

EQUITY, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

1. Policy Aim

- 1.1 Stoke on Trent College is committed to creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect and where discrimination is actively challenged. Everyone will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment and being a transsexual person, pregnancy or maternity, being married or in a civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. The College aims to create an inclusive and safe learning culture, which contributes to community cohesion and engagement.
- 1.2 To achieve its full potential, the College recognises the importance of meeting the needs of and acknowledging the individual perspectives on life of the diverse community it serves.
- 1.3 The College is proud of its diverse community and takes opportunities to celebrate, evaluate and value the differences between individuals within the whole College, local and wider community
- 1.4 The Equality Duty does not require public bodies to treat everyone the same. Rather, it requires public bodies to think about people's different needs and how they can be met.
- 1.5 The College seeks to ensure that this commitment is reflected in all College environments and through learning in all its contexts. All Governors, staff and learners, partners, visitors, contractors and subcontractors working on behalf of the College share this commitment.
- 1.6 Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (EDI) underpins our College values of:
 - Inclusive Embracing diversity, an inclusive College where everyone is valued and respected. We are 'One Team'
 - Collaborative Partnerships with purpose, strong relationships for greater impact
 - Courageous Bold and brave, doing thing better and differently, an enterprising college
 - Ambitious The pursuit of excellence, an aspirational vision for successful futures
 - Nurturing A safe and positive place the learn and work, we never give up on our learners

2. Legislation

2.1 The legislative framework is set out in Appendix 2. The Equality Policy is set out in Appendix 3.

3. Policy Statements

3.1 Equity at Stoke on Trent College means recognising that individuals need different support to reach an equal outcome

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- 3.2 Equality at Stoke on Trent College means supporting everyone to fulfil their potential.
- 3.3 Diversity at Stoke on Trent College means respecting that everyone is unique and celebrating the benefits this brings
- 3.4 The College's priorities for EDI are:
 - Supporting everyone to fulfil their potential
 - Involving and consulting widely in EDI matters
 - Advancing and celebrating EDI
 - Providing training and information for the College community linked to national standards, where appropriate
 - Measuring the impact of the College activity relating to EDI and reporting on progress annually
 - Promoting respect and inclusive values
 - Providing facilities and activities that are fully accessible wherever possible.
- 3.5 The College will fulfil its duties under Equality legislation. It is the Governing body's responsibility to ensure that the College:
 - Publishes and monitors the College Equality Objectives
 - Consults widely
 - Eliminates unlawful discrimination, bullying and harassment
 - Advances equality of opportunity
 - Fosters good relations.

4. Our Commitment to FREDIE and Investors in Diversity

The college is proud to be working towards the **Investors in Diversity Silver UK accreditation** through the **National Centre for Diversity**. This reflects our deep-rooted commitment to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment for our students, staff, and wider community.

We are actively embedding the core values of FREDIE—Fairness, Respect, Equity/Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Engagement—across all aspects of college life. These principles underpin our culture and guide how we teach, support, and empower everyone within our learning community:

- **Fairness**: We ensure all individuals are treated with integrity and impartiality, promoting equity in every decision and process.
- **Respect**: We encourage mutual respect throughout our college, valuing the voices, experiences, and contributions of all.
- **Equity/Equality**: We are committed to removing barriers and ensuring that everyone has access to equal opportunities to succeed and thrive.

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- **Diversity**: We celebrate the unique backgrounds, identities, and perspectives that enrich our college community.
- **Inclusion**: We strive to create a welcoming and accessible environment where everyone feels they belong and are supported to achieve their full potential.
- **Engagement**: We actively involve students, staff, and stakeholders in shaping the direction and continuous improvement of our practices.

By aligning ourselves with the FREDIE values, we aim to build a dynamic, inclusive college that not only meets the needs of our learners and staff but also reflects and respects the diversity of the communities we serve.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 Everyone involved in the life of the College has the responsibility to:
 - Listen to what others have to say and respect their point of view
 - Speak out, or report it, if they witness or are aware of bullying, vindictiveness, verbal or physical aggression and not assume that it is someone else's responsibility
 - Question their own prejudices and assumptions
 - Familiarise themselves with the responsibilities that equalities legislation places on them.
- 5.2 The Principal and Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the operation of the Policy.
- 5.3 The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams are responsible for ensuring the Policy is implemented in all aspects of its work. They are responsible in ensuring the widening of participation in all other aspects of College business and in creating community cohesion in education and employment to meet the needs of learners.

