

Single Equalities Scheme 2016-18



Introduction

Every member of our community matters. As a School, we provide education to students, we are an employer and we provide services to the wider community through access to our specialist knowledge, resources and facilities. This Single Equality Scheme brings together Sidmouth College's approach for promoting equality in fulfilling these three roles so that no group or individual feels excluded or unable to achieve their potential. The scheme therefore includes students, staff, governors, parents/carers and the community users of our facilities. It is important to recognise that treating people equally does not mean treating them the same.

Scope of this Policy

Our Single Equality Scheme replaces previous equality policies. This Single Equality Scheme enables us to achieve an overarching action plan to eliminate discrimination and harassment which covers all six equality strands:

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation

In addition to the six strands above this protection is also extended to students who are pregnant or have recently given birth, or who are undergoing gender reassignment. It also aims to improve equality for those who face less favourable socio-economic circumstances (students in receipt of Free School Meals) and to incorporate the requirements for an Accessibility Plan as a single document. Through this scheme we aim to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and to foster our relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Through consultation, we will develop our scheme to impact at every level in light of what is reasonable and practicable according to:

- the size and age and layout of our College buildings
- the make-up of our school population
- the school budget
- our other duties

Vision and Values

Sidmouth College has an inclusive vision. As a school we put students first, have effective learning at the heart of all we do and promote a climate of success and achievement for every student. We have a passion for, and a commitment to, the core purpose of education and focus relentlessly on each student's right to the very best provision and recognized that this is best achieved through a culture of honesty, openness and trust which:

- is challenging, supportive and inclusive
- delivers top quality learning experiences
- develops, character, responsibility and commitment
- celebrates and rewards effort, progress and achievement at all levels
- reaches out to the wider community
- recognises individuality within a vibrant community
- inspires all to improve and maximise their progress

Legislative Background

The following legislation has been taken into account when developing this scheme:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health Standards (England) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality Act 2010
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998

For children with statements of SEN:

- The Education Act 1996 – Part IV
- The Education act 1996 – Schedule 27
- Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) Regulations 2001

Other groups who will benefit from this policy as they may suffer from discrimination are:

Children from single parent families
Children from estranged families
Children in care (see Children in Care Policy)
Children and families in crisis
Children who are identified as Most Able
Pregnant students
Transient and mobile students
Students with EAL
Young Carers

Refugees and Asylum seekers
Poor attenders (see Attendance Policy)
Disaffected learners (see Behaviour Policy)
Students who misuse illegal substances
Students with pronounced medical needs
Students with mental health difficulties and those who self-harm
Students who are home tutored
Students who are adopted (See Adoption Policy)

Consultation and dissemination

This policy and Scheme has been produced with reference to non-statutory advice provided by the DFE. We have also incorporated:

- Feedback from parent questionnaires, parents' evenings and Parent Forum meetings.
- Input through staff meetings / INSET and from staff exit interviews.
- Feedback from the Student and House Councils, PD (PSHE) lessons and our Student Voice surveys
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans, EHC Plans, and Annual Reviews.
- Feedback from Governing body meetings and Governors visits and visit notes.

The Devon Community

Devon is the third largest county in England, covering 2,534 square miles. The county has over 750,000 residents, with a higher proportion of older people than the national average. This population is growing at a faster rate than the national average. It is also one of the most sparsely populated counties, with few large settlements and a dispersed rural population. Patterns of deprivation marked by isolated pockets and hidden need within communities and higher levels of rural deprivation, with groups experiencing inequalities likely to be geographically dispersed. Average earnings within the county are below the national average and house prices and cost of living is above the national average which contributes to a number of issues including food poverty, housing-related health conditions, homelessness, mental health and wellbeing, and fuel poverty.

The Sidmouth College Community

Sidmouth College is a smaller than average semi-rural secondary school. Learners are drawn from a variety of rural, semi-rural and urban settings. A number of students live in isolated areas and there are pockets of serious socio-economic deprivation which can be hidden. The number of students who receive Free School Meals are below the National Average. We have few students from ethnic minority backgrounds. Some students in Year 6 at local Primary schools sit the 11+ and a small number of students with high verbal reasoning scores take up places in Colyton Grammar. Attainment on entry is assessed using Key Stage 2 test results, Key stage 2 Teacher assessment and CATs which are administered early in Year 7. The mean SAS shows a range of ability from below 70 to above 120 with 30% to 40% of students falling between 100 and 110; 10% - 15% between 110 and 120 and a very small number above 120. The number of students from backgrounds other than English, faiths other than Christian or whose first language/language spoken at home is not English is well below the National Average. The isolated nature of some of our communities can also mean that some families and communities are not exposed to a mixture of cultures, religion and beliefs. Whilst we have students who are from Service Families due to our proximity to military bases at Limpstone and Exeter, these families tend to be permanent postings.

