

Thomas Knyvett College

EQUALITY POLICY

Purpose: The governors and staff of Thomas Knyvett College are fully committed to providing all students with an equal opportunity to reach their full potential. As set out in the Equality Act (2010), this covers sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, students who are pregnant or who are undergoing or who have undergone gender reassignment. Our aim of "Bringing Out the Best" applies equally to all our students. We are proud of, and value, the diverse backgrounds of our students. We believe as a comprehensive school every child has the right to a challenging and stimulating education. We also believe that the curriculum itself should reflect the cultural diversity of our society as a whole, so that all students grow up with an awareness of the contribution made by other cultures to that society, even if they do not directly encounter them at school. The concept of Equality of Opportunity is one of our core values as a school. As an employer, we similarly strive to ensure we do not discriminate against employees and potential employees in all matters of recruitment, promotion and training.

Date created:	January 2012	Governors Committee Responsible:
Created/implemented:	April 2012	Senior Leader Contact: Deputy Headteacher
Review period:	Annually	
Last reviewed:	June 2013	
Last re-written:		Next due for review: June 2014

Legal Background

The legal and local framework for this policy is the Equality Act (2010).

Aims and Values

Thomas Knyvett College is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students to maximise their potential regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and gender reassignment. We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, carers, governors and members of the wider community.

At Thomas Knyvett College we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

The Equality Policy provides a framework for Thomas Knyvett College to pursue our equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination (both direct and indirect), harassment and victimisation (see Appendix 1), promote equality of opportunity, good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all our activities.

We will seek to ensure that no students, staff, parents, carers or any other person through their contact with the school receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This includes the protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act (2010) – sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, students who are pregnant, undergoing or who have undergone gender reassignment.

As a school, we aim to:

- Provide a secure environment in which all our students can flourish and achieve.
- Provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;
- Prepare students for life in a diverse society in which they are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- Include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- Provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age and ability, gender reassignment, pregnancy;

- Plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity;
- Actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
- Make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.

To achieve these aims we will:

- Involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- Publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community;
- Collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage;
- Use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to students' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- Ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
- Have high expectations of behaviour, through the use of Behaviour for Learning, which demonstrates respect to others.

Leadership, Management and Governance

Thomas Knyvett College is committed to:

- Being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of school life and the wider community;
- Encouraging, supporting and enabling all students and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
- Working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our **Single Equality Scheme** is followed.

Responsibilities

School governors are responsible for:

- Making sure that the school complies with current equality legislation, in particular the Equality Act (2010);
- Making sure the equality policy and its procedures are followed.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, students and their parents/carers know about it;
- Making sure the procedures are followed;
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working and providing training for them on the policy, if necessary;
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.

All school staff are responsible for:

- Modeling good practice;
- Dealing with discriminatory incidents;
- Being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- Promoting equality and avoiding discrimination against anyone;
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking training and learning opportunities.

Students are responsible for:

- Keeping equality and diversity issues on the School Council agenda, through a shared input with staff on developing policies relating to this area. For example the anti-bullying policy and specifically racist and homophobic bullying and developing school/class rules which challenge discriminatory behavior

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Upholding the policy via their commitment to our Home-School Agreement that reflects our inclusive ethos and policies that support this. e.g. Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following our equality policy

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with a named member of staff and governor. These responsibilities include:

- Coordinating and monitoring work on equality issues;

- Dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents);
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of students;
- Monitoring exclusions.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

This Equality Policy is supported by a Single Equality Scheme. The Scheme is linked to the school development plan and includes targets promoting equality. The Equality Policy will be reviewed yearly to ensure that it is effective in eliminating discrimination, promoting access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups and that it does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.

Any pattern of inequality found as a result of impact assessment will be used to inform future planning and decision making.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body as required.

Appendix One

Unlawful Behaviour

The Equality Act (2010) defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour:

- 1. Direct Discrimination** – this occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat, or would treat, other people.
- 2. Indirect Discrimination** – this occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.
- 3. Harassment** – this is 'unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.' This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour.
- 4. Victimisation** – this occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done in connection with the Equality Act ('a protected act'). A protected act includes anything that is done under or in connection with the Equality Act.