



**TRAFFORD &
STOCKPORT
COLLEGE GROUP**

Equality and Diversity Policy

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Consultation:	Equality and Diversity Committee TSCG Leadership Team TSCG Board of the Corporation
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1. Equality & Diversity Policy Statement

This Policy demonstrates how Trafford & Stockport College Group (TSCG) celebrates and values the diversity of our students and employees. TSCG is committed to the elimination of discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity for all. The general public sector Equality Duty is underpinned by a number of specific duties. These specific duties require TSCG to set specific and measurable equality objectives and to publish information relating to equality so that the general public may hold the organisation to account. Published information includes:

- Information on the effect of policies and practices on those who share protected characteristics.
- Evidence of analysis undertaken to establish whether policies and practices will further the General Duty.
- Details of engagement with interested parties.

At TSCG we want to ensure, through an inclusive culture, that everyone who works or learns with us reaches their full potential; in a supportive environment which is respectful and values individual difference.

TSCG aims to promote excellence in equality and diversity practice beyond statutory compliance. Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion principles impact on every area of activity and influences how TSCG operates and what it does. We will make reasonable adjustments and proportional changes to our processes and procedures to meet the needs and circumstances of individuals.

To meet our Mission, Vision and Values we will analyse data in relation to educational performance and take positive action to improve.

TSCG will increase access and participation to learning and employment for specific groups and underrepresented groups in our community to close equality gaps.

We will treat everyone fairly and with respect and strongly oppose and eliminate unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment and prejudice. TSCG recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Prevent Strategy and Modern Slavery Act 2015.

We will ensure policies, procedures, practices and services are fit for purpose, are regularly reviewed and assessed for impact and inclusivity.

TSCG will regularly review workforce diversity and take action where appropriate, using a variety of methods, to attract and retain employees from all backgrounds at all levels of the organisation. We will ensure individual selection for employment and promotion is based on aptitude, ability and skills making reasonable adjustments for employees with specific needs.

Approval Declaration:

Signed:



Principal & Chief Executive Officer: James Scott

Date: 27th April 2021

Signed:



Chairperson of the Board of the Corporation: Graham Luccock

Date: 27th April 2021

2. Trafford & Stockport College Group Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Unlocking potential, fostering success.

To be a leading provider of education and skills that supports community cohesion and drives local and regional productivity.

Our Mission

To provide the highest quality of education and training to all our students and employers through an inclusive and career focussed curriculum.

Our Values

Resilience

We believe that every challenge is an opportunity to learn, develop and become stronger.

Ambitious

We set high expectations and standards for students, colleagues and our communities, striving for excellence in all that we do.

Respectful

We allow ourselves and others to grow by treating each other with thoughtfulness and an open mind.

Collaborate

We work together, support one another, share ideas, and encourage success.

Inclusive

We value individual differences and creating an environment where everyone has the same opportunities.

3. Scope

This Equality and Diversity Policy provides a framework and the overarching principles for the development and promotion of a learning environment that is accessible to all and that promotes equality of opportunity within the learning environment and employment. TSCG is committed to delivering equality of opportunity to eliminate all forms of unfair and illegal discrimination as well as all forms of harassment, bullying and victimisation.

This Policy applies to all those who come into contact with and work for TSCG including staff, governors, students, applicants for employment and for learning and other individuals who are affected by the services delivered by TSCG.

TSCG is committed to delivering equality of opportunity for all employees, students and visitors.

4. Policy Objectives

TSCG aims to be:

- Open and available to all sections of the community and maintains a reputation as a provider in whose activities all individuals, staff or students are encouraged to fully participate.
- Inclusive where individual differences are respected and where employees and students are treated on their merits and where everyone has a fair opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- Mindful of legal responsibilities and therefore:
 - o Aims to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation by ensuring that equality and diversity principles are embedded into all provision, services and procedures.
 - o Advance's equality of opportunity between people that share protected characteristics by removing or minimising disadvantages, making reasonable adjustments, responding to individual needs and by encouraging participation in public life.
 - o Fosters good relations between people who share protected characteristics by consolidating effective partnerships with key stakeholders.
 - o Ensures that all suppliers/contractors working on behalf of TSCG follow Equality & Diversity Policy principles.
 - o Pays due regard when making decisions or taking actions, assessing the impact or implications and making reasonable adjustments for people with protected characteristics.
 - o Monitor's equality and diversity in the recruitment of employees and ensures that CPD is inclusive and includes equality issues both directly and indirectly.
 - o Publishes data annually so that others can judge TSCG's effectiveness in meeting duties.
 - o Develops and publishes specific and measurable equality objectives.

5. Defining Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

5.1 Equality

Equality within TSCG means that we recognise that students and employees are equal but can and often will have different needs. As well as making sure TSCG meets statutory duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 we will ensure we consider the particular needs of students and employees and, where possible, will seek to ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place. TSCG recognises that equality is not about treating everyone the same but about fairness, respect and giving people an equal and fair chance of opportunities to fulfil their potential.

