



# **Single Equality Scheme**

**2022**

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## **Forward**

### **A vision for equality, diversity and human rights**

Our approach to equality and diversity is to recognise and value difference whilst also holding on to what we all have in common. Our commitment to reducing the inequality gap underpins all our plans. We want to be an example to the whole country of successfully fusing the celebration of diversity with greater social inclusion and cohesion.

Success of the college's Single Equality Scheme will require ownership by Trustees, senior leaders, all staff, the college community and the students. .

The College's Single Equality Scheme (SSES) serves essentially two purposes:

1. To set out a college's overall commitment to equality and diversity in one central document. The SSES therefore contains:
  - The college's approach to all six Equality Strands: race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability, age and gender (including transgender), and
  - how the college will manage, plan and include its equality and diversity policy within its day to day work.
2. To act as the 'umbrella' document for both our statutory and non-statutory equality schemes. The SSES therefore contains:
  - the college's statutory equality schemes in relation to race, disability and gender
  - the college's non-statutory schemes in relation to sexual orientation, religion/belief and age.

The SSES will help ensure we focus more on the outcomes that matter to the community and people who use the services; and that the services are more accessible and delivered effectively.

The SSES incorporates, for the first time, information, issues and potential areas for action in relation to sexual orientation, age and religion/belief. While there is no legal requirement to develop 'schemes' in these areas, broadening the approach to all six recognised equality strands illustrates their commitment to ensuring equality for all.

## **Section 1 - Introduction**

The Park College Equality Scheme (SES) is a combined scheme designed to meet the Race, Disability, and Gender Equality Duties, as well as the requirements of the law for Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation. Our College Equality Scheme also includes how we will meet requirements under the Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003; Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. There is also a need to address bullying and discriminatory incidents, as these issues are prevalent in race, disability, gender, and homophobic incidents.

In the implementation of this Scheme we have moved from a focus on an individual response to an approach that builds on race, disability and gender considerations from the start and at every level of the college, at strategic, policy, management and classroom level. We need to be able to demonstrate what we have done and what we plan to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for students, staff, parents and other users of the college. This scheme will be monitored and delivered through the governors' role, College Improvement and Self Evaluation process.

We will ensure that every student irrespective of race, disability, gender, religion and belief is able to achieve high standards and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We will ensure that every student has access to the necessary support required to enable them to achieve their highest potential. We will ensure that the college's procedures for disciplining students and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable.

Our intention is to ensure that the adults working or volunteering in the college include as much as possible a balanced gender mix, appropriate representation of diverse ethnic groups and disabled people. We believe that this will provide good role models for students from all backgrounds.

We will involve stakeholders in the development of our scheme. They need to be involved from the very start and their involvement will inform the preparation, development, publication, review and reporting of the Scheme. The aim is to ensure that we meet the needs of people from different ethnic backgrounds, males and females, and young people and adults with disabilities.

## **Section 2 - College profile and values**

### **The college context:**

The Park College is in Southwark. Our college community is drawn from across the borough and represents Southwark's diverse ethnic minority communities. Young people from many minority ethnic communities and from non English speaking homes attend our college.

***At The Park College we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all our students, for their parents/carers, for staff and for all those receiving services from the college, irrespective of their gender, disability, ethnic background or other characteristics. We believe that diversity is a strength – for our college, its community and Britain as a whole – and we will work proactively to address inequality and foster positive attitudes to diversity so that all those who learn, teach and visit here are respected and valued.***

This Single Equality Scheme is intended to ensure that:

- We have integrated equality issues in all our key policies, service planning arrangements and performance management framework;
- We have ensured that the college's short, medium and long term planning contributes towards this scheme;
- We have ensured arrangements are in place to monitor and report on our progress against our action plans as well as our progress on integrating equality issues; and
- We have ensured we engage effectively with stakeholders and local communities in delivering and monitoring the scheme.

### **Section 3 - The Race Duty and Community Cohesion**

We recognise and welcome our responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRA). We have a written statement of our Race Equality Policy, and we implement the arrangements for developing a Race Equality Policy to meet the General Duty.

The purpose of our Race Equality Policy (REP) is to help us to:

- Prevent racial discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different racial, cultural and religious groups.
- Expand access across all communities and in all areas of college activity.
- Eliminate unlawful racial harassment.
- Ensure the policy is also part of planning arrangements that the college already makes.

