

1. Policy Aim

1.1 Darlington College is committed to creating an environment where students, customers, staff, governors and other stakeholders celebrate equality and diversity in all activities creating a place where everyone, whatever their circumstances and/or background:

- Is fully respected
- Is listened to and encouraged to give their views
- Feels welcome
- Is treated in a friendly way
- Is treated in an equal way
- Has equality of opportunity
- Has full access to all activities wherever possible

1.3 Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, gender, marital status, civil partnership, nationality/citizenship, religion/belief, sexuality, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, social background or any personal characteristic of the individual(s) will not be tolerated. Students, customers, staff, governors and other stakeholders are expected to behave in a way which makes other people feel accepted, comfortable and safe.

1.4 Darlington College values everyone as an individual and celebrates diversity by encouraging people to be successful as themselves.

1.5 This policy will apply to subcontracted partner organisations in so far as they do not have their own policy which has been reviewed as being acceptable by the College.

2. Policy Statements

2.1 The College will work to ensure that:

- Equality of opportunity is embedded in all policies, practices, decision-making and evaluation processes
- A Single Equality Scheme is in place, published and monitored annually
- A visibly diverse environment is created which values difference and raises aspiration
- Flexible opportunities are offered which meet local learning needs and enable all students to realise their potential
- All staff are clear about standards and strategies to meet diverse student needs and are equipped to respond effectively
- The fullest participation of all students and staff is secured in all areas of College life
- Issues of under-representation will be addressed and where appropriate incorporated into equality and diversity impact measures

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- There are clear procedures for challenging discrimination, harassment and unacceptable behaviour
- Rigorous analysis is undertaken to identify equality gaps and strategies to address these issues are implemented and monitored through equality and diversity impact measures
- Comprehensive and imaginative feedback systems are developed to capture student, staff and stakeholder perceptions of our performance and potential for improvement
- Positive images of achievement from all sections of society are recognised and celebrated
- No member of its community is unfairly disadvantaged because of their social or economic background
- Job applications are welcomed from all sections of society and selection is made on the basis of specified skills and abilities. Exceptions are only permitted in the event that there is a genuine occupational requirement

2.2 Inclusiveness is central to all the decisions and actions of the College staff. Staff and governors are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of, and meet, their statutory responsibilities. Students are made aware of, and expected to behave in a way that is consistent with, the College’s Equality and Diversity policy. Individual breaches of the policy will be dealt with under the Student or Staff Disciplinary Procedures. The College will support individuals who have a justified complaint. The Whistle blowing procedure may be one mechanism in which an issue could be raised.

2.3 The College is fully committed to equality of opportunity and demonstrates commitment through actively embedding equality and diversity practice across the college’s operations.

2.4 The Principal and Chief Executive is responsible for monitoring this policy and will provide regular reports to the Executive and Corporation Board as appropriate.

2.5 The following sections of the policy support the overall aim above and the policy statements at 2.1 above and consider particular aspects of equality and diversity.

3. GENDER

The College will:

- Work actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all that enables full participation and success in learning and employment and will open up opportunities by actively combating discrimination in every area of College life. The College will not allow sexual harassment or unfavourable treatment in any form

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- Recognise that in society people are often treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of their gender. The College aims to eradicate gender discrimination and to actively promote gender equality
- Recognise the importance of listening and responding to the needs of every individual involved in College life. We understand the potential damage that may be caused by gender discrimination and will take positive action to break this cycle

The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and will:

- Oppose sexism and be committed to taking positive action to identify and remove sexism from College life
- Be proactive in the development of equality of opportunity for all throughout their College career
- Monitor and review the participation and performance of male and female students and redress inequalities
- Positively encourage students into non-traditional areas of study and work to minimise gender stereotyping
- Not tolerate sexual harassment in any area of College life. Any incidences of sexual harassment will be vigorously challenged through College disciplinary procedures
- Not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of gender re-assignment towards either trans-gendered or transsexual people
- Ensure that policies, procedures and opportunities for professional development will be family-friendly to encourage full participation
- Publish information relating to gender pay gaps and seek to reduce gaps in accordance with Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017

4. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The College:

- Is working actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all which is conducive to excellent practice in education, training and employment. The College actively combats discrimination, sexual harassment or unfavourable treatment in every area of College life
- Recognises that people are often treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of their sexuality. The College's aim is to eradicate discrimination on the grounds of sexuality and to promote equality of opportunity for all

The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and will:

- Oppose discrimination on the grounds of sexuality and are committed to taking positive action to identify and remove homophobia from College life