5.2 Diversity

Diversity within TSCG is about recognising, valuing and taking account of people's different backgrounds, knowledge, skills and experiences. In the context of this Policy, it also means encouraging and using those differences to create a productive workforce, celebrating differences and recognising the contribution every individual makes or can make.

5.3 Inclusion

Inclusion within TSCG is about all individuals being accepted for whom they are. Inclusion promotes equality of opportunity by seeking to provide equal access and ensuring that, as much as possible, everyone's needs are met with the removal of barriers to learning or working and progressing.

6. Protected Characteristics (or protected groups):

TSCG aims to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment for reasons relating to all recognised protected characteristics (see below) covered by the Equality Act 2010.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual orientation

7. Types of Unlawful Discrimination

At TSCG we will regularly review our workforce diversity and take action where appropriate, using a variety of methods, to attract and retain employees from all backgrounds at all levels of the organisation. We will ensure individual selection for employment and promotion is based on aptitude, ability and skills making reasonable adjustments for employees with specific needs.

Students will be welcomed to Trafford & Stockport College Group openly and without discrimination.

7.1 Direct Discrimination

Discrimination occurs where:

- A person is treated less favourably than someone else in comparable circumstances.
- The treatment is for a reason relating to a person's protected characteristic.
- The treatment cannot be justified.

7.2 Indirect Discrimination

This can occur when a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if it can be demonstrated fully that the organisation acted reasonably in managing the business need, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

7.3 Discrimination by Association

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic. For example, a carer of a disabled child or adult or someone that has a gay or transsexual friend/relative.

7.4 Discrimination by Perception

This is discrimination against someone because the other person thinks or perceives that they possess a particular protected characteristic. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

7.5 Discrimination Arising from Disability

Discrimination arising from disability occurs when a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability and such treatment cannot be justified.

Discrimination arising from disability is different from direct discrimination. Discrimination arising from disability will occur if the following three conditions are met:

- A disabled person is treated unfavourably, that is putting them at a disadvantage, even if this was not your intention.
- This treatment is because of something connected with the disabled person's disability (which could be the result, effect or outcome of that disability) such as an inability to walk unaided or disability-related behaviour.
 - The treatment cannot be justified by showing that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.'

7.6 Harassment

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual". Employees can make a complaint against behaviour they find offensive even if the behaviour is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant protected characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

7.7 Victimisation

Victimisation can occur when an employee is being treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act, or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

7.8 Bullying

Bullying is usually persistent behaviour, directed against an individual or group, which is intimidating, offensive or malicious and which undermines the confidence and self-esteem of the individual. This is dealt with via TSCG's Harassment and Bullying Policy & Procedure.

8. Legal Framework

The Equality & Diversity Policy is underpinned by the following legal / statutory / internal regulations:

- The Equality Act 2011: Specific Duties Regulations
- The Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Equality Act 2006: Gender Equality Duty
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005: Disability Equality Duty
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000: Race Equality Duty Apprenticeship, Skills, Children Learning Act 2009
- ACAS and AoC Equality Guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

9. Procedures and Protocols Supporting the Equality & Diversity Policy:

- Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Student Disciplinary Procedure
- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Procedure
- Online Safety Policy and Protocol
- Fitness to Study
- SEN (Local Offer) Policy

10. Responsibilities

10.1 Governors:

- Responsible for ensuring that equality is incorporated into the strategic plan for TSCG; ensuring that due regard to equality, diversity and inclusion is given.
- Responsible for the scrutiny of equality monitoring data, impact assessments and progression equality objectives.
- Represented on the Equality and Diversity Committee.

10.2 Vice Principal Corporate Services and Planning:

- Has overall responsibility for equality issues.
- Ensures TSCG meets its legal responsibilities.
- Chairs the Equality and Diversity Committee.
- Ensures that appropriate resources are deployed to maintain TSCG's objectives associated with equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Reports to the Corporation on equality and diversity issues.

- Oversees consultation/negotiation arrangements regarding employment practices and procedures.

10.3 Managers:

- Responsible for creating a positive, inclusive culture that challenges discriminatory attitudes and behaviour amongst colleagues, employees and students.
- Aware of the legislation and TSCG's general duties in relation to the Equality Act 2010.
- Contribute to policies associated with the promotion of equality of opportunities and the fostering of good relations including marketing activities and images and materials displayed within TSCG.

10.4 Employees:

- Ensure they and their students are aware of their responsibilities associated with legislation in this area.
- Ensure that policies and procedures for which they are responsible are implemented with sensitivity to issues associated with equality and diversity (for teachers this includes schemes of work, lesson plans, teaching resources and delivery).
- Ensure they challenge prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviours of colleagues, students, visitors and outside contractors as appropriate.

10.5 Students:

- Ensure they are aware of their responsibilities associated with legislation in this area.
- Do not use discriminatory language and behaviour.
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour as not appropriate where it is observed amongst peers.

