



Equality and Diversity Policy

April 2025 – September 2027

Policy reviewed: June 2018, June 2020, June 2023, April 2025

To be next reviewed: September 2027

To be reviewed by: Policy and Procedures Lead, Nikki Twiner

Introduction

All educational organisations have a duty to update and publish their Equality and Diversity Policy, which adheres to the Equality Act 2010. This policy describes the way in which The Oaks Specialist College will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The policy will be applied to all staff and learners, as well as any volunteers working in the College

Access

Employees, learners and volunteers are made aware of the existence of this policy and where it can be accessed.

Policy

The Oaks College will 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:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin),
- religion or belief,
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition, there will be no discrimination against anyone due to the behaviours of an individual they know.

When recruiting staff, health-related questions will not be asked until after a job offer is made, and then only if it is necessary for the role.

The Oaks may decide to use the 'Positive Action' clause of the Equality Act 2010, which may involve the implementation of provision that although may target particular individuals, everyone within the College are invited to use them.

It is expected that every person in the organisation will make a positive contribution to this policy, namely:

- All staff whether paid or voluntary
- All visitors to The Oaks
- All learners at The Oaks

In addition, The Oaks will:

- ensure that the services it provides are accessible to all and will endeavour to positively encourage and benefit people from disadvantaged groups.
- full consideration is given to candidates put forward for examinations so they can be assessed in a fair and objective manner.
- provide adjustments to enable disabled people to fully participate and engage in the college community.

- monitor any issues that arise within the organisation and take appropriate action, fully supporting any person in the organisation who is faced with prejudice or discrimination
- undertake a biannual evaluation process to ensure that the policy is clear, in keeping with current legislation and being adhered to
- treat seriously any breaches of the policy, regarding them as misconduct which may lead to disciplinary proceedings

The three priority objectives for the College over the lifespan of our Whole College Equality and Diversity Policy will be:

1. To promote and demonstrate our belief in equality and diversity as a critical factor for us to be a successful College and as part of our core values.
2. To build a College community which celebrates its diversity and the contributions of a wide range of learners and staff and where all believe they are welcome and safe.
3. To ensure that staff are aware of and can positively promote equality and diversity in their teaching and learning including curriculum planning and content.

Complaint Procedure:

Stage 1:

In line with The Oak's Complaints Procedure, any person who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this Equal Opportunities Policy has not been respected, should immediately bring the situation to the attention of a member of the Management Team. The person responsible for this breach will be reminded of the existence and purpose of this policy and asked to adhere to the policy.

Stage 2:

If the person continues behaving in an unacceptable manner, the matter will be referred to the Principal who will decide the best course of action.

This may result in:

- further training
- a warning being issued
- disciplinary proceedings instigated
- a referral to a higher level of authority

Stage 3:

The offending person has the right to appeal any decision. He/she can write to the Chair of Trustees of The Oaks Specialist College using the appeals' process set out in our Complaints and Concerns Policy.

The decision of the Chair of Trustees will be final.