In summary, the pertinent factors that can impact on equality and diversity at Sidmouth College are:

- Progress of Disadvantaged students and those eligible for Free School meals
- Progress of students with SEND
- The geographical situation of the school and its population profile
- Hidden deprivation

Aims

Sidmouth College aims to:

- Deal effectively and appropriately with all incidents of prejudice, intolerance and/or discrimination
- Meet all our students' needs, encourage them to achieve their full potential, and raise educational standards
- Raise awareness of, and celebrate, cultural diversity and prepare students for a life in a culturally diverse society
- Promote equality of opportunities for all students to achieve as highly as possible
- Provide an appropriate learning experience for all students, whatever gender, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, disability or social situation
- Develop a culture which values everybody and provides the opportunity to learn in an environment free of prejudice
- Ensure that all staff educate against any form of prejudice or negative stereotyping and that their conduct with students and colleagues reflects this responsibility at all times
- Ensure that students, staff and parents are not adversely affected in any area of the College's activities on grounds of equality or diversity.
- Take specific action to tackle any differences between sub-groups such as disadvantaged or racial groups in their attainment levels and progress, in the use of disciplinary measures against them (such as exclusion), in admissions, or in assessment.
- Create an ethos in which these issues can be discussed openly by the whole College community including parents.
- Use opportunities through assemblies and PD sessions to deal with issues of prejudice and the importance of the values of inclusiveness, community, equality, and mutual respect.
- Consider the equality implications whenever it is taking significant decisions or developing policy.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Sidmouth College fully recognises its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The College will, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a "protected characteristic" (see below) and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The College will keep a written record to show where it has actively considered its equality duties and asked relevant questions.

The College also recognises its specific duties to:

- Publish information (which will be updated annually) to demonstrate that it is complying with the public sector equality; and
- Prepare and publish equality objectives every four (4) years.

The College will publish equality information on its website.

Curriculum

Equal opportunity for all is evident in the delivery of:

- The formal curriculum (programme of lessons)
- The informal curriculum (extra-curricular and enrichment activities)
- The 'hidden' curriculum (the ethos, values and principles of the College).

All students are entitled to equal access to all areas of the curriculum.

Learning materials will be free from bias and suitably differentiated to enable full access to the curriculum by all students.

The Personal Development (PD) Curriculum and all other curriculum areas promote the value of diversity and deal with the problem of prejudice and its effects.

Staff must remain suitably aware and updated of all equal opportunity issues.

Staff will respond positively to the individual needs of all students.

Curriculum planning and Schemes of Work will demonstrate strategies, teaching and learning pedagogy and resources which enable all students, regardless of their ability and personal characteristics, to maximise their performance and achievement

Extra-Curricular Activities/Enrichment Programme

We will endeavour to provide a range of activities to meet the needs of all students.

All students are encouraged to access the full range of extra-curricular activities. Provisions to support participation may need to be agreed e.g. changing facilities, auxiliary aids, specific resources or staffing.

Specific Accessibility Plans within this Equalities Scheme outline support and provisions made available to all students to enable full engagement with chosen activities.

Where provisions are not explicitly described in the Accessibility Plan school staff invite parents/carers to a meeting to discuss the individual needs of their child and plan to support access and enjoyment of chosen activities.

Admissions

The College admissions procedures are managed and administrated by Devon County Council. The County policy on admissions welcomes a diverse student population which encompasses all abilities, aptitudes, social backgrounds and any of the protected characteristics apart from age, which is not a protected characteristic that applies to students in schools.

Uniform

In implementing its uniform policy, the College has regard to its duty not to discriminate on grounds of the protected characteristics.

The College student uniform makes provision for religious diversity. The College will consider written requests from parents for variations in the uniform on religious grounds or on the basis of other protected characteristics. The Principal may take expert advice and will normally arrange to meet with the parents to discuss the implications of such a request.