The Executive Leadership Team will contribute to and monitor the impact of EDI actions.

- 5.4 The Assistant Principal Student Experience is responsible for leading the EDI Board, with the support of the Chief People Officer: to monitor the implementation of objectives and action plans; advising the Executive Leadership Team of action needed; reporting to Governors; and monitoring and reporting on progress of action to address identified barriers and quality gaps.
- 5.5 The Chief People Officer is responsible for formulating, monitoring evaluating and reviewing the Policy in respect of staff.
- 5.6 The EDI Board is responsible for monitoring EDI practices and to complete regular reviews and update their activities in achieving the EDI objectives and targets.

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- 5.7 The College Management Team (CMT) is responsible for implementing the EDI Policy in relation to staff and students for their area of responsibility.
- 5.8 All staff have a duty to comply with the requirements of this Policy.
- 5.9 Teaching staff will create a classroom environment where all students can thrive together and understand that individual characteristics make people unique and not 'different' in a negative way. Teachers will work with Heads of Learning to provide opportunities within their scheme of work to promote EDI. They will, wherever possible, provide a diverse range of learning opportunities to facilitate access and achievement for the whole community.
- 5.10 The Student Council is responsible for ensuring that the Student's Union conducts its business in a manner which conforms to the requirements of this Policy and promotes equality of opportunity amongst its membership.
- 5.11 Learners are responsible for their behaviour and conduct and must abide by the learner charter ("The Deal" and the EDI Policy. "The Deal" sets out the rights and responsibilities of learners at the College.
- 5.12 The Assistant Principal Student Experience is responsible for ensuring that "The Deal" is regularly reviewed, updated and communicated to all learners, wherever they are studying.
- 5.13 The Executive Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that charters are reviewed in light of current equality and diversity legislation.
- 5.14 The Heads of Learning are responsible for ensuring that all learners undertake a learner induction led by a member of the teaching team for their course. The teaching team makes clear to learners that discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation will not be tolerated.
- 5.15 The learner induction supporting information and tutorials are approved by the Assistant Principal Curriculum and Quality. This includes a tutorial on EDI. Guidance and suggested teaching materials are available on Canvas and are available for staff to use during induction and throughout the tutorial programme.
- 5.16 Each Tutor will agree a code of conduct with their learner groups for the classroom or workshop, which will be followed by each learner.

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6. Challenging Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation

- 6.1 Where an incident involving discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation occurs in the classroom, the teacher should refer learners to "The Deal", the learner induction and the classroom agreed code of conduct.
- 6.2 In addition to 5.1 above, the staff member should refer to the College's Learner Disciplinary Procedure and take appropriate action.
- 6.3 Where an incident involving discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation occurs outside the classroom, the matter will normally be resolved through the College's disciplinary processes.
- 6.4 All Staff are responsible for their behaviour and conduct and for the advancement of EDI both in their classrooms / work areas and on premises used by the College. All staff are entitled to, and must attend, a College staff induction. This staff induction includes a mandatory module for EDI. Staff may undertake additional EDI training by making a formal application through Staff Development requests.
- 6.5 Staff must report all incidents involving College learners or staff where discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation has occurred relating to the protected characteristics of others, be this on or off premises used by the College.
- 6.6 Staff are also responsible for intervening where they feel this does not put them at personal risk/ harm.
- 6.7 Where an incident involving discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation occurs and involves a member of staff, it must be reported to their line manager. This matter will be investigated in accordance with the staff Bullying and Harassment Policy. Further guidance is available in the Whistleblowing Policy, Staff Professional Code of Conduct and the Safer Working Practices CPD.
- 6.8 External partners with which the College works must comply with the EDI Policy and share the College's commitment to EDI, as set out in the Policy statement.
- 6.9 When drawing up agreement or contract with external partners, the College must ensure that external partners are made aware of the requirement in 5.8 and must assure itself that the external partner has appropriate policies and procedures in place regarding EDI.
- 6.10 Visitors, contractors and subcontractors must comply with the College's EDI Policy. College staff meeting / employing visitors, contractors and subcontractors are responsible for making them aware of the College's EDI Policy.

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7. Data Collection and Monitoring

- 7.1 The personal data of learners and staff are collected and used in line with the College's Data Protection Policy.
- 7.2 Course teams, programme areas, central services and the College as a whole are responsible for monitoring the data available for each of the protected characteristics and taking appropriate action to advance EDI.
- 7.3 Course teams and learning areas monitor enrolment, retention, and achievement data at appropriate points throughout the academic year. They evaluate this data in their self-assessment reports and, where there are differences in data for different groups, identify actions to eliminate these differences. These actions are added into Quality Improvement Plans and monitored regularly.
- 7.4 All areas of the College use the data available to them centrally and also ensure that they put in place systems to monitor data for different groups of people. Key data include those relating to staff (applications, interviews, employment, turnover and staff satisfaction) and learners (enquiries, applications, interviews, admissions, complaints, disciplinaries, additional learning support and learner satisfaction).
- 7.5 The College Leadership and Management teams evaluate the full range of data in the College's self-assessment reports and identifies actions to eliminate these differences. These actions are inserted into Quality Improvement Plans and are monitored regularly.
- 7.6 The College's EDI Board monitors EDI data relating to learners and staff.
- 7.8 The Equality Objectives Action Plan supports the overall Policy aim and is published online and can be made available in alternative formats.

8. Curriculum development, delivery and impact measures

- 8.1 Key issues including EDI are included as part of the review of curriculum programmes.
- 8.2 As part of the self-assessment processes, learning areas, central services and the College identify where different groups are performing differently and actions to be taken to eliminate these differences.
- 8.3 These actions are included in Quality Improvement / action plans
- 8.4 This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis further to a review of the impact measures.

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9. Communication and Engagement

9.1 Stoke on Trent College will take every opportunity to celebrate the diversity of our learners, staff, volunteers and local community. We highlight our commitment to this every year during our EDI week as well as through our EDI calendar and other College enrichment events that support our local community and create a sense of social awareness.

10. Approval

Approved by the College Executive team and Corporation Board.

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Appendix 1 - Definitions

Diversity	Diversity is about embracing the differences
	that individuals bring, including (but not limited
	to) and actively fostering a culture that
	celebrates diverse perspectives.
Equality	Equality is ensuring that all individuals are
	treated fairly and consistently, with equal access
	to opportunities and resources, regardless of
	their personal characteristics or background.
Equity	Equity recognises that individuals have different
	needs, circumstances and experiences. We
	therefore aim to provide tailored support and
	remove barriers to enable everyone to achieve
	fair and meaningful outcomes.
Inclusion	Inclusion is about creating an environment where
	everyone feels respected, welcomed, and able to
	contribute fully. Inclusion means actively listening
	to, involving and valuing individuals, ensuring
	that everyone feels a sense of belonging and
	purpose.
Protected Characteristics	Protected characteristics (previously called
	"strands") are definitions for groups of people
	given protection under the Equality Act 2010.
	They are age, disability, gender reassignment,
	marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and
	maternity, race, relation and belief, sex and
	sexual orientation. (see appendix 2, item 5 for
	details)
Direct Discrimination	Someone is treated less favourably than another
	person because of a protected characteristic.
Direct Discrimination by Association	Someone is treated less favourably because they
	associate with another person who has a
	protected characteristic.
Direct Discrimination by Perception	Someone is treated less favourably than another
2 30. Sloomination by 1 orooption	person because others think they have a
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Indirect Discrimination	A rule or policy that applies to everyone, but
mandet Bisdiminiation	disadvantages people with a particular protected characteristic
Harassment	Someone behaves in such a way that their conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an environment that is offensive, hostile, degrading, humiliating or intimidating, even if this behaviour is not directed at the person making a complaint.
Victimisation	Someone is treated badly because they have made/supported a complaint or grievance under the Act.
Discrimination arising from disability	A disabled person is treated less because of something connected to their impairment
Reasonable Adjustment	The duty to make reasonable adjustment comprises three requirements. For education providers, these requirements are to take reasonable steps to: • avoid the substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled learners at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled • remove or alter a physical feature or provide a reasonable means of avoiding such a feature where it puts disabled learners at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled • provide an auxiliary aid where disabled learners would, but for the provision of such an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled
The Act	The Equality Act 2010
EHRC	The Equality and Human Rights Commission has duties to promote human rights and equality and to provide advice about the law so that discrimination is avoided. It also has powers to

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	enforce discrimination law in some
	circumstances.
EDIMs	Equality and diversity impact measures are
	actions an organisation takes to advance equality
	and diversity
Equality Impact Assessment	This is a process whereby a policy, procedure or practice is reviewed, and if necessary amended, to ensure that it does not discriminate against any group or individual with a protected characteristic.

