

EGGBUCKLAND
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Equality Policy for those with Protected Characteristics



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Eggbuckland Community College Academy Trust

Policy:	Equality Policy for those with Protected Characteristics
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Equality Policy for those with Protected Characteristics

Legislative Context

The Equality Act (2010) amended the requirements of the Equal Pay Act (1970) and the Sex Discrimination Act (1975). It added to the duty to eliminate discrimination with specific reference to those with 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equality Act, October 2010, (part one chapter 4). This policy is applicable to all staff, students, temporary workers, trustees and volunteers.

Social Context

We recognise that despite about forty years of individual legal rights to sex equality there is still widespread discrimination and persistent gender inequality. Both sexes suffer from the stereotyping of their roles and needs and such stereotyping has to be understood, challenged and overcome. For example, it is widely known that boys are more likely than girls to be excluded from school and, in addition, there is a trend of underachievement for boys and girls in some subjects and it is our commitment to narrow the gap that exists.

College Key Values

As a Learning Caring Achieving community, we are committed to ensuring that all students do as well as they possibly can, regardless of their ability and leave us with all the skills necessary for life and work. This also applies to the opportunities and career progression offered to our staff.

The General Duty

In accordance with our College's values, we welcome the statutory Gender Equality Duty. In compliance with the General Duty, Eggbuckland Community College has due regard for the need to, and works to eliminate discrimination as defined in the Equality Act 2010 and seven different 'types':

- 1) Direct discrimination: discrimination because of a protected characteristic by treating that person less favorably than the College treats, or would treat, others.
- 2) Associative discrimination: direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person with a protected characteristic. (This includes carers of disabled people and elderly relatives, who can claim they were treated unfairly because of duties that had to carry out at home relating to their care work. It also covers discrimination against someone because, for example, their partner is from another country).
- 3) Indirect discrimination: when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a protected characteristic.

- 4) Harassment: behaviour deemed offensive by the recipient. Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic which has the effect or purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Staff or students can claim they find something offensive even when it's not directed at them. Furthermore the claimant need not have the protected characteristic (can be perceived to have it or associated with the person who does have it).
- 5) Harassment by a third party: the College is potentially liable for the harassment of staff or students by people it does not directly employ, such as a contractor, parent or visitor.
- 6) Victimisation: discrimination or unfavourable treatment against someone because they made or supported a complaint under Equality Act legislation.
- 7) Discrimination by perception: direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic, (even if they do not).

By unlawful sexual discrimination we mean treating one person less favourably than another on grounds of sex or gender. We understand that this could be done directly but that it could also occur indirectly. Indirect discrimination means that a particular policy or practice may impact more negatively on one gender than on the other, or may favour one gender to the disadvantage of the other.

By sexual harassment we refer to behaviour or remarks based on a person's sex or gender, perceived to be unpleasant, threatening, offensive or demeaning to the dignity and self-esteem of the recipient or subject. We see such behaviour as also damaging to the perpetrator (*refer to our College's Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying policies*).

We understand 'sex' to refer to the **biological** differences between males and females and 'gender' to refer to the wider **social** roles and responsibilities which structure our lives. By promoting gender equality our intention is to recognize and help overcome those lasting and embedded patterns of advantage and disadvantage which are based on socially ascribed gender stereotypes and assumptions.

We understand that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to treat girls and boys, and women and men differently, if that action is aimed at overcoming previous, current or possible future disadvantage.

We will take steps to counteract the effects of any past discrimination in staff recruitment. Where we are uncertain whether there is a genuine occupational requirement for preference to be given to the employment of someone of a particular gender we will seek specialist advice.

We understand the three parts of the duty to be different, but that they should normally support each other. However, we are aware that achieving one may not lead to achieving all three.

In taking due regard we will exercise the principles of proportionality and relevance. By this we mean that the weight we give to gender equality will be proportionate to its

relevance to a particular function. The greater the relevance of a function to gender equality, the greater regard we will pay to it.

The Specific Duties

We welcome the responsibility to think and act more strategically about gender equality. To meet the specific duties, and guided by the Code of Practice prepared by the Equal Opportunities Commission, we have prepared, published and implemented, and will maintain, a Gender Equality Action Plan which contains our current objectives. This is attached to and forms an essential part of this Policy, please see Annex A

We are working to develop our understanding of the major gender equality issues in our College's functions and services. In order to do this we:

- Collect and analyse College data and other gender equality relevant information, including data about our local area. Continue to use this data proactively and strategically to narrow the gap in performance between subgroups.
- Consult all staff, students, parents and relevant local communities.
- Review all our College policies and practices to assess the ways in which they might impact on gender equality.
- Ensure Trustees, staff, students, parents and others in our College are accountable and understand their responsibilities with regard to preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality.
- Ensure Trustees, Staff, Students Parents and others in our College are comfortable in reporting unacceptable behavior, actions etc where necessary.
- Assess and address the causes of any gender pay gap.
- Publish and implement the Action Plan with our proposed objectives and actions.

We will:

- Set out the results of reviews, consultations and impact assessments.
- Report on progress annually and set further objectives where necessary.
- Review and revise the Policy and Action Plan at least every three years.