Any complaints regarding the College's decision in this regard should be raised in accordance with College's Complaints Procedure.

School Meals

All members of the College community are entitled to a balanced diet.

Students with special dietary needs will be appropriately catered for where possible.

The College recognises that students of certain faiths will also have specific dietary requirements and the school will act in accordance with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to provide appropriate meals for such students in partnership with our contracted catering provider Aspens.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

To ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements of equalities legislation and that this Scheme and Action Plan meet those duties. Specifically:

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

The Principal

To implement this Scheme, ensuring staff are aware of their responsibilities, that they are given necessary training and support and to report progress to the governing body. Specifically:

- Making sure the Single Equalities Scheme is readily available and that the staff, students and their parents /carers are made aware of it.
- Making sure the Equalities Scheme and its procedures are followed.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given support when taking appropriate action.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of discrimination.
- Presenting general reports, statistics and incident reports to the Governing Body and its committees as agreed.
- Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to monitor the performance of potentially disadvantaged or vulnerable students.
- Ensuring that all staff appointments panels give due regard to this scheme and to the College Recruitment and Selection Policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- 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 school life.
- Take appropriate action which treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying, harassment or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.
- Reviews this scheme and the action plan annually, updating at least every third year, sooner if indicated in outcome of review.

Senior Leadership Team

To support the implementation of this policy and the Equalities Scheme. Specifically:

- Ensure strategies are implemented to raise performance, aspirations and self-esteem.
- Support the provision of staff development to raise awareness of differences in need and to promote strategies to raise achievement in all students.
- Evaluate the impact of additional support on standards achieved.
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the College in accordance with our ethos and values enabling students to access learning and maximise their progress.
- Challenge inappropriate language and behaviour, responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment,
- Ensure appropriate support is provided for children with additional needs.
- Maintain a good level of awareness of equalities issues within those departments they line manage, working with Heads of Department to ensure all related aspects of the Equalities Scheme are fulfilled.
- Coordinate day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this scheme ensuring equality within each remit.
- To coordinate day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this scheme and revision of the action plan, ensuring equality of academic outcomes for different student groups.

Staff

Sidmouth College recognises the need to actively protect all children and adults who may be vulnerable because of their disabilities or characteristics. Staff and students will work together to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

The College is committed to an equal opportunity recruitment policy and equality for staff is dealt with under the Equal Opportunities (Staff) Policy and the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

The College will:

- Provide training and support to staff in carrying out their responsibilities under the policy
- Insist that all members of staff challenge inappropriate racial or stereotypical comments both in and out of the classroom
- Regularly examine the content of resources to ensure that negative images are not portrayed.
- Use strategies set out in the Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies for addressing and preventing discrimination.
- Deal appropriately with any incidents of discrimination
- Where appropriate, consult with governors, parents, staff and students as regards the likely impact of proposed policies for the promotion of equality
- Work with local agencies (eg. Devon County Council, East Devon Council, police, Chamber of Commerce) to assist in fostering equality of opportunity through any local initiatives.

All staff should be aware of the requirements of the Equality duty in order to comply. It is essential that all staff fully understand what is required of them.

Student Conduct

Students are encouraged to promote a climate of understanding, tolerance and harmony and report any occurrence of discrimination.

Incidents between students

- Evidence of negative incidents, whether between students; staff or students and staff, will be dealt with immediately and the Behaviour Policy will be applied where applicable.
- All incidents and ensuing actions will be recorded using the College's agreed procedures.
- An immediate referral will be made as soon as practicable, to the appropriate Class Teacher, House Tutor, Head of House, Head of Department/Faculty or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- The perpetrator(s) will be made fully aware of the reasons why such behaviour is unacceptable and given the opportunity to review and modify their inappropriate behaviour as part of a long term strategy.
- The victim(s) will be provided with support (short or long term) and be kept informed of any action being taken on their behalf.
- The parents or carers of both the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) will be informed as soon as possible of the incident and the action being taken.

- The parents or carers of the perpetrator(s) may be requested to visit the College in order to discuss the incident.
- The parents or carers of the victim(s) will be given the opportunity to visit the College and discuss the incident.

