Specific incidents of racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation involving members of staff are dealt with in accordance with the college's Grievance Procedures.

2. Planning and Review of all College Policies

Policy planning and development

Ethnic and gender monitoring

The college is moving towards the critical use of ethnic and gender monitoring data to identify possible patterns and trends that may inform planning and decision-making with an emphasis on pupil attainment. The college plans to put strategies in place to address disparities. Ethnic and gender monitoring will be carried out on a range of issues affecting both pupils and staff.

3. Implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy

Targets

Targets for action linked to this policy are to be included in the College's Improvement Plan.

Evaluations

It is an aim of the college that evaluations of these targets, by senior leadership and LEA staff are carried out annually. The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated in meeting the general requirements of the relevant legislation.

Review

This Equal Opportunities Policy will be reviewed annually and will undergo a major review every three years.

Training and development

To facilitate implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy, it is an aim that all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and as many governors as possible receive training on the implications of the relevant legislation for their roles in college. It is a further aim that regular ongoing training is organised through LEA and college-based training sessions. All training is evaluated.

Communicating and promoting the policy

This policy will be published in the Staff handbook that is issued to all staff and Governors at South Molton Community College. Further copies can be obtained by request from the college office.

The full Equal Opportunities Policy :

Can be found :

- On our Learning Platform ~ <https://smcc.itslearning.com/>
- On our website ~ <http://www.smcc.devon.sch.uk/>
- Or on request from The College

It is brought to the attention of all non-LEA contractors or service providers, as necessary, available on request for parents, visitors and members of the wider community

The college will endeavour to make the Equal Opportunities Policy available in large print format or other accessible formats on request.

4. Consulting on the Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy was produced following consultation with the following people and groups:

The Student Council

The Staff

The Governing Body

Similar consultation will take place when the policy is next reviewed.

Promoting equality and eliminating discrimination across areas of college activity.

a) Admissions and Attendance

Admissions

Pupils' gender and information about all pupils' ethnicity, home language, religion and dietary requirements is collected through admission forms and entered on Sims.

Attendance

We expect good attendance of all pupils and work together with staff, pupils, parents and the Education Welfare Officer to ensure that high levels of attendance are maintained. The college has a well-established procedure for dealing with absences. Unexplained absences will be followed up with telephone calls and, in more serious cases, home visits and the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer. The Attendance Officer, who follows up absence is aware of and sensitive to relevant cultural and religious issues.

We recognise pupils' and staff members' right to take time off for religious observance and make provision for pupils on extended leave to cover missed work.

b) Attainment, Progress and Assessment

Attainment and Progress

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils achieve to the highest standards. We value many forms of personal and academic achievement. We monitor individual pupils' attainment and progress and are developing the use of monitoring of our SEND pupils to identify any differences between the performances of different groups. We aim to address disparities through planned and targeted support.

We aim to ensure all pupils are aware of the commitment of the college to equality of opportunity and that pupils are aware of particular staff they can turn to in the event of problems regarding sexual orientation, race, gender, disabilities or religion. This is achieved through assemblies, Tutor Sessions and PSHE delivery.

Assessment

We aim to ensure that all pupils are appropriately supported in assessments, and that our SEND pupils are not disadvantaged through cultural and linguistic bias or lack of support. The college is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the curriculum and extra-curricula activities are available to all. In particular the college aims to ensure that disabled pupils and visitors have full access to all appropriate areas of the college and college activities.

Special Educational Needs

We aim to make sure that accurate assessments of special educational needs of all our SEND pupils are taken into consideration and we aim to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate support.

c) Discrimination, Harassment, Abuse and College Ethos

Discrimination and Harassment

We are opposed to all forms of homophobic, sexist and racial prejudice, harassment and discrimination. We are similarly opposed to discrimination and harassment on the grounds of disabilities of any kind. The use of associated language or behaviour is not tolerated and will be challenged. All incidents are dealt with in accordance with the college's disciplinary procedures and relevant policies. Incidents involving staff as alleged perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with the college's Discipline or Grievance procedures.

Celebrating and catering for diversity

We take every care to ensure the specific cultural and religious needs of all groups are addressed in college. The college enables pupils to observe festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand and respect such festivals and events.

Preparation for life in a multi ethnic society

We encourage all pupils to understand, respect and value peoples, cultures and faiths with which they are unfamiliar and foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. We actively promote good personal and community relations in order to prepare all pupils for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic society.

d) Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusion

Behaviour and Discipline

We expect high standards of behaviour of all pupils. All pupils are treated fairly, consistently and without discrimination when being disciplined for disruptive behaviour. The college recognises that cultural background may affect behaviour and takes this into account (an example of this is fasting). Incidents where the principles of this policy are transgressed are dealt with firmly and consistently and allegations of discrimination and harassment or provocation are fully investigated.

