

Inclusion Policy

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Putting Students First

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1. Introduction

This policy sets out The Isle of Wight College's commitment to ensuring an inclusive learning environment where every student feels safe and valued and supported to achieve their full potential. It replaces the previous Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and reflects enhanced expectations around inclusion and belonging.

2. Policy Statement

Inclusion is central to our mission. We are committed to removing barriers to participation and learning, ensuring that all students, regardless of background, identity or need, can thrive. This includes embedding inclusive practices across curriculum design, teaching, support services, leadership and governance.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students and apprentices
- Staff, governors, volunteers, contractors.
- Visitors and external partners.
- All college activities including teaching, assessment, enrichment and support services.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The policy is underpinned by:

- o Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- o SEND Code of Practice
- o Ofsted 2025 Education Framework and Inclusion Toolkit
- o Human Rights Act 1998
- o Safeguarding and Legislation and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)

Related internal college policies, procedures and documents:

- SEND Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding Policy
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Mental health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Recruitment Policy

5. Definitions (see Appendix D for more details)

- **Inclusion:** Creating a culture where every member of the college community—including students, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors—feels that they belong, are safe, respected, and supported to succeed. Inclusion means ensuring that everyone, regardless of background, identity, or need, is valued and empowered to participate fully in college life, contribute their perspectives, and reach their potential.
- **Protected characteristics:** As defined by the Equality Act 2010 (see also Appendix B)
- **Disadvantage:** Any factor that limits access to opportunity or achievement. This can include, but is not limited to, socio-economic status, disability, special educational needs, language barriers, care experience, family circumstances, discrimination, or lack of access to resources

and support. Disadvantage may be temporary or long-term, visible or hidden, and can affect individuals or groups. Addressing disadvantage involves identifying and removing barriers so that everyone has an equitable chance to participate, progress, and succeed.

- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** - Refers to students who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most others of the same age. This includes a wide range of needs, such as difficulties with cognition and learning, communication and interaction, social, emotional and mental health, or sensory and physical needs. Learners with SEND may require additional support, reasonable adjustments, or tailored interventions to access education, participate fully in college life, and achieve positive outcomes.

6. Policy Objectives

- **Embed inclusive practices** across all areas of provision ensuring that curriculum, teaching, support services, leadership, and governance reflect the values of diversity, equity, and belonging.
- **Ensure early identification and support** for student needs through proactive screening, ongoing assessment, and timely interventions, so that every learner receives the help they need to succeed.
- **Promote equity in access, participation and outcomes** by removing barriers, addressing disadvantage, and monitoring progress to close achievement gaps between different groups of students.
- **Create a culture of belonging and respect** where every student and staff member feels valued, safe, and empowered to contribute to college life.
- **Ensure compliance with statutory duties** including the Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice, Ofsted Framework, and safeguarding legislation.
- **Ensure active student and staff voice** in shaping inclusive policy and practice, using feedback to drive continuous improvement.
- **Monitor and evaluate** the impact of inclusion initiatives through data analysis, audits, and regular reporting to governors and stakeholders.
- **Champion continuous professional development** for all staff to build confidence and competence in inclusive pedagogy and adaptive support.

7. Responsibilities

Students and Apprentices

- Respect and contribute to an inclusive environment through Student Voice or the Student Executive Committee.
- Actively participate in inclusion-related activities and training, such as induction sessions, workshops, or personal development groups, to build awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion.
- Challenge discrimination, bullying, or exclusionary behaviour by reporting concerns and supporting peers, helping to create a safe and welcoming environment for all.
- Provide honest feedback on inclusion through surveys, forums, or direct communication, helping the college to monitor and improve its inclusive practices.
- Promote inclusive values in daily interactions, using respectful language and encouraging others to do the same.