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- Encourage positive acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual, gender re-assignment and heterosexual people
- Not tolerate homophobic harassment in any area of College life. College commitments will be made explicit to new students and staff. Sexual harassment and discrimination will be challenged through College disciplinary procedures
- Employment policies and procedures will be family-friendly and will apply equally to households based on same-sex partnerships and to non-traditional parenting and care arrangements where appropriate legislation is in place

5. DISABILITY

5.1 The College:

- Aims to identify and eliminate attitudes, practices and procedures that discriminate against people on the grounds of disability and/or learning difficulty or where someone has a long term physical or mental health condition
- Is committed to ensuring an inclusive, professional and friendly environment for students, employees and members of the public with disabilities and/or learning difficulties or long term physical or mental health conditions.

The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to making any reasonable adjustments within the Corporation's business activities that will promote equal access and opportunity for students, employees and members of the public with disabilities and/or learning difficulties or long term physical or mental health conditions using College facilities.

5.2 The College will ensure that all disabled students and students with learning difficulties and students who have mental and physical health conditions (that have a long-term effect on their ability to carry out their day to day activities) have access to:

- Appropriate opportunities to disclose disability and/or learning difficulty throughout their time as a student at the College
- Flexible and inclusive learning opportunities
- Assessment of need to ensure that any reasonable adjustments to College provision are made and are appropriate to the individual
- Direct and indirect, student centred learning support to enable access to College provision including specialist equipment and technology
- All other aspects of College provision
- Information in relevant formats to ensure equal access
- Information on support available

5.3 The College will ensure that all potential and current employees with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and employees who have mental and physical health conditions (that

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have a long-term effect on their ability to carry out their day to day activities) have access to:

- Appropriate opportunities to disclose disability and/or learning difficulty or physical or mental health conditions throughout their time as an employee at the College
- Employment opportunities including promotion and are not refused due specifically to a disability and/or learning difficulty or physical or mental health conditions
- Specialist equipment and technology and other reasonable adjustments to allow equal opportunity as an employee
- Information in relevant formats to ensure equal access
- The College will maintain strong links with external agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective support for staff with disabilities and/or learning difficulties or physical or mental health conditions

5.4 The College is committed to:

- Ensuring that its services and facilities are open to the public
- Equal and dignified treatment in the provision of those services and facilities
- Continual improvement in all aspects of equal access in all areas of College provision
- Maintaining strong links with external agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective support for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties or physical or mental health conditions
- Undertaking health and safety risk assessments to assess entry onto programmes where appropriate

See also **STS10P**: [Fitness to Study Procedure](#)

6. RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE OR BELIEF

The College:

- 6.1 Recognises and fully accepts their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that all practices, attitudes or procedures include students or staff whatever their religion or religious beliefs.
- 6.2 Actively supports and welcomes diversity amongst its students, staff and visitors, recognising the particular contributions to the achievement of its mission that can be made by individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences and will be sensitive to the religious beliefs of similar philosophical beliefs of staff and students when planning events and activities as well as those who do not hold a religious belief.

6.3 The College will:

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- Actively tackle and discrimination or unfavourable treatment to anyone because of their religion or beliefs or for not holding a belief or following a religion.
- Ensure that all provision, practices and procedures are inclusive to all regardless of religion or belief or non-belief.
- Ensure that regardless of religion or religious beliefs, staff and students are protected from harassment or victimisation (past or present)

7. RACE AND ETHNICITY

7.1 The College:

- Is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations between persons of different groups and avoiding racial discrimination, whether direct or indirect
- Recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

7.2 The College actively supports and welcomes diversity amongst its students, staff and visitors, recognising the particular contributions to the achievement of its mission that can be made by individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

7.3 The College is committed to:

- Actively tackling racial discrimination, and promoting racial equality and good race relations
- Encouraging, supporting and helping all students and staff to reach their potential
- Working with other institutions, local communities and others to tackle racial discrimination and to encourage and promote good practice in achieving race equality
- Assessing the effects of the policy on staff and students from different racial groups
- Monitoring, by racial group, the admission and progress of students, and the recruitment and career development of staff
- Promoting the race equality policy inside and outside the College

British Values –

The College will actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Actively promoting the values means challenging opinions or behaviours that are contrary to fundamental British values. This should enable all students to:

- develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;

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- accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely;
- acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people; and
- encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