Exclusion

We take steps to prevent exclusion. The college uses a range of strategies for integrating long-term absentees and excluded pupils that aim to address the needs of all pupils.

e) Personal Development and Pastoral Care

Pastoral support

Our pastoral support seeks to take account of differences in sexual orientation, gender, physical attributes and difficulties. Our pastoral support takes into account religious and ethnic differences and it is intended that staff should become increasingly aware of the experiences of the victims of homophobia, traveller, refugee and asylum seeker children. Victims and perpetrators of incidents of discrimination are counselled, where it is felt necessary, and pupils are taught ways of responding appropriately to such incidents.

Support for EAL and traveller pupils

We endeavour to provide appropriate support for pupils for whom English is an additional language and traveller pupils, and encourage them to use and develop their home languages, where possible. Pupils are also given the opportunity to take G.C.S.E.s in their home language if the exams are available.

Careers and work experience

We encourage all pupils to consider the full range of work experience, career and post-14 options to ensure there is no stereotyping by sexual orientation, gender, physical attributes or ethnic or racial groups. Work placement providers are expected to be committed to equality of opportunity and to challenging discrimination. Support will be offered to any pupil who experiences any form of discrimination whilst on work experience and action will be taken to ensure that it doesn't recur.

f) Teaching and Learning

We take positive steps to ensure that all pupils can participate and feel that their contributions are valued. All teachers are aware of their pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs and teach about different cultural traditions with sensitivity. We encourage pupils of all backgrounds to work together with cooperation and understanding, learning from each other's varied experiences. Our teaching seeks to challenge prejudice and stereotypes, and we try to foster pupils' critical awareness of bias, inequality and injustice to help them identify and challenge the forms of discrimination.

g) Curriculum

Promoting cultural diversity through the curriculum

We recognise and value cultural diversity in all curriculum areas through teaching a balance of positive, culturally diverse content. Principles of equality and respect for people of different sexual orientation, gender, physical and intellectual ability and of different racial and ethnic groups are present throughout the curriculum and pupils are given opportunities to explore issues of identity, equality in the appropriate curriculum areas. We evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum for pupils of all groups and, have as an aim, where appropriate, to monitor its effectiveness in promoting understanding of diversity.

Curriculum access

We make every effort to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking account of their individual cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs, physical and intellectual abilities and by differentiating work appropriately. We positively discriminate, where appropriate to ensure that our SEND pupils are catered for in a way which offers them equality of opportunity

Resources

Our resources and displays portray positive images of a range of peoples and cultures. We have as a central aim that appropriate resources are purchased to meet the needs of individual pupils including those for whom English is an additional language, travellers and refugee and asylum seeker children. Resources and displays are regularly reviewed and upgraded and we use a variety of resources to challenge stereotypes and all forms of discrimination and prejudice across the curriculum.

Individual faculties are encouraged to be mindful of promoting equality in planning and preparing teaching materials. These should reflect the mix of SEND pupils.

Involvement of people of diverse backgrounds

We seek to use role models and presenters from a range of different racial, ethnic and faith groups within the college to share a wide range of skills and experiences. We recognise the ideal where pupils, staff and visitors feel safe and welcome in the college regardless of sexual orientation, gender, abilities, race, ethnic background or religion. Where possible activities are arranged to promote equality.

h) Staff Recruitment and Professional Development Recruitment and Promotion

All governors and staff involved in recruitment and selection endeavour to ensure equality and to avoid discrimination in the recruitment and selection process. All teaching and non-teaching posts are formally advertised. Applications and details of staff in post are monitored by ethnicity and gender and this data is supplied to the LEA on an annual basis.

People from all sections of the college community are encouraged to stand for election to the governing body.

Professional Development

All staff are encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities. It is intended that training of all staff and governors address issues of equality of opportunity, cultural diversity and the needs of all our SEND pupils.

i) Partnerships with Parents, Carers and Communities

Parents, carers and the wider community

We have as an aim to make greater use of the expertise, skills and knowledge of people of a range of backgrounds, from the local and wider community, to develop positive attitudes regarding sexual orientation, gender, abilities, race, ethnic background or religion and cultural diversity. Parents and carers are always informed of specific (racist) incidents of discrimination, abuse or harassment. We aim to do more to encourage parents and carers of all backgrounds to participate in the life of the college and to take steps to encourage greater involvement of under-represented groups.

College premises

College premises are well used by members of the local community.

Contractors and service providers

We expect all contractors and visitors to the college to be treated in a manner that is consistent with this policy. Equal opportunity standards should be incorporated into all contracts with service providers such as catering, cleaning and building maintenance.

Useful websites

Commission for Racial Equality www.cre.gov.uk

Equal Opportunities Commission www.eoc-law.org.uk