



Ifield Community College - Equal Opportunities Policy and Statement

Approved by Governing Body 14th March 2024

Date of next review: March 2025

Signed: (Chair of Governors)

General Policy Statement

Ifield Community College is committed to achieving equality of educational opportunity for all students, irrespective of gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, physical disability, level of ability or other protected characteristics. The college values its students and staff equally and aims to treat them as individuals, not pre-judging them or discriminating unfairly against them. An attitude of tolerance and acceptance of others is encouraged among all members of the college. The religious affiliations of many members of the college community help to underpin the explicit moral values promoted in college life. In committing itself to a policy of Equality and Diversity, Ifield Community College will proactively promote equality of opportunity and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to remove barriers and prevent its students, its staff and its partner organisations being discriminated against or disadvantaged, in line with the principles identified above.

The college aims to implement such values in all its activities, whether they be academic, sporting, artistic or social.

This policy complies with the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Our Strategies

We aim to provide the best learning opportunities and learning environments that we can for our students. To achieve this, we will:

- Effectively meet the changing demands of the curriculum for all students by reasonably modifying and enhancing existing accommodation and resources where appropriate
- Broaden the curriculum and meet the National Training and Education targets ensuring Equality and Diversity is embedded within the classroom
- Set positive, attainable targets for all students in order to enable them as individuals, and the school as a whole, to attain high levels of achievement
- Ensure facilities and strategies for furthering the learning of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or other special needs (including high levels of specific or general abilities) are continuously reviewed and improved!
- Broaden the range of social and cultural opportunities available for all students

- Promote access, equality, and good relations between different groups.
- We will actively and explicitly celebrate and support diversity
- We will ensure all other policies, such as uniform policy and transgender policy, reflect the above criteria

Measuring the impact

We will ensure our strategies are embedded into everything we do.

1) Gender identity/sexuality

- Ifield Community College will challenge the stereotyping that can limit and restrict choice
- Members of the college will avoid gender biased messages that may be conveyed through 'hidden curriculum' or through learning materials. Any negative attitudes towards gender identity and/or sexual orientation will be vigorously challenged

2) Ethnicity and Culture

- The college values and accommodates ethnic and cultural differences. This is reflected in displays, assemblies and advertisements for activities that embrace different ethnic and cultural group.
- The college has developed its own culture in relation to appearance and behaviour, and respect for this is required from all students
- Linguistic diversity is positively addressed throughout the college and provision is made to meet the linguistic needs of students who have been brought up in different traditions and require help in order to understand fully the English language of the college's curriculum
- All students are encouraged to develop tolerance of differences in order to avoid making invalid generalisations about ethnicity and culture
- All negative attitudes towards ethnicity are actively and vigorously challenged.

3) Physical Disability

- Ifield Community College positively involves and integrates students with physical disabilities into academic and extra-curricular activities.
- Reasonable adjustments are put in place to remove barriers to accessing the school's facilities and are reviewed regularly by the college in conjunction with the PFI provider.
- The college has an appointed member of teaching staff whose responsibilities include overseeing the needs and welfare of students with physical disabilities.
- All students and staff with a physical disability will have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) prepared with them
- All negative attitudes towards disability are actively and vigorously challenged.

4) Financial Disadvantage

- The college recognises the need to be aware of the financial circumstances of students and provides all compulsory materials for the curriculum at no charge. The college encourages open dialogue with parents/carers in respect to any financial issues that may impact on the educational welfare of students.

- We positively seek to encourage students with financial disadvantage to access extra-curricular activities.

5) Religion

- The college respects the right of students and staff to hold their own religious beliefs and encourages them not only to respect the rights of others but also to be tolerant of views which differ from their own.
- All negative attitudes towards religion are actively and vigorously challenged.

