



WELLINGTON COLLEGE

Equality & Diversity Policy

Reviewed by Board of Governors February 2020

Equality and Diversity Policy

At Wellington College measures are taken to create an inclusive culture to ensure equal educational opportunities for all our students and staff at all times. This ethos is embedded in our behavioural approach which encourages all students and staff to be Ready, Respectful and Responsible.

We do not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (protected characteristics) in admission or employment and in access to our educational and professional programmes and activities. We take positive action to provide equal opportunity to all students and staff and others using school facilities.

Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations among all members of the school community and particularly with respect to protected characteristics.

We welcome our duty under the DENI strategy for school improvement, Every School A Good School 2009.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Guiding principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by the following principles:

1. All learners are of equal value. We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value, whether or not they have a protected characteristic.
2. We recognise and respect diversity.
3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.
4. We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.
5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that may already exist.
6. We aim to consult and involve the school community.

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but nevertheless do take account of differences.

Definitions of discrimination

- Unlawful direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than others in comparable circumstances, because of a special characteristic such as age, gender, disability, or race.
- Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to all, but has a different impact on members of one or more protected groups, of which the complainant is one, and is placed at a disadvantage as a result.
- Victimisation is unlawful, which is treating a person less favourably because they have taken action in respect of discrimination e.g. by bringing a complaint or giving evidence for a colleague.
- Harassment is also unlawful and is when there is unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, on the grounds of one of the relevant characteristics, e.g. race or gender etc.

Aims

General:

- We expect that all students will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and be motivated to succeed, secure in the knowledge of their own worth.
- We expect students and staff to treat each other with complete respect and dignity at all times.
- We recognise the need to prepare our students for life in a diverse society where they exercise respect and understanding for everyone.

Gender equality:

- We will work towards improving standards of attainment and achievement for all our students.
- We will actively promote equality of opportunity between men and women (and girls and boys).

Race equality:

- We will actively promote race equality and good race relations across school activity.

Disability equality:

- We will promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other people and take steps to meet disabled people's needs.

Implementation

In order to translate the above policy into action, we will:

General:

- Ensure that we comply with all relevant legislation.
- Communicate our commitment to equality and diversity to all members of our community, for example through our websites.
- Inform all staff, students and governors of their responsibilities in promoting and maintaining equality.
- Set up mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and review.
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Curriculum:

- The curriculum will display a discriminatory free approach to teaching and learning throughout our schools.
- Departments will present opportunities for promoting cultural diversity within subjects.

Environment:

- All reasonable measures will be taken not to discriminate against students with protected characteristics.
- Staff will be informed at the beginning, and throughout the school year of any particular needs of the students.
- We will maintain a strategic approach to ensuring that our schools are a welcoming and accessible environment for all.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

- The College will endeavour to provide a wide range of activities which appeal to the interests of all students.

Employment:

- Wellington College will comply with the law regarding equal opportunities and employment and implement fully approaches advised by Educational Authority NI in this regard.
- New staff will be made aware of the policy and be welcome to contribute to its development.
- Advertising will state that we are an equal opportunities employer and we will appoint the best candidate for the job.

Monitoring and evaluation

The impact of this policy will be reviewed annually. This policy will be supported by appropriate training where required.