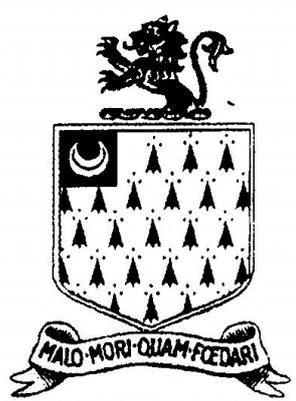


# Strode's College, Egham



## Equality and Diversity Policy

Reviewed by HR Committee: June 2014

Approved by the Corporation: July 2014

Next review date: June 2017

# Strode's College Egham

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### 1. Policy statement

- 1.1 The College is committed to equality and diversity for all who learn, work or use our services. Our culture is one of awareness, understanding and respect. We value differences, for example, in ethnic background, nationality, gender, disability, mental health, sexual orientation, age, religion and belief, gender reassignment, family circumstances, economic and social background.

We want everyone who works and learns at the College to achieve their full potential in an inclusive environment. The College opposes all forms of discrimination, bullying and harassment, including the above grounds, and other areas such as pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnerships. Staff and students throughout the College are expected to contribute to a climate which leads to a sense of well-being, confidence and belonging to the College.

In reviewing and developing its provision, the College will pursue equality of access. Diagnostic testing, course literature and learning materials should not discriminate unfairly against people from particular groups. Support to meet specific needs (e.g. physical access, language support) should be embedded wherever possible.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all members of the College, including governors, staff, students and people using our services. The policy is also binding on our external contractors, employers and other partners with whom the College collaborates.

### 3. Aims

- 3.1 This policy aims to clarify how the College complies with the Equality Act 2010 and establishes clear responsibilities for governors, staff, students and other stakeholders to ensure that all members of the College community are aware of their collective and individual duties under the Act.

### 4. Policy Details

- 4.1 The College recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010, which identifies the following protected characteristics: gender, age, disability, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race and religion and belief.
- 4.2 The College, as a public authority, is subject to the general equality duty and therefore, in the exercise of its functions, will have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.3 The College will publish information to demonstrate our commitment and compliance with the specific equality duties across our functions. The College will also prepare and publish equality objectives and details of engagement undertaken to achieve these objectives at least every four years.

## **5. Responsibilities**

5.1 Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the strategic direction of the College supports advancing equality and diversity.
- Ensuring the College meets all its legislative duties, including the general and the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 and all subsequent legislation.
- Setting and monitoring the equality objectives.
- Reviewing progress on advancing equality and diversity on a three yearly basis in line with the three year Strategic Plan.
- Striving to ensure that the membership of the body of governors and advisors reflects the diversity of the student communities at the College.
- Monitoring equality and diversity reporting through the committee structure.

5.2 The Principal and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:

- Leading the promotion of an inclusive College culture of awareness, understanding and respect.
- Implementing the Equality Act 2010, including the general and specific duties and all subsequent legislation, and of the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Ensuring the setting up and effective operation of a cross-college Equality and Diversity advisory group. This includes approving the group's role and membership which will be drawn from across the College, including students. The group will be chaired by a senior post holder.
- Approving the membership structure of the Equality and Diversity group.
- Producing and publishing the annual Equality and Diversity Report.
- Ensuring the staff and students understand their responsibilities and are given appropriate support and training to enable them to carry out their duties.
- Carrying out relevant statutory duties e.g. Equality Impact Assessments.

5.3 The Equality and Diversity Group is responsible for:

- Advancing Equality and Diversity by disseminating information about equality issues within the College.
- Communicating views and ideas on equality issues to all areas of the College.
- Encouraging and supporting teaching, learning and assessment activities across the College that embed and advance the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Producing the College's Equality and Diversity self-assessment report.
- Contributing to the Annual Equality and Diversity report.
- Providing a forum to address equality and diversity issues raised by staff and students.
- Making suggestions and recommendations for changes to College policies and practices in order to embed inclusive practices.
- Identifying and promoting relevant staff training opportunities and activities

5.4 All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting an inclusive College culture of awareness, understanding and respect.
- Challenging inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour.
- Contributing to self-assessment reporting on how equality and diversity are promoted in their areas.
- Reporting incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

5.5 Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Developing schemes of work, lesson content and resources which recognise and promote inclusion.
- Fully integrating and embedding equality and diversity within curriculum planning and teaching, learning and assessment.
- Regularly reviewing the promotion of equality and diversity in individual subject areas and improving the opportunities identified in the scheme of work.