- Take responsibility for understanding and following college policies and the college charter around inclusive practice, equality, and respectful conduct.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Set the strategic direction for inclusion, ensuring it is embedded in the college's mission, vision, and values.
- Lead by example, modelling inclusive behaviours and championing diversity, equity, and belonging at all levels.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties (e.g., Equality Act 2010, Ofsted Inclusion Framework, SEND Code of Practice, KCSIE).
- Allocate sufficient resources (staffing, training, funding, and support) to enable effective implementation of inclusive practices.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of inclusion initiatives, using data analysis, audits, and feedback from students, staff, and stakeholders.
- Oversee the development and review of related policies (e.g., SEND, safeguarding, student behaviour, mental health and wellbeing).
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging innovation and sharing of best practice in inclusive teaching and support.
- Ensure that inclusion is a standing item in leadership meetings and quality assurance processes.
- Support the professional development of staff through mandatory training, CPD, and opportunities to develop inclusive pedagogy.
- Engage with student and staff voice, responding to feedback and involving stakeholders in shaping inclusive policy and practice.
- Report regularly to governors and external bodies on progress, challenges, and impact related to inclusion.

Head of Foundation Learning and High Needs

Operational Delivery

- Oversee the day-to-day implementation of inclusive practices for students with high needs and those in foundation learning.
- Ensure that support plans, reasonable adjustments, and interventions are delivered effectively and consistently.
- Coordinate with teaching staff, support teams, and external agencies to meet individual learner needs.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are trained and confident in supporting students with SEND and other additional needs.

Impact Monitoring

- Regularly review and analyse data on participation, retention, progress, and achievement for students across minority groups and SEND (equality impact measures).
- Chair and lead a working group with cross college representation and a focus on inclusion activities and interventions.
- Monitor the effectiveness of support strategies and adjust as needed to improve outcomes.
- Gather feedback from students, parents/carers, and staff to inform continuous improvement.

- Report on the impact of inclusion initiatives to the Senior Leadership Team and governors.
- Contribute to termly inclusion audits and annual reports, highlighting successes and identifying areas for development.

Responsibilities of Non-Curriculum Staff (including Student Support, Business Support, Admin, Pastoral, Welfare)

- Model inclusive behaviours and championing diversity, equity, and belonging at all levels.
- Provide day-to-day support to students, ensuring that all learners feel included and valued within the college community.
- Coordinate and follow up on referrals with parents/carers, Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG), and external professionals (such as the virtual school and social services) to support students at risk of disengagement.
- Maintain accurate records of interventions and support provided, contributing to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of inclusion practices.

Responsibilities of Curriculum Staff (e.g., Teachers, Lecturers, Curriculum Managers)

- Model inclusive behaviours and championing diversity, equity, and belonging at all levels.
- Embed inclusive practices in day-to-day teaching, learning, and assessment to ensure all students can access and participate fully in the curriculum.
- Identify and support students who may be at risk of withdrawal, working collaboratively with support staff to implement appropriate interventions.
- Ensure that all actions taken to support vulnerable or high-risk students are documented on E Trackr and communicated to relevant colleagues.
- Liaise with non-curriculum staff, parents/carers, and external agencies as needed to address barriers to learning and promote student retention.
- Reflect on and adapt teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners, encouraging an inclusive classroom environment.

8. Procedures

- **Inclusive curriculum planning and delivery** - Curriculum design and teaching methods are proactively planned to reflect diverse cultures, identities, and experiences. Staff ensure that learning outcomes are ambitious and accessible for all, using differentiated strategies and accessible materials to remove barriers and promote full participation (see Appendices A and C for more details)
- **Student needs assessment and support plans** - All students' needs are identified early through screening, staff awareness, and ongoing assessment. Individual support plans are developed collaboratively with students, reviewed regularly, and adapted to ensure effective support and positive outcomes (see Appendix E for more details)
- **Reasonable adjustments and accessibility measures** - The college provides reasonable adjustments to teaching, assessment, and the physical environment to ensure all students can access learning and college life. This includes assistive technology, alternative assessment formats, accessible classrooms, and tailored support services (see appendix E).

