



## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

### **College Vision**

To be an outstanding, inclusive Catholic sixth form college; valuing the individual, celebrating learning and raising aspirations.

### **College Mission**

We are a Catholic College dedicated to the education and development of the whole person and supporting all students to realise their full potential. In becoming an outstanding learning organisation SJR will have a strong sense of purpose and a commitment to shared values within a Christian community. We will establish a unique and challenging environment where every individual is valued, talents are recognised and nurtured, achievements are celebrated and dedication is rewarded. To achieve this as a community we will:

- Welcome all students who are happy to be educated within a Christian environment
- Value the uniqueness and dignity of each individual
- Deliver the highest standards of teaching and learning
- All show a commitment to our work and the Christian values of the College
- Provide equality of opportunity, with mutual respect and positive encouragement
- Build and further develop local, national and international partnerships

Core values in daily life at St John Rigby College are expressed as:

- Genuine concern for others
- Support for and challenge of one another
- High standards and expectations
- Consistency and perseverance
- Recognition of talents, progress and achievements

## College Strategic Objectives

1. To embed a learning culture which improves the standards of student achievement, raises aspirations and promotes excellence across the full range of the College curriculum. We will focus on three key areas of outcomes for learners:
  - 1.1 *Improving the consistency of outcomes across all courses*
  - 1.2 *Raising student success rates and challenging all courses to exceed Sixth Form College national benchmarks*
  - 1.3 *Continuing to improve the proportion of students achieving high grades and achieving a positive value added score for all courses*
2. To widen student participation, in partnership with other providers, through the offer of a comprehensive range of high quality courses that meet the needs of our students and support developments and provision within partner high schools.
3. To work collaboratively with groups within the College's local and extended community.
4. To further develop the estate to provide an outstanding learning environment for the whole College community.
5. To sustain a culture where all staff are committed to SJR's core values, where continuous professional development is encouraged and organisational efficiency and effectiveness are achieved.
6. To maintain the College's financial stability in order to implement the College Development Plan.

## Policy Statement

At St John Rigby College we recognise the potential to transform people's lives and welcome a diverse range of students and staff to the College community. We embrace the challenge to make a positive difference to the culture of the College, where opportunities to excel are available to all. We continue to strive to create a College that is inclusive at all levels and in every system and process. Our vision for diversity remains clear and consistent: to be a motivated and diverse College community, where staff and students demand the highest standards from each other and work together to maximise the benefits of difference.

Our Equality and Diversity policy enables us to continue to take a long term strategic approach to diversity and inclusion, whilst retaining the ability to deliver focussed actions to improve the experience and perceptions of specific diverse groups.

## Duties

The Equality Act 2010:

The Equality and Diversity policy supports St John Rigby College's compliance with the principles and requirements of the Equality Act 2010

The Public Sector Equality Duty, (2011), covers 8 of the 9 'protected characteristics'. Being married or in a Civil Partnership is not a protected characteristic for FE institutions.

## General Duty

The Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) – A public authority must in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
- Advance<sup>1</sup> equality of opportunity between persons with or without a protected characteristic
- Foster good relations<sup>2</sup> between persons who have a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

The College is committed to meeting the aims of anti-discrimination legislation, by

1. taking reasonable steps to remove any disadvantages experienced by those who share a relevant protected characteristic.
2. taking steps to meet the needs of those who share a protected characteristic.
3. encouraging those with a relevant protected characteristic to participate in activity where participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
4. meeting the needs of disabled people and taking reasonable steps to take account of impairments.

## Specific Duty

1. The College needs to gather two kinds of equality information:
  - a) from engagement with interested people on their needs
  - b) from other data sources – internal, local and national
2. The College needs to use this information to analyse the effect of College policies and practices on people who share a relevant characteristic. This will be via the stated measures of success.
3. The College publishes information annually sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the three aims of the General Duty, including the above analysis and the information it was based on
4. Prepare and publish specific and measurable objectives for a four year cycle to further one or more of the aims, with details of
  - a) the engagement it undertook when developing its objectives and
  - b) how progress towards these objectives should be measured

## Goals

- To develop a fully inclusive College community which recruits and retains students (up to the age of 19) and staff from all sectors of society.
- To nurture the talents of all students and staff, irrespective of their background or characteristics, and develop them within a positive and supportive culture.
- To implement measures to ensure that there are no differences between different groups of students, irrespective of their background or characteristics
- To implement a skills strategy in support of learners
- The Equality and Diversity group in the College will work to enhance the College reputation and culture. Members will continue to help build positive relationships between students, staff and external stakeholders. They aim to meet the needs and expectations of all stakeholders through the Equality and Action Plan, communicating a vision where equality and diversity is valued by all.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'advance' replaces 'promote' – the intention is to move forward, to get somewhere and to achieve improved outcomes.