Effectiveness within Curriculum

1) Subject Related issues

- Consideration will be given by each teaching department to ensure that the courses they offer take into account factors relating to equal opportunity and cultural diversity.
- The proportion of male/female students and their ethnicity in each subject will be noted on a yearly basis in order to monitor the statistical breakdown of subject choices and achievement and used to identify any achievement gaps and take appropriate action if necessary to correct under-achievement.
- The school as a whole, as well as individual departments, will give consideration to the way they represent themselves and their students within information literature such as leaflets and prospectuses, as well as in displays such as those used on Open Evenings

2) Teaching and Resources

- The whole curriculum will aim to acknowledge cultural diversity, which will be reflected within schemes of work and resources.
- Resources, including textbooks, library books, visual displays and any other college material should represent people fairly and acknowledge under-represented groups. Staff should be aware of the impact which the inclusion and exclusion of images and languages can have on students when such material challenges or reinforces stereotypes.
- Staff should be aware of the need to use a variety of teaching methods to encourage the full participation of all students whatever their level of ability or confidence. Students will be encouraged to express views about subjects being studied.

Harassment

Incidents of harassment or bullying could arise from personal disagreement and/or prejudicial motives. If any form of harassment is witnessed, staff are expected to:

- Express strong disapproval of negative attitudes to equality issues and carefully explain their reasons. This strong disapproval should apply to disparaging racial, gendered, or sexist remarks or actions as well as to comments or actions made about physical disability, cultural background or religious beliefs.
- Show the strongest disapproval of offensive symbols or works written on walls, furniture, or students' belongings. Graffiti should be removed immediately.

No member of staff will ignore any form of verbal abuse.

Our Staff

Ifield Community College is an equal opportunities employer. All posts at the college are open to staff with suitable qualifications, experience, and personal qualities, regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic origin and other frequently misconstrued background factors.

As an employer we aim to manage a diverse workforce and we are committed to promoting equality and good practice and eliminating unfair discrimination. Every employee is entitled to work in an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all and Ifield Community College will not tolerate any form of intimidation, bullying or harassment on any grounds. Any breaches of our equality policies will be regarded as misconduct and may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

We actively encourage applications from all minority groups within our community. As part of our recruitment process, we ask applicants to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form. This is used to provide us with valuable equal opportunities information in our aim to ensure equal access to jobs at all levels, across our teaching and support team. This information is not used in our short listing or interviewing process. It may be used to help us adapt a role or make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of an individual, in line with our legal obligations and our aim of a diverse and representative workforce.

The college values the important contribution made by all its employees, support staff and teachers, part-time and full-time alike. The college aims to treat its staff as individuals and to protect them against any unfair discrimination.

1. Staff recruitment, promotion and inset – those involved in recruitment will undertake Safe Recruitment training. All applications/requests for employment, promotion and inset will be subject to fair and transparent criteria that reflect equal opportunities. The college will encourage and support career development for all staff.

2. Appointments –

- All employment literature about the college will make its position on equal opportunities clear. Application forms will ensure that no bias in relation to age, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, or disability can be applied.
- Applicants with disabilities will be provided with the opportunity to declare their disability so that reasonable adjustment may be made for interview. Declaration of a disability will not influence any decisions made in respect to outcome of the application. All job descriptions will be written in gender neutral language.
- Where possible, interview panels will be balanced to provide a fair representation that reflects the college's ethos on equal opportunity. Interviewers should be aware of the need to avoid an approach which, however unintentionally, suggests candidates of a particular gender or ethnic group are more likely to be appointed.
- Selection for recruitment or promotion will be on merit judged through fair and transparent criteria.

3. Appraisals – these are operated on a basis that are fair and equitable to all. The process will positively promote equal opportunities by encouraging all staff to fulfil their potential. Appraisers will be trained and made aware of their legal

responsibility not to discriminate and of the dangers of stereotyped expectations which result in bias.

Procedures for dealing with incidents related to equal opportunities

- Staff should inform a student's Progress Leader of such incidents so that an incident log can be maintained.
- Persistent offenders will be interviewed by the Progress Leader who will apply appropriate sanctions and inform parents of the developing situation. Where necessary, students may be suspended from college as directed by the Headteacher after consultation with the appropriate Deputy Headteacher or Progress Leader.
- The college will have no hesitation in seeking permanent exclusion for a student who has proved, over the long term or through an outrageous single act, to be beyond the control of the college. It is anticipated that this sanction will be used rarely and in extreme situations.
- Any incidents relating to staff should be reported to the HR department for logging and potential further investigation.
- At all stages of intervention and implementation of sanctions, the feelings of both victim and offender will be taken into account when making any decisions relating to follow up actions.