Responsibilities

All trustees, staff, volunteers, students and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the College's Equality Policy for those with Protected Characteristics and Action Plan. In addition:

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the College prepares, publishes, implements, reports on and reviews the Equality Policy for those with Protected Characteristics and Action Plan (including budget requirements), and in particular the employment implications of meeting the Equality Equality Duty.

The Principal works with the LT to ensure that –

- The Policy and Action Plan are implemented.
- Staff recruitment, training opportunities and conditions promote gender equality.
- All staff, students and their parents are consulted regarding, and are aware of the College's responsibilities to meet the Equality Duty.
- Existing and planned policies are assessed for the ways in which they impact on equality.
- Curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, College journeys and extended College activities take account of the need to promote gender equality.
- Incidents of sexual/gender bullying or harassment are dealt with according to our Behaviour for Learning and Anti-Bullying policies.
- Visitors to the College, or those who use the premises, are aware of the Equality Policy and Action Plan.

All staff have a responsibility to deal with incidents of harassment or bullying; help eliminate unlawful discrimination; prepare and/or help deliver a curriculum, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation and assessment procedures, behaviour management, College journeys and extended College activities (including work with parents) that take account of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote gender equality.

Students and parents have a proportionate responsibility to understand and act in accordance with the Policy, as do **visitors** to the College.

Use of Social Media

The College will consider action against trustees, staff, volunteers, students and their families writing disparaging or abusive comments, or publishing inappropriate images, about the College, its staff, volunteers, trustees, students or their families, on social media sites e.g. Twitter, Facebook and the like, in relation to this Policy.

These and other responsibilities are outlined in detail in our Equality Policy and Action Plan which is attached to and forms part of this Policy (see annex A)

We believe that, even having the Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, there is still widespread discrimination and gender inequality in society. We believe that having this Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan will:

- support us in our decision-making and policy development.
- give us a clearer understanding of the needs of staff, students and their families.
- enable us to provide better quality services which meet varied needs.
- help us target our resources more effectively.
- help promote increased confidence in our College.
- make more effective use of our workforce.

We recognise that both sexes can suffer from sexual stereotyping and that sometimes the same policies and practices can impact differently on men and women and boys and girls. We will make appropriate adjustments if this is found to be the case with any of our policies and practices.

We also recognise that girls and boys, and women and men, can experience different forms of discrimination depending on, among other things, their ethnicity, belief, sexual orientation, age or disability and we will take this complexity into consideration.

In these ways we will strive to improve the situation for, and the relationships between, men and women and boys and girls within our College and wider community.

Single Sex Provision

Where we provide for one sex only, this is to help meet the different needs of boys and girls (men and women), needs often arising out of historical and current stereotyping and unjust gender discrimination, or where there is an issue of physical intimacy or embarrassment to be considered. We do not provide activities, classes, facilities, benefits or services for one sex only if this would amount to less favourable treatment of the other sex, or where it would promote gender stereotyping and gender inequality.

We do not deny one sex gives the same opportunities as the other and where we provide for one sex only we ensure there are equivalent and proportionate facilities, benefits or services for the other sex. We do not offer different curriculum choices to boys and girls,

and where there are curriculum options we ensure that these are not offered in such a way that boys and girls are steered into making choices based on gender stereotypes.

If requests for additional single sex activities, facilities or provision which appear to maintain or promote gender inequalities come from students, families or the community, these will be considered and legal advice sought.

Breaches of the Equality Policy for those with Protected Characteristics

We understand that eliminating gender discrimination and harassment and promoting gender equality is in part an education function and a matter of cultural change. Where possible, breaches of the Policy will be dealt with in a manner appropriate to the level of the breach, and with the intention of bringing about the relevant changes. More serious breaches of this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with our school's anti-bullying and harassment procedures, and the disciplinary procedures for staff.

Where safeguarding issues based on sex and gender come to the attention of the College these will be dealt with according to our child protection procedures.

Consultation; publishing; staff, students and parent development

This Policy has been drawn up in consultation with trustees, staff, students and parents. These consultations have contributed to developing the awareness among trustees, staff, students and parents of the ongoing need to eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination and harassment and to promote gender equality.

Copies of this Policy are available on our SLG.

Annex A 'Gender Equality Policy Action Plan' : Gender Equality Policy – Action Plan

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start Date	Completion Date
1. Promote equality of opportunity for male and female students in lessons.	There is a tendency for boys to dominate the questioning and answering elements of a number of lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD to raise awareness with staff and provide strategies that can be used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forthcoming Reviews and lesson observations to focus on this issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly report to LT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLW for CPD; MDC for monitoring the impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jun 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
2. Promote equality of opportunity for male and female students in their learning and achievement.	More boys than girls are removed from lessons because of poor behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all students. • Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning (including Behaviour for Learning) is as effective as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of Senior on Call events to ascertain which students are being removed from which lessons. • Analysis of examination results to look at male:female differentials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly report to AP Student Services. • Exam results – post formal module and full examinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDC for curriculum; SLW and RHT for CPD and quality of teaching and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apr 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing

Reference to the 'Behaviour for Learning', 'Anti Bullying', Disability Equality Scheme' and Disability Access Scheme' policies that can be found on the College Gateway.