- **Inclusive enrichment and extracurricular activities** - Enrichment and other opportunities are designed to be inclusive and reflect the diverse interests and backgrounds of students. Participation is encouraged for all, with adjustments made as needed to ensure equitable access
- **Complaints and concerns procedure** - A clear, accessible process is in place for students and staff to raise concerns or complaints related to inclusion. All concerns are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and used to inform continuous improvement of inclusive practices (see the college's compliments and complaints policy and procedures)

9. Training and Awareness

- Mandatory Inclusion/EDI training and unconscious bias training for all staff.
- Student induction includes inclusion awareness.
- Regular refresher training for all staff to ensure up-to-date understanding of inclusion, equality, and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Specialist training for staff working with students with SEND, mental health needs, or those at risk of exclusion.
- Workshops and training on topics such as cultural competence, anti-bullying, restorative practice, and trauma-informed approaches.
- Awareness campaigns and themed events (e.g., Diversity Week, Disability Awareness Month) to promote inclusion across the college community.
- Training for governors and volunteers to ensure everyone involved in college life understands their role in promoting inclusion.
- Accessible resources and guidance (e.g., toolkits, online modules, quick reference guides) to support staff in applying inclusive practices.
- Opportunities for staff and students to share lived experiences and best practice through forums, focus groups, and surveys.

10. Monitoring and Review

- Termly inclusion audits
- Student Voice surveys and focus groups.
- Case studies of inclusive practice.
- Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) reporting.
- Analysis of trends in complaints or concerns related to inclusion to inform continuous improvement.
- Review of reasonable adjustments and accessibility measures.
- Data analysis on participation, retention and achievement.
- Annual report to governors.

11. Confidentiality/Record keeping

- The inclusion policy is published on the college website and intranet, ensuring transparency and accessibility for all stakeholders.
- Key information and updates about inclusion are communicated through newsletters, internal communications, and the student executive committee to keep the college community informed.
- Inclusion working group record keeping:

- Maintains accurate records of meetings, actions, and decisions related to inclusion initiatives.
- Tracks progress on inclusion objectives and monitors the implementation of agreed actions.
- Documents case studies, best practices, and examples of successful inclusion strategies.
- Ensures confidentiality and compliance with data protection regulations when handling sensitive information.

12. Communication

- Published on the college website and intranet.
- Principles of the policy included in the welcome programmes for staff and students with emphasis on inclusive values and expectations.
- Included in the Student Handbook around creating a culture of belonging and safety.
- Reinforced through posters, digital signage, newsletters and social media channels.
- Referenced in curriculum planning, staff development and student support processes.
- Inclusion champions across departments to help disseminate and explain the policy.
- Reviewed in forums such as student voice and staff forums/meetings.

13. Evaluation and Reporting

- Gather input from staff through surveys or focus groups to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion initiatives and identify areas for improvement.
- Termly inclusion impact report provided to governors
- Case studies of inclusive practice
- External benchmarking and peer review.
- Public Sector Equality Duty Report.

14. Review and Amendment History

October 2025	• Policy rewritten in line with inclusion framework
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15. Approval

Clair Etchell-Johnson	Author	Head of Foundation Learning and High Needs
Samantha Rooney	Reviewer	Assistant Principal
SLT	Approval	Chief Operating Officer and Deputy CEO
Governors	Final Sign off	Governing Body (C&Q)

Appendix A: Inclusion Toolkit Summary

The Ofsted 2025 Inclusion Toolkit introduces a standalone evaluation area for Inclusion within Further Education inspections. It reflects a strategic shift from compliance-based EDI approaches to holistic, student focused model of inclusion embedded across all aspects of provision.

Key Principles:

Inclusion is non-negotiable; It is now a core inspection area not a subsidiary theme.

Support must be proactive and embedded: Inclusion is expected to be part of curriculum planning, teaching, leadership and governance

Impact matters: Inspectors will assess not just the presence of support but its effectiveness and outcomes for students.

Evaluation Areas

Early Identification of Needs

- Systems must identify learner needs promptly, including those without formal diagnoses or EHCPs.
- Screening tools and staff awareness are essential from day one.

High Expectations for All

- Support must raise aspirations and outcomes, not dilute standards.
- Adaptations should enable access without compromising ambition.

Integrated Support Strategies

- Support must be woven into curriculum delivery, teaching practice, and learner journeys.
- SEND and disadvantaged learners must be visibly supported across all provision.

Learner Voice and Experience

- Inspectors will gather feedback from learners, parents, and staff.
- Inclusion must be felt and experienced, not just documented.

Data and Evidence

- Providers must show:
 - What needs were identified.
 - What support was implemented.
 - What impact it had (e.g., retention, progress, achievement).
- Systems for tracking and evaluating inclusion outcomes are essential.