<sup>2</sup> 'Foster good relations' includes having due regard to tackle prejudice and promote understanding

## Measures of Success

We will demonstrate our commitment by the positive actions we take across 8 protected characteristics.

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and Maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual Orientation

We will monitor and assess our success in the following ways:

- By the extent to which we succeed in engaging people in the ongoing implementation of the policy. This will be achieved via staff networks, through working with and involving people in all departments, by seeking and acting upon the views of students and staff to develop action plans and measurable outcomes.
- By the extent to which actions are achieved. The actions and outcomes will be reviewed and reported upon by the Equality and Diversity Group to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors annually.
- By the Equality and Diversity Staff Survey and the outcomes of resulting actions.
- By the comparison of student recruitment and success data by gender, disability, ethnicity and race, religion or belief and socio-economic group.
- By the achievement of a positive and inclusive culture as evidenced by an increase in our Equality Data disclosure rates for the eight protected characteristics. This will be monitored through surveys, and the extent to which our staff and students become actively involved with the Equality and Diversity policy and recommend the College as a progressive place to study and work.

## Priorities

The Equality and Diversity policy focuses on a number of key themes to facilitate change, create a sense of belonging and further develop a culture where everyone feels valued and engaged. We have identified the following key priorities for St John Rigby College:

- Integrating inclusion into College strategies

The curriculum offer at College will advance the spiritual, moral, cultural and educational development of all and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We value equally the needs of all who learn here and aim for all to realise their potential. In line with the Mission of the College the curriculum must reflect the needs of the local area as well as a rapidly changing world and diverse society. Creating an open and inclusive culture in which everyone feels valued and respects each other is key, as is taking decisive action to advance Equality and Diversity. Services and departments across the College will address equality and diversity issues through the Self Assessment cycle. The Principal's Report to Governors provides regular updates on the work of the Equality and Diversity group and includes annual submissions from Heads of Department on subject based Equality and Diversity activities.

- Developing an inclusive culture

Seeking to make a positive difference demands continuous commitment and reinforcement from all levels. It is essential that we work collaboratively with all students, staff and external stakeholders to ensure that they feel able to engage with and help shape our culture of inclusion.

We want all staff and students to understand what the vision “Equality and Diversity” means to them personally and what their responsibilities are. To enable them to do this, we need to help prepare them for the challenges that difference brings, and help them appreciate the benefits of diversity.

- Engaging and Involving people

We will ensure staff, students and other stakeholders can share their stories and experiences of good practice and areas for improvement with us. We will engage managers at all levels to forge a common culture and vision which embraces a community that is fully inclusive to all.

We will support staff, students and other stakeholder representatives of those with protected characteristics to act as consultation groups for College. Training will be necessary to raise awareness and opportunities for involvement will be provided. We will involve these groups in reviewing progress and setting further objectives.

- Ownership of Equality Data

Measuring and analysing data is a catalyst for action and will guide the Equality and Diversity Group, managers and Governors to identify areas of strength and vulnerability.

We will extend our staff monitoring via the staff and recruitment analysis to include all equality characteristics covered by the Equality Act, to encourage staff to share information with the College and we will consider ways of gathering wider student equality information. This will help us to develop future actions.

The Equality and Diversity Group will review data annually to assess progress and help set new objectives in our action plans.

#### **Related Policies:**

Data Protection Policy

Exams Policy

Learning Support Handbook

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

SEMH Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Staff Disability Policy and Procedures

Staff Disciplinary Procedures

Staff Wellbeing Policy

Student Admission Policy

Student Charter

Student Disability Policy

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy