



# SoundSkool Music

## Student Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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<b>Reviewed By</b>	Giza Smith/ Pamela Christie
<b>Amendments Made Since Last Review Date</b>	

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## Statement of intent

SoundSkool understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, all colleges have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.
- Promote mental health and wellbeing.

Our college's overall values are underpinned by our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. We are dedicated to ensuring that every student receives an education that offers them the best chance at fulfilling their potential, and to promoting mental wellbeing amongst our students. We are committed to supporting and celebrating all students' individual identities. We have developed this policy to provide a clear framework for how we will achieve our college's aims.

Our college's demographic state is directly linked to our overall aims for achieving equality. Specifically, we aim to tackle inequity in cultural capital, minimise social barriers to progression and increase rates of access to higher education.

To achieve our aims, we will adopt the following methods:

- Embedding equality within teaching and resources
- Using key data indicators to understand the needs and characteristics of our college
- Promoting community cohesion
- Promoting parental engagement
- Investing in regular staff training
- Using key data, such as measures of wellbeing, to monitor the progress of students with protected characteristics
- Regularly reviewing our policy to ensure it reflects current trends and issues

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

This policy has due regard to statutory and good practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act and colleges'

- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Gender separation in mixed colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Equality Act 2010: advice for colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in colleges'
- This policy operates in conjunction with the following college policies:
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
  - Attendance and Absence Policy
  - Admissions Polic
  - Anti-bullying Policy
  - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
  - Complaints Procedures Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

The Governance board will:

- Be responsible for ensuring the college complies with the appropriate equality legislation and regulations.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure students and potential students will not be discriminated against, harassed or victimised in relation to:
  - Admissions.
  - The way the college provides and education for students.
  - How students are provided with access to benefits, facilities and services. The exclusion of a student or subjecting them to any other detriment.
  - Ensure all policies are developed and implemented with appropriate equality impact assessments informing future plans in collaboration with the Head of College.

The Head of College will:

- Implement and champion this policy, ensuring that all staff and students apply its guidelines fairly in all situations.
- Conduct regular training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Review and amend this policy, taking into account new legislation and government guidance, and previously reported incidents, in order to improve procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate counselling is made available for students who require immediate interventions, parental assistance and personal counselling.

Staff will:

- Be alert to the possible harassment of students, both inside and outside of the college, and to deal with incidents of harassment and/or discrimination as the highest priority.
- Carry out their statutory duties relating to equal opportunities and inclusivity, and pertaining to their specific roles.

- Have due regard to the sensitivities of all students, and not provide material that may cause offence.
- Act as a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the whole college community

### **3. Protected characteristics**

Staff will not discriminate against, harass or victimise a student, or prospective student, because of their:

- Sex.
- Race.
- Disability, which includes mental health, encompassing prejudiced assumptions, attitudes or behaviours related to mental health.
- Religion or belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender reassignment.
- Pregnancy or maternity.

Staff will not discriminate against a student, or prospective student, because of a characteristic related to a person, such as a parent, with whom the student or prospective student is associated.

Staff will not discriminate against a student, or prospective student, because of a characteristic which they are believed to have, even if the belief is mistaken.

### **4. Sex**

For the purpose of this policy, sex refers a student's biological assignment at birth depending on their reproductive organs. The college understands that some students identify as a gender different to the sex they were assigned at birth, and we will support students through their transitioning phases.

Staff will ensure that students of one sex are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to students of other sexes.

The college will only separate students by sex where there is reasonable justification for doing so, or if one of the following applies:

- Students will suffer a disadvantage connected to their sex
- One sex has needs that are different from the needs of the other sex
- Participation in an activity by students of one sex is disproportionately low

The college will consider non-statutory exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and regularly review the impact of any separation to ascertain whether it remains lawful.



Students will be offered equal opportunities to undertake any activity in the college, e.g. in relation to technology lessons, all students will be allowed to choose which skills they learn.

## **5. Race and ethnicity**

Staff will ensure that students of all races and ethnicities are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other students and the college will regularly review its practices to ensure that they are fair.

Staff will ensure students are treated equally and fairly, while ensuring they are supported at all times.

The college will not segregate students on the basis of their race or ethnicity, understanding that claims of 'separate but equal' will not be tolerated, and that such actions will always be viewed as direct discrimination.

The college may, however, take positive action, e.g. organising open days for students and families of a specific race that is under-represented, to address the particular challenges affecting students of one racial or ethnic group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

## **6. Disability**

Staff will ensure that students with disabilities are not singled out or treated less favourably than other students simply because they have a disability, which includes any mental health issue, regularly reviewing our college practices to ensure they are fair.

The college will avoid implementing rules that could have an adverse effect on students with disabilities (e.g. by making physical fitness a basis for admission, or asking all students to deliver a presentation, as this could be unfair towards students with anxiety), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

Staff will ensure that they do not discriminate against students with disabilities because of something which is a consequence of their disability (for example, by not allowing a student on crutches outside at break time because it would take too long for them to get in and out), unless it is for a legitimate reason and is a proportionate way of achieving that legitimate aim.

The college will make any reasonable adjustments, and provide any auxiliary aids, necessary to ensure the full inclusion of students with disabilities, especially where the student also has SEND but does not have a SEND statement or EHC plan

The college will meet its duty to undertake accessibility planning for students with disabilities and ensure that an Accessibility Plan is implemented and reviewed where necessary.

The college will adhere to its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for students with SEND.

## **7. Religion and belief**

Staff will ensure that students are not singled out or treated less favourably because of their religion or belief.