Incidents involving Staff and Students

Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour or offensive remarks by a student towards a member of staff concerning protected characteristics will be recorded immediately and referred directly to the student's Head of House and SLT and dealt with as outlined in the College's behaviour policy and procedures with sanctions applied appropriately.

In the case of a member of staff acting in an inappropriate manner towards a student, the College Governors and Devon County HR service HROne may be consulted in line with the College's Employee Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.

Incidents concerning Parents or Visitors to the Academy

- Whenever possible, staff will challenge any inappropriate behaviour or remarks
- Matters of major concern will be referred directly to a member of the SLT.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Any student becoming pregnant during their statutory education years will be supported to complete their education:

- A risk assessment will be completed to ensure that all physical access arrangements are in place.
- A referral will be made to the School Nurse and the appropriate local service supporting teenage mothers (e.g. Care to Learn).
- The College Inclusion and Pastoral House teams will ensure protection of the student's physical, emotional and social needs in the College. The Inclusion Manager and Head of House will liaise with home and external agencies with appropriate input for the College SENCo as appropriate. This will be fulfilled through the Devon Assessment Framework (DAF) process.
- Staff will work with external agencies to secure an appropriate educational setting for the later weeks of pregnancy and early maternal weeks.

A note on the Prevent agenda

Sidmouth College is fully committed to exercising its duty as a secondary school to prevent students and staff engaging in radicalisation, extremism and terrorism. We believe that respect for all persons should lie at the heart of all that we do. The Prevent agenda and the positive promotion of British Values - democracy, individual freedom, rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance for people of different religions and beliefs – aligns with our commitment to fostering good relations between different groups of people and positively promoting equality diversity in all that we do.

First Adopted: 16th May 2016 (FGB)

Appendix 1 Table of legislation prior to Equality Act 2010

Prior to the Equality Act 2010 'protected characteristics' were commonly called 'strands'.

Equality Strand	Legislation	General Duty	Specific Duties
All	Human Rights Act (1998), Article 14: Rights ... 'without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.		N/A
Disability	Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005	Eliminate discrimination Promote equality of opportunity Eliminate harassment Promote positive attitudes Encourage participation More favourable treatment	Disability Equality Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation • Assess impact • 3 year review • Report annually SEN policy & Accessibility Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually
Gender	Equal Pay Act 1970 Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended Equality Act 2006 Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regs 1999 Gender Recognition Act 2004	Eliminate discrimination Promote equality of opportunity	Gender equality scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation • Assess impact • 3 year review
Race	Race Relations Act 1976, as amended Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000	Eliminate discrimination Promote equality of opportunity Promote good relations	Race equality policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation • Assess impact • 3 year review Record incidents & report to DCC
Religion or Belief	Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006	Employment & provision of goods & services including Education	Eliminate discrimination on the basis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less favourable treatment • disadvantage • any other detriment – including harassment None
Sexual Orientation	Sexual Orientation Employment Equality Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006, Sect 81		None

Appendix 2 Table of Legislation: Equality Act 2010

Protected Characteristics	What is new?	Requirements	Application to schools
Age Marriage and civil partnership Pregnancy and maternity Race Disability Religion or belief Sex Gender - reassignment Sexual orientation	<p>A single public sector equality duty applying to all protected characteristics: Specific changes offering greater protection from harassment and victimisation.</p> <p>Positive action</p> <p>Direct discrimination extended to disability.</p> <p>Indirect discrimination extended to disability and gender reassignment</p> <p>New protection from discrimination by association or perception.</p>	<p>Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity, Foster good relations.</p> <p>Victims now only need to show that they have been treated badly, rather than less favourably.</p> <p>No requirement to take positive action. No restriction on treating disabled people more favourably.</p> <p>Extension of protection from discrimination based on association or perception to all protected characteristics</p>	<p>Provision for Education (Part 6, Chapter 1).</p> <p>Application of all characteristics as employer and provider of services. Age and Marriage and civil partnership excluded in relation to students</p>

The General Duty – in the exercise of all functions Sidmouth College must have “due regard” to:

