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## INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to detail the framework for promoting and ensuring equality of opportunity for all who learn at and work for or on behalf of Richard Huish College.

Diversity and Equality in this context means that we recognise value and respect individual and group differences.

## ENQUIRIES

Any enquiries about this policy or suggestions on how it can be improved should be addressed to Alison MacKenzie (Diversity and Equality Manager).

## PLANNED NEXT REVIEW COMPLETION DATE

01-Apr-2012

## APPROVAL

Given by: The Corporation

Date:

## 1. PURPOSE

This policy:-

- 1.1. Aims to ensure relevant and effective equal opportunities practices exist within the College and that a culture of continuous improvement in those practices is encouraged. It does so by setting out the framework of values and responsibilities within which other College policies and codes must operate and with which they must be consistent.
- 1.2. Articulates the right of every member of the College to work without fear of unfair or prejudicial treatment or discrimination. This requires the College to provide a safe, co-operative learning and working environment based on mutual respect, and as a result, one in which all individuals - students, staff and other users of the College - can operate effectively and can flourish.
- 1.3. Explicitly commits the College to:
  - being proactive in promoting equality, diversity and good relations, and in tackling unfair discrimination and treatment
  - encouraging and supporting all students to help them get the best from themselves
  - supporting and developing all staff so that they can operate effectively and contribute to the provision of an excellent experience and outcome for our students
  - working with our partners in the wider community to establish, promote and model equality good practice and to tackle unfair discrimination

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1. All students, staff and other users of the College, and all College activities on and off the College campus.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

### 3.1 The College's Commitment

(a) Richard Huish College is committed to the principle and practice of equality of treatment and opportunity for all. It is, therefore, the responsibility of everyone within the College to actively combat any direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour that could provoke feelings of discomfort or disadvantage towards others. This could be on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, race, sex, religion and belief or sexual orientation, as outlined by the Equality Act 2010.

(b) In making that commitment, the College recognises that its practices are bound by current legislation. In addition to being bound by the legislative framework, the College will use recognised codes of practice as the benchmark for procedures and measures introduced to ensure greater equality of opportunity.

(c) The commitment to good equal opportunities practice extends collectively to everyone in the College and all that we do. It is implicit that we will develop policies, procedures and systems which avoid and/or tackle unfair treatment or discrimination and which will promote equality of opportunity, respect for individuals and good relations between people across **all** areas of the college, both for example and in particular in:

- marketing and admissions procedures
- teaching and learning
- curriculum content and materials
- attainment, assessment and progression
- students' personal development and tutorial care
- opportunities for enrichment activities
- access to further individual support for students
- partnerships with parents, communities, employers and other agencies
- staff recruitment and professional development

The College will take appropriate opportunities in all areas of its work to publicise and make explicit its commitment to the principle and practice of equality of treatment and opportunity. Policies and practices developed by College management in these areas will also take a lead from and will comply with the principles and framework this policy sets out.

(d) It is also the responsibility of individual members of the College community to adopt the aims and values of this policy; to ensure that unfair discrimination or prejudice does not occur; to take responsibility for their own behaviour and modify it if necessary.

### **3.2 Advisory Committee on Equality (ACE)**

The College has a group consisting of staff, governors and students which will:-

- (a) Support teachers, support staff and managers - in understanding diversity and equality principles, in being aware of good practice, and in developing their policies, procedures and quality management.
- (b) Support the Student Council – in their promotion to all students of awareness of their rights and responsibilities in respect of diversity and equality, and their knowledge of how to respond appropriately to unfair or prejudicial behaviour or practices.
- (c) Evaluate the College's adherence to its commitment to equality of opportunity and identify improvements the College should make, report annually to the Academic Planning and Quality committee of the Corporation.
- (d) Enable the College to keep up to date with Equality legislation and good practice.
- (e) Evaluate the risks associated in relation to diversity and equality considerations and contribute to the College Risk Assessment process.

### **3.3 Monitoring**

- (a) College managers use and will continue to develop comprehensive and robust internal measures through which they can test whether the commitments in this policy are being met in their area of responsibility. They will use the information from those measures in their annual evaluation (self-assessment) of their area and action planning for improvement.
- (b) The College lesson observation process ensures that observations include reference to how diversity and equality is integrated within teaching and learning and ensuring that a culture of respecting individuals is developed in lessons.

- (c) The College managers will develop specific measures which will enable the College and its external stakeholders to evaluate improvement in equal opportunities practice over time.
- (d) The ACE (see 3.2) will evaluate the College's performance against its commitments in this policy and will report annually to the Academic Planning and Quality Committee.

#### **4. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Corporation in conjunction with the Diversity and Equality Manager and the Advisory Committee on Equality to review and monitor the effectiveness of this policy and to recommend change to it where necessary.
- 4.2 The effectiveness of the policy will be reported to the Corporation (via the Academic Planning and Quality Committee) in the Annual Report of the Advisory Committee on Equality and also in the Self-Assessment Report compiled by the Diversity and Equality Manager.