The college will ensure that students are provided with the appropriate space in which they can practice their faith, e.g. to perform their daily prayers.

Absences in relation to religious observances will be handled in accordance with the college's Attendance and Absence Policy.

The college will liaise with local religious leaders of all faiths to inform the amount of leave students will be granted in relation to religious observance.

## **8. Sexual orientation**

Staff will ensure that all gay, lesbian and bisexual students, or the children of gay, lesbian or bisexual parents, are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other students.

The college will ensure that students are taught about the nature of marriage, including same-sex marriage, teachers will not offer personal opinions when discussing marriage. The college will educate students on positive relationships, families and gender identities within the LGBTQ+ community.

Staff will ensure that any religious beliefs with regards to sexual orientation are taught to students in an educational context, in a manner that is not prejudicial or discriminatory.

Staff will support LGBTQ+ students to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

The college will ensure that there is a designated safe space where students can discuss issues of sexual orientation without fear of discrimination.

## **9. Gender reassignment**

Staff will ensure that students are not singled out or treated less favourably in relation to gender reassignment, i.e. because they are trans or have trans parents, siblings or other family members. The college recognises that gender reassignment does not necessarily involve physical change, and can be solely social and emotional

The college will support trans students to feel comfortable and ensure they can celebrate their identity.

The college will ensure that there is a designated safe space within the college where trans students can discuss issues of gender without fear of discrimination.

The college will abide by its LGBTQ+ Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for trans students.

## **10. Pregnancy and maternity**

The college will ensure that students are not singled out or treated less favourably because they become pregnant, have recently given birth, have children or are breastfeeding.

The college will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for the treatment and support of students who are pregnant or have just given birth.

To ensure all college-age parents and pregnant students are properly supported and the college can fulfil its duty of care, the college will implement and monitor a Supporting Pregnant Students and College Age Parents Policy.

## **11. Looked-after children (LAC)**

LAC and previously LAC (PLAC) will be given the highest priority for admissions, as per the requirements of our Admissions Policy.

Staff will ensure that students are not singled out or treated less favourably because they are looked after, or have previously been looked after, by the state.

A personal education plan will be created and implemented for all LAC and PLAC, to ensure that their education and development needs are fully covered, including appropriate transition and catch-up support to ensure that they do not fall behind.

Staff will ensure that any SEND that LAC or PLAC have are duly taken into account and addressed, whether this is with or without a SEND statement or EHC plan.

The college will adhere to its LAC Policy containing further information addressing equal opportunities for LAC.

## **12. The curriculum**

Students will be exposed to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, and the college will not make any unjustified changes to curriculum content on the grounds of any protected characteristics that a student may have. The college will ensure, however, that the curriculum is as balanced as possible, and delivered in such a way that prevents discrimination and the promotion of prejudicial stereotypes.

To ensure equality, diversity and acceptance are taught and promoted throughout each subject area, the college will deliver a rigorous and broad curriculum. This will give students the opportunity examine self reflect and apply. For example, discussions on stereotype, cultures and difference.

The observation of inclusive teaching strategies will remain a key aspect of the SLT's annual programme of monitoring.

## **13. Promoting inclusion**

The college will promote inclusion and equality at our college through:

- Ensuring that students are called by their preferred names, which may be different from their legal names, taking into account the correct spelling, structure and pronunciation.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, that our Governance board and staff reflect the full diversity of our local community.
- Providing an environment where prejudiced assumptions, attitudes and behaviours are continually challenged.
- Instilling in students an awareness of prejudice, giving them confidence that it can, and must, be eradicated.

- Providing a variety of educational and residential visits that expose students to a wide range of cultural experiences.
- Ensuring equal access to opportunities, such as extracurricular activities and the curriculum.
- Taking care in the use of language and the choice of resources, so that teaching and non-teaching staff avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.
- Valuing the cultural experiences and contributions of all students, regardless of any protected characteristic that they may have.

## **14. The Public Sector Equality Duty**

The college will meet its duty to publish:

- Annual information to demonstrate how the college is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty, taking into account the specific circumstances surrounding students who have any of the protected characteristics outlined in the [Protected characteristics section](#) of this policy.
- Equality objectives (at least every four years) outlining how the college may further equality.

There are some protected characteristics where statistical data is less likely to be readily available, and students will not be pressured into providing information related to any characteristic which they may identify with.

## **15. Bullying and discrimination**

Our Anti-bullying Policy will be used in conjunction with this policy in order to prevent, and effectively deal with, any discriminatory incidents. Any bullying incidents of a child protection or safeguarding nature will be reported, recorded and dealt with in line with the process in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The Head of College will decide whether it is appropriate to notify social services and/or the police of any incident. Concerns with regards to the handling of bullying and discrimination incidents will be dealt with via the procedures outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.

## **16. Staff training**

New staff will receive relevant training on the provisions of this policy during their induction. Whole-college staff training for will be delivered in-house on a termly basis.

Staff will receive the appropriate equalities training that will:

- Focus on staff specialisms in relation to equality, for example, a focus on homophobic bullying to address a planned approach towards inclusion.
- Ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, current equalities legislation and government recommendations.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support students with protected characteristics.
- Provide support for teachers to effectively manage any discrimination towards students with protected characteristics.

- Provide up-to-date information on the terms, concepts and current understandings relating to each of the protected characteristics.
- Ensure that the college is aware of, and participates in, relevant awareness days, such as Black History Month, World Disability Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, Pride, and International Women's Day.

## **18. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of College and Governance board annually and updated where appropriate – any amendments will be duly communicated to staff.

This policy will next be reviewed on 31 August 2026.