We will report on progress annually and the review of our race equality policy will be brought in line with the review for the College Equality Scheme.

### **Community Cohesion**

We understand our duty to Promote Community Cohesion as part of the response to the duties contained in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

We understand that Community Cohesion is the process that should happen in all communities to ensure that different groups and individual people get on well together. It should also allow for new residents and existing residents to adapt to one another.

In order to achieve a cohesive community, we will need to:

- Promote understanding and engagement between our communities
- Encourage all children and families to feel part of the wider community
- Understand the needs and hopes of all our communities
- Tackle discrimination
- Increase life opportunities for all
- Ensure that teaching and the curriculum explores and addresses issues of diversity

### **Section 4 - The Disability Equality Duties**

We welcome the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the Duty. Our Scheme shows how we promote disability equality across all areas of the college, to disabled students, staff, parents, carers and other college users.

When carrying out our functions, we will have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

- Eliminate disability related harassment.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation of disabled people in public life.
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.
- Monitor staff and students by disability.
- Have a Disability Equality Scheme (DES).

We plan to increase access to education for disabled students by:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the college curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the college to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery of information to disabled students, to the standard of which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

## **Section 5 - The Gender Equality Duties**

We welcome the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty and this section sets out our commitment to meeting the duty. We will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender.
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions.

### **The Gender Equality Duty**

**The General Duty** on all authorities is when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination between women and men
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women

We will use contextual data to improve the support we provide to all students. Student results are analysed according to gender using CAPARK COLLEGE.

Targets for all students are personalised and there is a direct link with their Educational, health and Care Plan or statement of Special Educational Need.

Student achievement is monitored and assessed individually.

Achievement data is monitored by ethnicity, gender, disability and other groups relevant to our college.

Teaching materials used throughout the college reflect the diversity within society, without stereotyping or adapt them to particular needs. All students regardless of their gender are provided with the same opportunities throughout the college. They are encouraged to participate in activities and opportunities that they are interested in.

Teaching resources are used to promote equality between gender stereotypes. Where appropriate the curriculum would address issues such as, gender and domestic violence, sexual bullying and sexual exploitation at a level that is appropriate and understandable to the student group.

## **Section 6 - Religion and Belief**

We recognise the need to consider the actions outlined by the Equality Act 2009 (Religion & Belief) which requires us to assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures have on promoting equality for people based on their religion, belief and non-belief.

Religious Education is compulsory subject in this country and every college must teach it to statutory college aged students.

We teach what is known as the 'agreed Southwark syllabus' which is Christian and non-denominational. We have students who come from Muslim or Hindu families as well as from Catholic, Anglican and Humanist families. Some parents/carers are agnostic or atheist. We try to provide for all these beliefs in some way, so that no student feels left out. Our staff are aware of the spiritual needs of the students. We aim to ensure that individual views and needs and those of their parents/carers are catered for.

During assemblies and celebrations, we create an atmosphere to enable students to realise that something special is happening. Daily assemblies are centred around themes. These may include good news about students' achievements, a story, world events and news which students of all faiths can attend. In addition the whole college celebrates the major festivals such as Christmas, Chinese New Year, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Harvest, Easter and Diwali, thus reflecting both Christianity and other religions. If parents/carers do not want their child to take part in religious assemblies and event, they must let the college know.

## **Section 7 - Sexual Orientation**

We recognise the need to protect students from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007. We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the college and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process. Homophobic bullying, language and stereotypes will be challenged within the college by talking to the persons concerned. By heightening awareness, their rights and rights of others through college assemblies. Resources used will be adapted to enable the students group to access and understand their content , given that all students have Autism.

## **Section 8 Age**

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people. We recognise that society has negative attitudes, stereotypes and myths about youth, ageing, younger and older people. These attitudes and beliefs can lead to both younger and older people being socially and economically disadvantaged, excluded and marginalised. We believe that younger and older people have the right to equality of opportunity and that they make a significant and valuable contribution to the community at large.

Age equality means securing the equal participation in society of people of every age, securing a balance between equal citizenship, equality of opportunity, equality of outcome and respect for difference.

