



St Dominic's
Sixth Form College

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Date of Approval	November 2025
Approved by	HR Committee
Date of Next Review	November 2026
Author	Assistant Principal
Available on	College Website

St Dominic's is a Roman Catholic Sixth Form College committed to the personal and spiritual growth of all its members based on Christian values, academic excellence and high quality pastoral care.

Ethos Statement:

St Dominic's Sixth Form College is committed to encouraging, maintaining and supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work, eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The College aims for our whole community of staff and students to be truly representative of all sections of society and for everyone to feel respected, able to give their best and reach their full potential. The College expresses its opposition to all forms of inequality and discrimination and is an equal opportunities employer.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time and to provide equality, fairness and respect to all students at the College.
2. Not unlawfully discriminate. The Equality Act 2010 became law on 01/10/2010. The Act streamlines earlier equality legislation and introduces common definitions of discrimination. The nine 'protected characteristics' under the Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation

All students and staff must be protected from discrimination and harassment. The Act also protects against discrimination by association and perception e.g. a partner or carer of someone with a protected characteristic should also be protected from discrimination and harassment.

3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy
 - leave for parents
 - requests for flexible working
 - selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Our commitment:

St Dominic's Sixth Form College commits to:

1. Encourage and support equality, diversity and inclusion.
2. Create a working and learning environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all students and staff are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training managers, leaders and all staff about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include staff conducting themselves to help the College provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All staff understand they, as well as St Dominic's, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment and against fellow employees. Students are also taught the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion through the RSHE programme.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others during the organisation's work activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the organisation's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
5. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and this policy to take account of any changes in the law.
6. Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Agreement to adhere to the policy:

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by senior management team and governing board.

Disciplinary and grievance procedures:

Details of St Dominic's grievance and disciplinary policies and procedures can be found on SharePoint. Useful contacts are listed below:

Tom Colgan	Director of Finance and HR	tmc@stdoms.ac.uk
Jacqueline Brosnan	College Business Manager	jab@stdoms.ac.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives:

1. The Core RE programme which every student engages with, has been amended to include a programme of lessons to foster good relations and celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion. The following Protected Characteristics are covered: age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
2. The RSHE programme includes an emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion. The following Protected Characteristics are covered: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnerships, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Public Sector Equality Duty:

The Public sector Equality Duty is set out in section 149 of the Act. The Equality Duty has **three aims**. It requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

St. Dominic's must have *due regard* of these duties in the carrying out of its functions. Having *due regard* means consciously thinking about the three aims of the general duty as part of the process of decision-making. For example, having due regard to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;

- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Equality Duties:

The Public Sector equality duty requires all public bodies to publish information to demonstrate the extent to which it furthered the aims of the general equality duty. Subsequent information must be published at least annually.

The draft regulations require public bodies to:

- Publish equality objectives every four years
- Publish information annually to demonstrate their compliance with the general Equality Duty;
- Publish information relating to their employees (for bodies with 150 or more staff) and others affected by their policies and practices (such as service users).

All information must be published in a way that is accessible to the public.

- The College will uphold its public sector duty as outlined above and actively seek to ensure that both students and staff experience equality of opportunity and are free from harassment, discrimination or victimisation of any kind, in regard to the protected characteristics. Furthermore, the College recognises and extends this policy to include, social status and deprivation, homelessness, unemployment, asylum and refugee status or membership of a trade union, or for any other identifiable cause protected by law.
- As a responsible body, the College recognises and accepts its vicarious liability for the actions of staff, students and sub-contractors. The College will comply with all legislation, regulations, statutory and non-statutory codes of practice and our contractual requirements relating to equality and diversity.
- The College will challenge all forms of inequality, discrimination and harassment, and actively promote opportunities for the nine protected characteristic groups (mentioned above – p.2) and foster good relations. The College will challenge extremism and fundamentalism in order to confront radicalisation and promote tolerance by actively supporting the Prevent Programme. This work is regarded as the responsibility of all staff in the College.
- Any action which contravenes this policy renders individuals employed by the College or students liable for disciplinary action. Evidence of discrimination or harassment may be considered as gross misconduct. Clients or contractors who contravene the policy can expect appropriate action.

Scope:

- The College has an ultimate role in approving, championing, promoting and monitoring the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- The following groups and post-holders have responsibilities for the development and implementation of policies relating to equality and diversity for staff and students.
- The Principal is responsible for leading the College's committees and boards to ensure compliance with legislation.
- The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is implemented in all aspects of its work.
- An Assistant Principal is the designated senior officer with responsibility for equality, diversity and inclusion for students at the College. The postholder will be responsible for raising awareness of equality and diversity procedures and practices among the student body. They will also be responsible for formulating, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in respect of students.
- Heads of Subject and Administrative and Technical Managers are responsible for implementing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in relation to staff and students in their department.

- The College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee has a responsibility to monitor equality, diversity and inclusion practices across the College to provide guidance to staff and students on equality, diversity and inclusion matters and to complete regular reviews and update of the policy and of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities.
- Every staff member has an implied duty under their contract of employment to comply with the requirements of this policy.
- Every student has an implied duty under the Student Charter and Code of Conduct to comply with the requirements of this policy.
- Any individuals or organisations contracted within the College have an implied duty under their contract of employment to comply with the requirements of this policy.
- Any students and staff working on placement outside the College will be asked to understand the policy requirements of that organisation, whilst ensuring they comply with the policy of St Dominic's Sixth Form College.