8. AGE

8.1 The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and:

- Recognises that people are often discriminated against and stereotyped because of their age. This is evident in the range of beliefs, assumptions and attitudes which underpin judgements about an individual’s potential, behaviour and preferences
- From the recruitment process to staff leaving college employment, the college will not discriminate on the grounds of age. The College will not discriminate against students on the grounds of age, except where age is a mandatory criterion for entry to a course
- Recognises the value of Life Long Learning and that an individual’s life experiences add to their role as a member of the College community and their personal learning experience

8.2 The College will:

- Promote and actively support educational achievement for people of all ages
- Work to remove arbitrary age barriers to educational access and to the realisation of individual potential and success
- Provide learning experiences which meet the needs of particular cohorts
- Promote actively up-skilling and re-training programmes for those in paid employment or who wish to re-enter training
- Develop teaching and learning and support strategies to meet the particular needs of students from different age groups
- Promote positive images of achievement by people of all ages and which recognise and celebrate the knowledge and experience which people bring to their learning throughout life
- Welcome job applications from all age groups and select on the basis of specified skills and abilities

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9. GENDER IDENTITY

9.1 The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and:

- Recognises that in society transsexual people are often discriminated against and stereotyped.
- Believes that prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of gender identity have no place in an educational establishment. There should be no discrimination employment on the grounds of transgender.
- Recognises that people are often treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of their gender identity. The College's aim is to eradicate discrimination on the grounds of sexuality and to promote equality of opportunity for all
- Aims to eliminate discrimination in its structures and employment/recruitment practices as well as to encourage change in individual behaviour and attitudes and ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for all staff and students.

9.2 The College will:

- Encourage an openness of approach to all potential job applicants and learners.
- Ensure that all of a transgender person's rights are met, as are every employee's rights under The Equality Act and Equal Treatment Directive.
- Institute protocols for gender transitions
- Provide workplace transition guidelines to tailor to the specific needs of a transitioning employee.
- Raise awareness and understanding of staff and learners regarding transgender.
- Actively tackle discrimination and promote equality.

10. PREGNANCY/MATERNITY/PATERNITY/ADOPTION

10.1 The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and:

- Aims to create a supportive environment for men and women, which is conducive to excellent practice in education, training and employment.
- Aims to identify and eliminate attitudes, practices and procedures that discriminate against people on the grounds of pregnancy and/or maternity.
- Recognises that in society people can perhaps be treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment due to pregnancy/maternity.

10.2 The College will:

- Ensure that all of a person's rights are met as per the Equality Act with regard to Pregnancy/Maternity.

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- Ensure protection of women against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.
- Ensure protection of men against discrimination on the grounds of paternity and any statutory paternity leave to which he is entitled.
- Ensure protection of men and women against discrimination on the grounds of adoption and any statutory adoptive leave to which they are entitled.
- Provide breastfeeding facilities in college.

11. MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

11.1 The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and:

- Aims to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for both men and women regardless of marital status.

11.2 The College will:

- Ensure that all of a person's rights are met as per the Equality Act with regard to Marriage/Civil Partnership.
- Take positive action to work towards creating equality of opportunity in all areas of College activity for learners and potential learners, employees and potential employees.

12. EX-OFFENDERS

12.1 The College:

- Recognises the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (and any subsequent amendments thereto), in terms of the right of individuals seeking to gain employment with the College or seeking to join a College programme not to be questioned about offences which are spent
- Recognises that the Act sets education as an exemption to this, where education is the occupation
- Not discriminate against any individual seeking employment or enrolling on the grounds of previous offences, with the exception of circumstances that might put existing staff or students in danger
- In the appointment/application process meet the requirements of the Act apart from where the exception in terms of education is applicable

12.2 As an organisation using the Government's Disclosure and Barring Service to assess suitability for positions of trust, Darlington College complies fully with the DBS guidelines

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and undertakes to treat all people fairly. The college will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The College actively promotes equality of opportunity for the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

13. INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

13.1 The College:

- Will work actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all, that enables full participation and success in learning and employment and will open up opportunities by actively combating discrimination in every area of College life
- Recognises that people in society can be treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of personal characteristics. The College aims to eradicate such discrimination
- Will be proactive in the development of equality of opportunity for all throughout their College career

14. GDPR

No personal information is gathered by the Equality and Diversity function of the College. Data trends are analysed via information gathered through other functions of the College which follow GDPR regulations.

15. Approval

Signed:



Kate Roe
(Principal/Chief Executive)

Date: 29.06.21

Endorsed by the College Corporation

Signed:



Emma Wright
(Chair)

Date: 29.06.21

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