Leadership and Governance

- Leaders must demonstrate strategic oversight of inclusion.
- Inclusion should be a priority in decision-making, resource allocation, and quality assurance.

Inspection Expectations

- Inspectors will use **professional dialogue, joint activity, and learner-level evidence** to assess inclusion.
- Providers are not expected to produce bespoke documents for inspection.
- Inclusion will be graded based on strengths, areas for improvement, and overall impact.

Implications for Providers

- Inclusion must be visible in everyday practice.
- Staff training, learner support systems, and curriculum design must reflect inclusive values.
- Providers should prepare to demonstrate how inclusion is embedded and effective—not just compliant.

Appendix B - Protected Characteristics – Equality Act 2010

Characteristic	Definition	Examples of Inclusion Considerations
Age	Refers to a person's age or age group.	Avoid age-based assumptions in curriculum design or support services.
Disability	Includes physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term effect on ability to carry out normal activities.	Provide reasonable adjustments, accessible learning environments, and inclusive teaching strategies.
Gender Reassignment	Applies to individuals transitioning or who have transitioned from one gender to another.	Respect chosen names/pronouns, ensure inclusive facilities, and prevent transphobic bullying.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Protection against discrimination for people who are married or in a civil partnership.	Ensure policies do not disadvantage learners or staff based on marital status.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Protects individuals during pregnancy and the period after birth.	Offer flexible learning arrangements and support for young parents.
Race	Includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins.	Promote diverse representation in curriculum, challenge racism, and support cultural inclusion.
Religion or Belief	Covers religious and philosophical beliefs, including lack of belief.	Respect religious observances, dietary needs, and provide inclusive spaces for reflection.
Sex	Refers to being male or female.	Ensure gender equity in participation, achievement, and leadership opportunities.
Sexual Orientation	Includes heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual orientations.	Foster LGBTQ+ inclusion, challenge homophobia, and support identity expression.

Application in FE Context

- These characteristics must be considered in **curriculum planning, learner support, staff development, and college culture**.
- Discrimination, harassment, or victimisation based on any protected characteristic is unlawful and must be addressed promptly.
- Inclusion strategies should go beyond compliance to actively celebrate diversity and promote equity.

Intersectionality

Many individuals may identify with more than one protected characteristic. Inclusion efforts must recognise and respond to the **complexity of overlapping identities** and experiences.

Appendix C - Inclusive Curriculum Checklist

Curriculum Design

- Curriculum reflects diverse cultures, identities, and experiences.
- Learning outcomes are ambitious and accessible for all learners.
- Curriculum includes opportunities to challenge stereotypes and promote equity.
- Subject content is reviewed for bias, representation, and relevance.
- Curriculum pathways are flexible and responsive to learner needs.

Planning and Delivery

- Schemes of work include differentiated strategies for diverse learners.
- Teaching materials are accessible (e.g., large print, audio, simplified language).
- Lessons incorporate multiple learning styles and modalities.
- Inclusive language is used consistently in teaching and resources.
- Staff plan proactively for reasonable adjustments and support needs.

Assessment and Feedback

- Assessment methods are varied and inclusive (e.g., oral, practical, written).
- Reasonable adjustments are made for learners with SEND or access needs.
- Feedback is personalised, constructive, and supports learner progress.
- Assessment outcomes are monitored for gaps between learner groups.

Learner Voice and Engagement

- Learners are consulted in curriculum development and review.
- Opportunities exist for learners to share lived experiences and perspectives.
- Enrichment activities reflect diverse interests and backgrounds.
- Curriculum promotes active citizenship, inclusion, and social justice.

Staff Development

- Staff receive training on inclusive curriculum design and delivery.
- Inclusive practice is part of performance review and CPD planning.
- Staff collaborate to share inclusive teaching strategies and resources.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Curriculum impact is evaluated across learner groups (e.g., SEND, ethnicity, gender).
- Inclusion is a standing item in curriculum review meetings.
- Learner outcomes are analysed for equity and progression.
- Feedback from learners and staff informs curriculum improvement.

Appendix D – Glossary of Definitions

Term Definition Inclusion: The practice of ensuring all individuals feel valued, respected, and supported to participate fully in education, regardless of background, identity, or need.