Intent:

- Through its recruitment, selection and admission procedures, the College will seek to ensure that it supports equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of education and employment, so that the student body, workforce and Governing body reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.
- The College will seek to achieve equality for all students and to engage all learners, irrespective of their cultural background in all aspects of teaching, learning and support. It is committed to the attempt to 'narrow the gap' where students from one diversity strand achieve less well than those from other strands.
- The College is committed to achieving equality for all staff in training, career development, promotion and reward, and will support staff to help them maximise opportunities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Any form of unfair discrimination against students or staff will be tackled effectively and with the aim of preventing such discrimination from occurring again in future.
- Teaching materials and methods, and all forms of general communication with students, will strive to be sensitive to different cultures and will seek to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and foster good relations between people from different groups.
- Opportunities will be sought to extend the influence of the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion good practice to parents/carers, Higher Education institutions and other partner organisations, employers with whom we work and the local community.

Implementation:

- Implementing equal opportunities is an ongoing process that will be regularly reviewed by the College's Senior Leadership Team and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
- All staff will be made aware of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy during the induction process.
- The Senior Leadership Team will review all policies and procedures to ensure that a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is continually evident. Equality Impact Assessments will be conducted on key strategic documents and projects and policies related to students and human resources at the time of their revision.
- College marketing and support materials will seek to encourage applications and enquiries from all members of the community in line with the College Admissions criteria, reflecting the ethos of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- The College aims to provide support services during enrolment and on programme to help in the identification of additional student support needs where necessary.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training, advice and guidance and support will be provided to ensure that all staff, students and contractors understand their duties and obligations in law.
- The College will protect the confidentiality of disclosure of sensitive matters related to equality, diversity and inclusion. If information needs to be shared, for example on the grounds of health and safety or criminal law, care will be taken to share only what is necessary and to record what was shared, with whom, and why.

- Staff or Students who believe they have not been treated in accordance with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy may wish to make a complaint. This may be made either informally or formally in accordance with the College Complaints Procedure.
- The College will consider it to be a disciplinary offence under this Policy if any employee makes a false accusation against another employee regarding an alleged breach of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy supports the Prevent Strategy. All staff should challenge extremist views expressed in College and must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned about individual students who they think are becoming radicalised or who may be radicalising others whether in or beyond College.
- PREVENT tutorials address radicalisation and specify that students must report other students who hold extremist views or who they believe are either becoming radicalised or might be radicalising others. Tutorials on British Values are also delivered to all students at the College.

Monitoring:

- The College will conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring of all aspects of the Policy, both on an ongoing basis and as education and employment policies and practices change. Benchmarking data will be sought for the purpose of monitoring gender, ethnicity and disability.
- The Senior Leadership Team will receive data which will inform the planning process and the implementation of this Policy, and data is in the SAR.
- The College operates the filtering and monitoring software, *Smoothwall*. Interventions are staged where staff and students are found to be accessing inappropriate online content.
- Monitoring will be undertaken in accordance with best practice recommendations, particularly from the following bodies:

OFSTED; the Association of Colleges; SFCA and
The Equality and Human Rights Commission

- The College will monitor the implementation of this Policy as part of annual training activities, through staff and student focus groups and staff exit interviews.
- The College will engage external consultants periodically as part of the self-evaluation process to consider all work with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- As part of the Prevent Strategy the College Chaplain will continue to meet regularly with students (who meet for prayers) to audit and review their prayer and to ensure that appropriate support is given if required.

Promotion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

- The College will promote its equality, diversity and inclusion policies and practices to staff through training and development at whole College training days.
- All students will frequently discuss issues relating to equality and diversity during the general RE programme. Additional guidance will be available through the College's tutorial programme where they have specific equality, diversity and inclusion tutorials in both years. These two initiatives will help the College to meet the three aims of the Equality duty, together with equality, diversity and inclusion themes in the curriculum itself. Staff will discuss equality, diversity and inclusion issues as they arise naturally in the curriculum and will highlight these in Schemes of Work to promote E&D (part of SMSC).
- Staff will challenge inappropriate comments made both inside and beyond lessons (e.g. in corridors).
- All students attend special services such as on Dominican Day where equality, diversity and inclusion themes are promoted through prayer and other means.
- Study + supports all students who have a particular learning need as do the teaching staff, information about students' needs is shared sensitively and Study + manager writes to all relevant staff about how to best support any particular student (dyslexia for example).
- The College will make reasonable adjustments for both staff and students in line with the Equality Act 2010, to remove barriers and ensure accessibility.

- The Senior Leadership Team (Principal, VP and Assistant Principals) see students on a 1:1 basis if they are in a group whose achievement gap we are focusing on especially. We track the progress at every half term grades session, and public exam session, and provide support accordingly.
- The equality, diversity and inclusion committee meet half-termly and considers new ways of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion such as displays, events and publicity.
- Copies of this policy will be made available on the College's website and intranet.