## **Section 9 - Anti-bullying and Positive Behaviour Policy Framework**

We state clearly that all forms of bullying are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We have set out the measures that our college will take to address bullying in our Anti-Bullying/Positive Behaviour Policy. We monitor data regarding incidents of racism, reporting where necessary to the Children and Young People's Service in Southwark Council.

The college's expectation with regards to protecting students from bullying is communicated to all staff through entry in the Staff Handbook.

## **Section 10 - Employment Practices**

We ensure that we observe the principles of equal opportunities in how we employ, develop and treat our staff.

All permanent posts are widely advertised. For each post a person specification is drawn up and short listing is carried out according to the given criteria. Interviews are hosted by Senior Staff and Governors and allowances are made to accommodate candidates with specific needs. Staff development is available to all staff and is according to whole college need and those areas identified through the performance management process.

Performance management is available to teaching and support staff. Staff are given regular opportunities for Professional Development according to their needs – these opportunities are both in college and with external agencies.

Park College has a number of policies directly relating to redundancy, restructuring and redeployment, grievance, performance management and capability.

## **Section 11 - Equality Impact Assessments**

Equality Impact assessment involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy, function or strategy will be on individuals and groups of people.

We review key policies, functions or procedures that have been assessed as relevant to meeting the duties set out under race, gender, disability and religion or belief legislation. In line with best practice we will also assess the impact of our key policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality.

The main system by which we will assess the impact of our current policies, functions or procedures will be through carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. The effects of current policies and practices on disabled students and staff and parents /carers boys and girls, men and women; and people from black and minority ethnic communities will be monitored and issues arising will be addressed.

## **Section 12 - Consultation and Information**

Park College College consults with parents and carers through a variety of means including

- yearly questionnaires,
- regular coffee mornings
- parent/teacher consultation appointments

- student council meetings

### **Section 13 - Equality Scheme Objectives**

This section sets out the objectives we have identified in order to eliminate discrimination and harassment and promotion of equality in relation to gender, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Curriculum activities, events and opportunities will be available to all students.

Training opportunities will be linked to performance management and will reflect the colleges priorities. These will be available to all staff as appropriate

College policies and practice will reflect and promote equality across all strands.

Additional provision and support will be provided to enable everyone within the college community to be active participant.

The college building has been designed to facilitate access for all. Staff recruitment will follow protocol and all interviews will include an interviewer who has completed safer recruitment training. Equality monitoring will be used to assess progress on implementation, review and develop later schemes.

As a result of the equality impact assessments that are carried out, priorities for the college will be fed into the college development policy and as a result the necessary financial resources shall be allocated to the area in need.

### **Section 14 - Roles and responsibilities**

The Park College accepts the responsibility to promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment, as outlined in the scheme.

The Trustees have responsibility for

- monitoring the delivery of the Colleges Equality Scheme will take place at governors meetings.
- Ensuring that we meet the requirements of the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Duties, and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2009 Religion and belief and Equality Act (Sexual orientation) Regulations 2007.

In partnership with the LGB, the Principal has responsibility for providing leadership and vision in respect of equality.

This will involve:

- Overseeing the implementation of equality policies and schemes
- Co-ordinating activities related to equality and evaluating impact
- Ensure that all who enter the college are aware of, and comply with, the equalities policy
- Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support
- Taking appropriate action in response to any prejudice-related incidents

All college staff have responsibility for:

- The implementation of the college's equalities policy and schemes
- Dealing with incidents of discrimination and knowing how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping
- Ensuring that they do not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity and culture, disability, sexual orientation or other groups vulnerable to discrimination

- Keeping up to date with legislation

### **Section 15 - Contracting and Procurement**

It is the intention of this college that any contractor that is employed by the college will adhere to best practice in terms of equality of opportunity during their time dealing with staff of the college.

### **Section 15 - Reporting and reviewing the scheme**

In line with the requirements of the Scheme we will produce an annual report on student progress and review and revise the College's Equality Scheme regularly.

This policy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by staff and governors to ensure that it is effective in tackling discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

The Principal will provide monitoring reports for review by the Local Governing Body. These will include: college population, workforce recruitment, retention and progression, key initiatives, progress against targets and future plans.

### **Section 16 - Publication**

The Colleges Equality Scheme is published as a separate document and is available on request.