5.6 Students are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive College culture of awareness, understanding and respect.
- Behave in a way which does not discriminate against, bully or harass any individual or group.
- Report incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

5.7 All Stakeholders (for example, parents/carers, governors, contractors, visitors) are expected to:

- Behave in a way which does not discriminate against, bully or harass any individual or group.
- Behave in a way that does not contravene the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.

5.8 Staff and students who do not comply with this policy may be subject to the College's Disciplinary Policies and Procedures.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

6.1 The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored by the designated Assistant Principal who will report to the Senior leadership Team should any amendments be required.

6.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years. Where necessary, the review will be more frequent to ensure compliance with current legislation.

6.3 The College's progress in meeting the legislative requirements of the Equality Act 2010 will be published on our website on an annual basis.

## **7. Legal Considerations and Relationship with other Policies**

All College policies need to be consistent with the Equality and Diversity Policy, and in particular:

- 7.1
- Admissions 16-18 Policy
  - Bullying and Harassment Policy
  - Complaints Procedure
  - Disciplinary (Misconduct & Capability) Policy
  - Disciplinary (Misconduct & Capability) Policy for Senior Post Holders
  - Dignity and Work Policy
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Flexible Working Policy
  - Grievance Policy for Senior Post Holders
  - Instruments & Articles of Government.
  - Marketing Policy
  - Pay Policy
  - Professional Development and Performance Management Policy
  - Staff Grievance Policy
  - Staff Recruitment Policy
  - Strobe's Equality Objectives
  - Student Management Policy

## **Appendix**

### **Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**

#### **General Principles**

Strode's College will comply with the DBS Code of Practice and it undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It also undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any individual on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders will be made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process as well as to individuals who, either at the start of their employment or during its course, give consent for online Status Checks to be undertaken on their DBS Certificate via the Update Service.

#### **Equalities**

Strode's College is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and will consider applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. All candidates should be selected for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

#### **Undertaking DBS checks**

A DBS check (whether new or via the Update Service) is only requested after it has been clearly identified that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a check is required, there will be a statement that a DBS check will be requested as part of the recruitment process.

Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we require all applicants to provide details of any unspent convictions, cautions, warnings or reprimands at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to designated persons (the Principal or HR Manager) within the College or organisation; and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

In undertaking enhanced or standard DBS checks the College is allowed to ask questions about an individual's unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in Babcock International Support Services Ltd. (our "umbrella body" for the obtaining of DBS clearances) who are involved in the DBS process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.

We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. However where an individual fails to reveal previous unspent convictions or any other relevant information this could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or termination of their employment, regardless of the relevance of the conviction to the nature of their employment.

The DBS have a Code of Practice for registered bodies and other recipients of DBS check information, and this is available on request.

### **Dealing with criminal record declarations and positive DBS checks**

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual working in the role they have applied for. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of their offences.

Where convictions or other relevant information is revealed a discussion or exercise to assess risk will be undertaken which will take into account a range of factors including the following:

- Whether the offence is related to children or adults
- The nature and seriousness of the offence
- The relevance of the offence to the individual's duties
- Whether the offence is spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Whether the offence is a 'one-off' or is part of a history of offending
- The length of time since the offence(s) took place
- The individual's age at the time of the offence(s)

Before any decision is taken as to whether or not any matter revealed in a DBS check would lead to withdrawing a conditional offer of employment or, if an individual has already commenced work and the contract of employment is to be terminated, the situation will be discussed with the individual concerned.