Equality: Ensuring individuals or groups are not treated less favourably due to protected characteristics and have equal access to opportunities.

Diversity: Recognising, respecting, and valuing differences in people's backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Protected Characteristics: The nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities): Learners who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most others of the same age.

Reasonable Adjustments: Changes made to remove or reduce disadvantages experienced by disabled people, ensuring equal access and participation.

Disadvantage: Circumstances or factors that limit a learner's access to education, opportunities, or outcomes (e.g., socio-economic status, care experience).

Intersectionality: The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, which can create overlapping systems of disadvantage or discrimination.

Unconscious Bias: Social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their conscious awareness, which can influence behaviour and decision-making.

Learner Voice: The views, experiences, and feedback of students used to inform and improve educational practice and policy.

Inclusive Pedagogy: Teaching approaches that consider the diverse needs of learners and aim to remove barriers to learning.

Safeguarding: The process of protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and ensuring their well-being.

Ofsted Inclusion Toolkit: A framework introduced by Ofsted in 2025 to evaluate how effectively FE providers embed inclusive practices across their provision.

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED): A legal duty requiring public bodies to consider how their policies and decisions affect people with protected characteristics.

Neurodiversity: The concept that neurological differences (e.g., autism, ADHD, dyslexia) are natural variations of the human brain and should be respected and accommodated.

Belonging: A sense of being accepted, included, and valued within a community or environment.

Cultural Competence: The ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures.

Trauma-Informed Practice: An approach that recognises the impact of trauma on learning and behaviour and seeks to create safe, supportive environments.

Inclusive Language: Language that avoids expressions or terms that exclude, stereotype, or demean people based on identity or background.

Social Model of Disability: A perspective that sees disability as caused by societal barriers rather than an individual's impairment.

Accessibility: The design of environments, resources, and services to be usable by all people, regardless of ability or disability.

Microaggressions: Subtle, often unintentional, comments or actions that can be discriminatory or offensive to marginalised groups.

Allyship: Active support for the rights and inclusion of marginalised groups, often by those in positions of privilege.

Inclusive Assessment: Assessment practices that accommodate diverse learning needs and reduce barriers to demonstrating achievement.

Equity: Providing varying levels of support and resources to ensure fair outcomes for all, recognising that different learners have different needs.

Representation: The presence and visibility of diverse identities, experiences, and perspectives in curriculum, staffing, and leadership.

Safe Space: An environment where individuals feel secure to express themselves without fear of discrimination or harm.

Restorative Practice: A relational approach to resolving conflict and building community through dialogue and mutual understanding.

Identity-Affirming Practice: Educational approaches that validate and celebrate learners' identities, cultures, and lived experiences.

Inclusive Leadership: Leadership that actively promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in decision-making, culture, and strategy.

Appendix E – Reasonable Adjustments Guidance (see the College’s SEND Policy and Procedures)

What Are Reasonable Adjustments?

Reasonable adjustments are changes or accommodations made to:

- **Physical environments**
- **Teaching and learning methods**
- **Assessment and feedback**
- **Policies and procedures**

These adjustments aim to remove barriers and promote equity without compromising academic standards.

Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

Area	Examples
Teaching & Learning	Use of assistive technology, differentiated instruction, extended time for tasks, visual aids
Assessment	Extra time, alternative formats (e.g., oral presentation instead of written), use of a scribe or reader
Environment	Accessible classrooms, quiet spaces, ergonomic furniture, sensory-friendly areas
Communication	Use of plain language, sign language interpreters, captioned videos, visual timetables
Support Services	Access to counselling, mentoring, study skills support, flexible timetables

5. Process for Requesting Adjustments

- **Identification:** Learner self-discloses or is identified by staff.
- **Assessment:** Inclusion team/ALS team conducts a needs assessment.
- **Planning:** Adjustments are agreed in consultation with the learner and relevant staff.
- **Implementation:** Adjustments are put in place and monitored.
- **Review:** Regular review of effectiveness and relevance.

6. Principles for Decision-Making

Adjustments should be:

- **Effective:** Remove or reduce disadvantage.
- **Proportionate:** Balanced against resources and impact.
- **Individualised:** Based on the learner’s specific needs.
- **Collaborative:** Involve the learner in planning and review.