11. Implementation and Monitoring

- 11.1 TSCG aims to promote excellence in equality and diversity practice beyond statutory compliance. Our commitment to equality and diversity principles impact on every area of activity and influences how TSCG operates and what it does. We will make reasonable adjustments and proportional changes to our processes and procedures to meet the needs and circumstances of individuals.
- 11.2 We will provide an inclusive supportive environment and promote inclusive learning where individuals are recognised and valued.
- 11.3 TSCG will increase access and participation to learning and employment for specific groups and under-represented groups in our community to close equality gaps.
- 11.4 We will treat everyone fairly and with respect and strongly oppose and eliminate unfair discrimination, bullying, harassment and prejudice.
- 11.5 TSCG recognises its duties and responsibilities in relation to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Prevent Strategy and Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- 11.6 We will ensure policies, procedures, practices and services are fit for purpose, are regularly reviewed and assessed for impact and inclusivity.
- 11.7 By monitoring equality and diversity in the workforce TSCG will identify how employment policies are working and identify areas where these may appear to be impacting disproportionately on certain groups of employees. Employment monitoring data is collected and reported annually in relation to all protected groups apart from gender reassignment due to the sensitive confidential nature of this data.
- 11.8 TSCG uses student data from a variety of sources to understand the factors which may impact on student success and achievement; this includes monitoring data in relation to age, disability, race, religion and gender, performance of students, internal surveys relating to perceptions of safety, outcome of disciplinary incidents.

12. Positive Duty

As an employer TSCG meets the six minimum standards that are required to comply with our positive duty obligation: knowledge, prevention plan, organisational capability, risk management, reporting and response and monitoring and evaluation. The first four standards are directed towards prevention and five and six are about responding to instances of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation.

- **Knowledge.** TSCG ensures that leaders, managers, contact officers and human resource employees understand their responsibilities through formal and information education and training.
- **Prevention Plan.** By developing or updating policies and changing practices aimed at preventing discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and vilification, and effective mechanisms to review and improve the policies.
- **Organisational Capability.** Leaders, including line managers and heads, being required to role model respectful behaviour, for instance through codes of conduct or performance review processes. Encouraging and supporting bystanders to act safely to respond to discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation. Holding people to account for unlawful workplace behaviour in a fair, consistent, and timely manner.

- **Risk Management.** By recognising that some employees and students are more vulnerable to discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation than others and providing training in order to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation from happening.
- **Reporting and Response.** TSCG has developed a fair and confidential reporting and complaints procedure with safe and accessible options for raising and resolving concerns, that prioritises the complainants' wellbeing. TSCG ensures that employees know how and where to make a complaint or report and are supported to do so and any complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively. TSCG ensures that employees are safe and supported throughout the complaints process, including through identifying and avoiding victimisation.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** TSCG regularly monitors workplace culture, service delivery, any complaints received and employee knowledge of legal obligations in order to improve compliance and deal promptly with any issues that arise.

13. Learner Voice

TSCG actively promotes Learner Voice through a variety of mechanisms; ensuring the voices of young people, adult students, Apprentices and students with additional needs are heard and responded to. All structures are inclusive and accessible. Accessibility is further endorsed through respecting the diversity of the college community and working collaboratively with them.

- TSCG is secure in its drive to address all areas of personal and social development and create opportunities to supplement its educational provision with transformative experiences. This inclusive approach ensures the necessary skills are provided to improve life chances for a diverse college community.
- Students will be participants in designing their educational provision, respecting individual styles of learning. This will be achieved by Trafford & Stockport College Group providing opportunities for regular meaningful discourse between College leadership and student representatives. This will confirm the TSCG remains current in its approach to education, exploring student led feedback and responding to the students' views. TSCG will adapt to create a learning experience that matches the needs of the student cohort.
- TSCG supports and recognises student's individuality and promotes learner voice through participation in student led structures e.g. Equalities Council, Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions, LGBTQ+ groups, and Student Leadership and Representatives. Student Newsletter – *written for students by students*.
- TSCG promotes student led tutorials and events to support inclusive delivery of themed messages.
- TSCG recognises and supports the improvement of outcomes for underrepresented minority groups and puts measures in place to reflect diversity and promote community and college cohesion by working with outside agencies and community partners who reflect the diversity of the college community.

14. Complaints, Dignity at Work and Discrimination

TSCG actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and has developed robust policies for tackling bullying and discriminatory behaviour. TSCG takes complaints from students and employees very seriously and we have a comprehensive Complaints Procedure for dealing with student complaints and a Harassment and Bullying Procedure which details how complaints from employees will be dealt with.

15. Training

As an employer, TSCG has a proactive approach to training and development in order to meet the needs of different learners and recognises that it is critical for employees to have the skills and knowledge to help eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and value diversity. TSCG's People Plan is one element of the organisation's delivery mechanism to fulfil its equality commitments. The Plan identifies the various training and development activities delivered to ensure that the workforce has, as a whole, an understanding of the concepts and principles of equality as well as our duties and responsibilities and the methods to put these principles into practice.

Training and development required activities include:

- All employees, and new managers, as part of their induction, to go through equality and diversity training and awareness.
- All employees, involved in recruitment and selection, to go through training in recruitment and selection which includes a module on equality and diversity.
- Individual training, as identified through the performance management process, relevant to the job role.

16. Review

Trafford & Stockport College Group will review the Equality and Diversity Policy at least every two years or as legislation/ guidance requires.