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Appendix 2 - Legislative Framework

1. Overview

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

Before the Act came into force there were several pieces of legislation to cover discrimination, including:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Provisions of the Act were brought in at different times (known as commencement dates).

Equality Act provisions which came into force on 1 October 2010:

- the basic framework of protection against direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in services and public functions, premi, work, education, associations and transport
- · changing the definition of gender reassignment, by removing the requirement for medical supervision
- providing protection for people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic
- · clearer protection for breastfeeding mothers
- · applying a uniform definition of indirect discrimination to all protected characteristics
- harmonising provisions allowing voluntary positive action

Provisions relating to disability:

- extending protection against indirect discrimination to disability
- introducing the concept of "discrimination arising from disability" to replace protection under previous legislation lost as a result of a legal judgment
- applying the detriment model to victimisation protection (aligning with the approach in employment law)
- · harmonising the thresholds for the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people
- extending protection against harassment of employees by third parties to all protected characteristics
- making it more difficult for disabled people to be unfairly screened out when applying for jobs, by restricting the circumstances in which employers can ask job applicants questions about disability or health

Provisions relating to work:

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- allowing claims for direct gender pay discrimination where there is no actual comparator making pay secrecy clauses unenforceable
- extending protection in private clubs to sex, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment
- introducing new powers for employment tribunals to make recommendations which benefit the wider workforce

Equality Act provisions which came into force in April 2011:

- positive action recruitment and promotion
- public sector Equality Duty (see section below)

Ministers are considering how to implement the remaining provisions in the best way for business and for others with rights and responsibilities under the act. Their decisions will be announced in due course which will inform policy updates, as appropriate.

The Equality Act 2010 includes provisions that ban age discrimination against adults in the provision of services and public functions. The ban came into force on 1 October 2012 and it is now unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age unless:

- the practice is covered by an exception from the ban
- good reason can be shown for the differential treatment ('objective justification') The ban on age discrimination is designed to ensure that the new law prohibits only harmful treatment that results in genuinely unfair discrimination because of age. It does not outlaw the many instances of different treatment that are justifiable or beneficial.

Exceptions under the Order are:

- · age-based concessions
- age-related holidays
- age verification
- clubs and associations concessions
- financial services
- immigration
- · residential park homes
- sport

These specific exceptions are in addition to:

- · general exceptions already allowed by the Act
- · positive action measures
- 'objective justification'

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There are no specific exceptions to the ban on age discrimination for health or social care services. This means that any age-based practices by the NHS and social care organisations need to be objectively justified, if challenged.

Public sector Equality Duty

The <u>public sector Equality Duty</u> came into force across Great Britain on 5 April 2011. It means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination
- · advance equality of opportunity
- · foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Types of discrimination

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- direct discrimination treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others
- indirect discrimination putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage
- harassment unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them
- victimisation treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment

Types of discrimination ('protected characteristics')

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- gender reassignment
- · being married or in a civil partnership
- being <u>pregnant</u> or on maternity leave
- disability
- · race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- · religion or belief
- Sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

You're protected from discrimination:

at work

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- in education
- as a consumer
- · when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- · as a member or guest of a private club or association

You're legally protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010.

You're also protected from discrimination if:

- you're associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example a family member or friend
- · you've complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim

Reasonable Adjustment

The Equality Act 2010 requires reasonable adjustment to be made for someone with a disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustment comprises three requirements. For education providers, these requirements are to take reasonable steps to:

- avoid the substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled learners at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled;
- remove or alter a physical feature or provide a reasonable means of avoiding such a feature where it puts disabled learners at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled;
- provide an auxiliary aid where disabled learners would, but for the provision of such an auxiliary aid, be
 put at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled. Examples of auxiliary aids
 are:
 - qualified interpreters/notetakers
 - screen readers
 - Computer Aided Real-Time Transcription (CART)
 - Written materials
 - Video interpreting services
 - o Email
 - Text messaging
 - Qualified readers
 - Taped texts
 - Audio recordings
 - Braille materials
 - Large print materials
 - Material in electronic formats

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15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
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Positive Action

Positive action means offering targeted assistance to people so that they can take full and equal advantage of particular opportunities. Putting it another way, positive action means taking action to ensure that all groups of people have equal opportunity of access to the College's services. Positive action is optional, not a requirement. Positive action is lawful.