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.	<p>This means: Ensuring all of the policies, services and decisions do not have any bias that will disadvantage people who share a protected characteristic.</p> <p>Having good policies in place to support people who share a protected characteristic to raise concerns of discrimination and harassment, and be protected by the organisation and treated fairly if they raise a concern.</p>
Advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	<p>This means: Proactively identifying if there are barriers that prevent people who share a protected characteristic from getting the full benefits of employment, goods or services. Taking steps to remove barriers, and prioritising equality of opportunity where there are competing demands – where possible minimising the impact of changes.</p>
Fostering good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	<p>This means: Breaking down barriers that separate individuals into competing groups, addressing issues such as hate crime, domestic violence and violent extremism, ensuring that accurate information is given to all sections of the community so that myths and misinformation do not divide people.</p>

Appendix 3. The Single Equality Scheme (SES) process – organisation

The organisational sequence below is used as a basis for planning but we also maintain flexibility, in processes such as implementation and responsive impact assessment, in order to respond to the needs of our learning community and influences from areas outside the College.

In order to ensure that our SES is implemented effectively we will identify time frames and lead staff. The identification of any responsibility related to equality will be reflected in job descriptions and within the CPD, training and College Appraisal processes.

Planned sequence:

- Training based on Equality Act 2010 & available SES materials (all new staff and updates as required to all staff).
- SLT annual planning and production of impact assessment screening, information gathering and action planning based on analysis of data.
- Clear identification of roles and responsibilities (monitoring, assessment & action planning).
- Gathering of information (including consultation with identified groups).
- Analysis of information including Overview of Outcomes.
- Planning of further impact assessment including schedule of future impact assessment – dates logged.
- Identification and commissioning of consultative groups as required to improve engagement and accessibility.
- Further impact assessment screening and full impact assessments where indicated.
- Action planning over 1 and 3 years including review dates.
- Agreement and publication of the full SES.
- Implementing and monitoring (including further scheduled and responsive impact assessments).
- Annual review and report and 3 year review and report on progress.

Overview of Outcomes – Vulnerable groups

The College will effectively review and track the outcomes for vulnerable groups to support us in:

- Evaluating the outcomes of groups of students who are nationally identified as vulnerable to underachievement and discrimination.
- Identifying, through this analysis, areas for improvement in provision for those vulnerable groups.
- Establishing a baseline of information from which to assess the impact, over time, of action taken to improve outcomes and provision for vulnerable groups.
- Collating data summary information to inform College self-evaluation processes in relation to vulnerable groups.

When completing an analysis at key data points (both interim and profile) the College will break this down by all vulnerable groups to support longer term tracking and the impact of specific interventions over time. This will also support future comparison with national data for these groups.

When presenting or sharing the overview outcomes the College will avoid the possible identification of individual children or young people. The information is not intended as something to be published in full for circulation, rather as a source of information to inform self-evaluation and to identify areas for improvement. In considering the outcomes for all students in Sidmouth College, the SLT will consider the outcomes for minority ethnic groups as a whole and for each ethnic group as appropriate.

Impact Assessment

As part of our whole school monitoring and review processes we will complete an impact assessment to monitor the effectiveness of the College in improving our management and implementation of our Single Equality Scheme and the degree of impact this is having on our school community.

Why is an equality impact assessment important?

- Allows us to give thought to the effect or potential effect of what we do on all members of our College community, including students, parents/carers, our staff and others;
- Enables us to fulfil the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation and to promote equality of opportunity for all as we establish a College that is just and fair, where all can flourish;
- Helps us understand why there are different outcomes for various groups or individuals and to plan for change;

Principles:

- No new policy or policy amendment is applied without having first been impact assessed;
- Based on evidence
- Using impact assessment to inform change and development;
- Identifying existing or potential positive or adverse impacts

Action Planning

Action planning principles:

- Action planning is done in accordance with Sidmouth College's values and aims as identified in pages 2 and 4 of our Single Equalities Scheme document.
- Any planning must be based from accurate and up-to-date knowledge and information of the College. This enables us to plan in a way that is relevant and proportionate.
- Through the impact assessment process, consideration is focused on equality issues evidenced and provide scope to consider actions for areas that have future potential.
- Action planning allows the College to manage the process of **plan, do, review** in a responsive way and strategic way.

The process:

- Action planning is done in response to identified priorities arising from the analysis of all the information, including the Overview of Outcomes and the impact assessments we have undertaken.

- We plan for action over 1 and 3 years so that it is possible to implement change and development in a responsive yet systematic way.
- Action plans are reviewed annually and in the third year we undertake a review of the impact of our actions over three years.