Positive action is not the same as positive discrimination. Positive discrimination means explicitly treating people more favourably on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Positive discrimination is unlawful except in the case of disability. In The case of disability positive discrimination is lawful as long as it is appropriate to achieve equality of opportunity between disabled people with different impairments.

Issued	Rev 1	Rev 2	Rev 3	Rev 19	Rev 19	Rev 6	Rev 7	Rev 8	Rev 9
22.10.10	17.12.10	19.12.11	06.01.12	15.03.13	17.10.13	08.11.13	02.02.14	11.07.14	26.06.15
Rev 10	Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13	Rev 14	Rev 15	Rev 16	Rev 17	Rev 18	Rev 19
15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
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Appendix 3 Stoke on Trent College's Equality Policy

The following sections set out the detail of our Policy designed to protect our staff, learners and visitors.

1. Disability

A person who has a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment, the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Stoke on Trent College's Disability Equality Scheme forms part of this Equality Policy and will continue to drive activities that further promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other people; eliminate discrimination and harassment; promote positive attitudes to disabled people; encourage participation by disabled people in public life, and take steps to meet disabled people's needs if this requires more favourable treatment.

2. Gender

Stoke on Trent College's Gender Equality Scheme forms part of this Equality Policy undertaking its general duty to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment.

2. Gender Reassignment

A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment when the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Stoke on Trent College ensures that the needs and rights of people planning to undergo, undergoing or having undergone the process (or part of the process) are met.

- We will provide information that develops an understanding of our duty to prevent discrimination, harassment and bullying; and
- The College will provide internal and promote access to external support mechanisms for those who are from the LGBTQ+ community with our staff and learners.

4. Race Equality

Race means a person's colour, and/or nationality (including citizenship), and/or ethnic or national origin and a racial group is composed of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethic or national origins.

Issued	Rev 1	Rev 2	Rev 3	Rev 19	Rev 19	Rev 6	Rev 7	Rev 8	Rev 9
22.10.10	17.12.10	19.12.11	06.01.12	15.03.13	17.10.13	08.11.13	02.02.14	11.07.14	26.06.15
Rev 10	Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13	Rev 14	Rev 15	Rev 16	Rev 17	Rev 18	Rev 19
15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
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A person has the protected characteristic of race if they belong to a particular racial group, such as 'British people'. Racial groups can comprise of two or more racial groups such as 'British Asians'.

We recognise and celebrate staff and learner's defining activities that fulfil our duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Through monitoring and reviewing opportunities we will improve College's policies and procedures, ensure that it is compliant and ensure that race equality is fully embedded into the strategic framework of the College.

- We will include arrangements for gathering and using information on race equality in employment, services and functions; and
- · Create opportunity to celebrate the diversity and cultures of our learners, staff and local community

5. Age Equality

The Act defines age by reference to a person's age group and when it refers to people who share the protected characteristics of age, it means they are in the same age group.

An age group can:

- Mean people of the same age group or a range of ages;
- Be wide such as 'people under 50';
- Be narrow such as 'people in their mid-50s' or people born in a particular year;
- · Be relative, such as 'older than me' or 'older than us'; and
- Be linked to actual or assumed physical appearance which may bear little relation to chronological age such as 'the grey workforce'.

Stoke on Trent College will ensure that people of all age groups are not discriminated against in accessing services, work or study.

 The College will consider best practice in the areas of employment, retirement, redundancy, statutory sick pay and, discrimination, harassment and or victimisation in the workplace or at study (whether it be directed at them or another party).

6. Religion and Belief Equality

The protected characteristic of religion or belief includes any religion and any religious or philosophical belief. It also includes a lack of any such religion or belief.

Issued	Rev 1	Rev 2	Rev 3	Rev 19	Rev 19	Rev 6	Rev 7	Rev 8	Rev 9
22.10.10	17.12.10	19.12.11	06.01.12	15.03.13	17.10.13	08.11.13	02.02.14	11.07.14	26.06.15
Rev 10	Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13	Rev 14	Rev 15	Rev 16	Rev 17	Rev 18	Rev 19
15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
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A religion need not be mainstream or well known to gain protection as a religion. It must though, be identifiable and have a clear structure and belief system. Demonstrations or sects within religions may be considered a religion. Cults and new religious movements may also be considered religions or beliefs.

Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.

'Religious belief' goes beyond beliefs about and adherence to a religion or its central articles of faith and may vary from person to person within the same religion.

A belief which is not a religious belief may be philosophical belief, such as humanism or atheism.

A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their life or perceives the world.

- It must be genuinely held;
- It must be a belief and not an opinion or viewpoint based on information available at the moment;
- It must be a belief as to a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.
- It must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance;
- · It must be worthy of respect in a democratic society;
- It must be compatible with human dignity and not conflict with the fundamental rights of others;
- Stoke on Trent College will create opportunities to share in celebration activities that aim to nurture openness and understanding between all faiths and none; and
- We will provide information that develops an understanding of our duty to prevent discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Stoke on Trent College is a non-secular organisation and endeavours to welcome learners, staff and visitors regardless of their religion or belief preferences. Everyone is regarded as an individual and the contributions they make to the diversity of the College are encouraged and valued. We will:

- accommodate religious needs, such as requested for time off to observe religious festivals, and accept a person's religious belief system;
- Meet specific dietary requirements, such as halal food; and Provide a multi-faith room and offer the support of our chaplain.

7. Sexual Orientation Equality

Sexual orientation means the attraction a person feels towards one sex or another (or both), which determines who they form intimate relationships with or are attracted to.

Some people are only attracted to those of the same sex (lesbian women and gay men);

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22.10.10	17.12.10	19.12.11	06.01.12	15.03.13	17.10.13	08.11.13	02.02.14	11.07.14	26.06.15
Rev 10	Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13	Rev 14	Rev 15	Rev 16	Rev 17	Rev 18	Rev 19
15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
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• Some people are attracted to people of both sexes (bisexual people); and • Some people are only attracted to the opposite sex (heterosexual people).

Everyone is protected from being treated less favourably because of sexual orientation, whether they are bisexual, gay, lesbian or heterosexual.

The College will provide internal and promote access to external support mechanisms for those who are from the LGBTQ+ community with our staff and learners.

8. Pregnancy & Maternity

The Equality Act and other aspects of employment law means that a woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity in the protected period in relation to a pregnancy of hers, if she is treated unfavourably:

- Because of the pregnancy, or
- Because of illness suffered by her as a result of it.

The College will support staff and learners who become pregnant during the course of their work or studies.

9. Marriage & Civil Partnership

The College recognises the rights of individuals whether married or married within a civil partnership, the College will recognise and not discriminate against learners or staff on the basis of their marital status or civil partnership.

10. Socio-economic Duty

Stoke on Trent College will ensure we consider the impact that our strategic decisions have on narrowing socio-economic inequalities. We will look at data regarding indices of multiple deprivation of the wards we serve.

We will seek to understand new ways to encourage learners from these wards to raise their aspirations and seek a route to improved economic wellbeing through positive interventions.

As a response the College gives priority access for financial support to students from disadvantaged households.

It will communicate in a way that is both accessible and broad in style and method. Hard copies, in a variety of formats, will be available upon request.

Issued	Rev 1	Rev 2	Rev 3	Rev 19	Rev 19	Rev 6	Rev 7	Rev 8	Rev 9
22.10.10	17.12.10	19.12.11	06.01.12	15.03.13	17.10.13	08.11.13	02.02.14	11.07.14	26.06.15
Rev 10	Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13	Rev 14	Rev 15	Rev 16	Rev 17	Rev 18	Rev 19
15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
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The Equality Policy is published and included on the College website and intranet and priority actions acknowledged annually, adapting to the identified need and reflecting new learning.

The Equality Policy recognises the need to continue to engage with a diverse range of groups in shaping the services of Stoke on Trent College to ensure that every individual working for the College, studying here, or visiting feel that they are welcome, valued and treated fairly.

Issued	Rev 1	Rev 2	Rev 3	Rev 19	Rev 19	Rev 6	Rev 7	Rev 8	Rev 9
22.10.10	17.12.10	19.12.11	06.01.12	15.03.13	17.10.13	08.11.13	02.02.14	11.07.14	26.06.15
Rev 10	Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13	Rev 14	Rev 15	Rev 16	Rev 17	Rev 18	Rev 19
15.07.16	14.06.17	30.04.18	10.09.18	3.07.19	3.7.20	10.9.21	31.8.22	13.07.23	11.6.24
Rev 20									
10.7.25									