



Rotherham Opportunities College

Accessibility Policy



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1. Introduction

This Policy is a statement of the principles and practices at Rotherham Opportunities College to ensure all disabled people, including students, staff, parents, carers and visitors, have full access to the physical environment, learning opportunities, and the cultural and social life of the college. Underpinning this policy is the philosophy that all people, regardless of disability, background or protected characteristic, are to be treated fairly, with respect, and have an entitlement to equality of opportunity. By making reasonable adjustments and improving accessibility, barriers can be reduced and participation improved for all. This policy should be read alongside the Equality Act 2010 and other related college policies including Safeguarding, Behaviour and Complaints procedures.

2. Mission Statement

At Rotherham Opportunities College, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for students, staff and others who receive services from the college. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel safe and confident to disclose disabilities, learning needs or health conditions and participate fully in college life.

We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the college environment, curriculum, communication systems and wider opportunities are as accessible as possible. Accessibility includes physical access, communication access, sensory needs, neurodiversity, learning differences, mental health needs and digital accessibility.

At Rotherham Opportunities College, we believe diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3. Scope and Responsibilities

This policy applies to:

- Students
- Staff
- Trustees / Governors
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Visitors to the college

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Principal and Trustees/Governors. All staff are responsible for promoting inclusive practice, equality of opportunity and accessibility within their roles.

The Trustee Board will monitor compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and review accessibility arrangements annually.

4. Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.



The following characteristics are protected characteristics under the Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Equality Act defines a disabled person as someone who has:

“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Discrimination can take place in several ways, including:

- Treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic;
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage;
- Harassment or victimisation linked to a protected characteristic.

5. Aims

This policy aims to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, which requires educational settings to:

Eliminate Discrimination

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 by removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.

Advance Equality of Opportunity

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by taking steps to meet differing needs and removing barriers to participation.

Foster Good Relations

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by encouraging participation, understanding, respect and inclusion.

In compiling equality information, the college examines how effectively it engages with protected groups and identifies areas where practice can be improved.

6. Principles



- The college environment will be as accessible as possible to students, staff and visitors, including wheelchair access, signage and accessible facilities.
- All students at Rotherham Opportunities College will play a full part in the life of the college and have opportunities to participate both internally and within the wider community.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation will not be tolerated. Any concerns or incidents will be reported, recorded and addressed in line with the college's Safeguarding, Behaviour and Complaints procedures.
- Information will be available to parents, carers, visitors, students and staff in a variety of accessible formats. Communication will avoid unnecessary jargon and use a plain English approach.
- An annual accessibility audit will be undertaken to support forward planning and continuous improvement.
- Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible, including through the provision of specialist equipment and assistive technology where required, such as walkers, standers and AAC devices.
- Staff are supported to complete maternity and workplace risk assessments to help ensure their safety and wellbeing.
- The college will seek to ensure that digital systems, online learning materials and communication platforms are accessible to all users wherever reasonably practicable.

7. Access to the Curriculum

All staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring students are communicated with in an appropriate and accessible format;
- Ensuring students with sensory impairments, such as visual or hearing impairments, have alternative access to the curriculum through approaches such as tactile resources, enlarged materials, assistive technology and adapted equipment;
- Ensuring all parts of the building are accessible wherever reasonably practicable, including access to low-level sinks and food preparation areas within the independent living home;
- Ensuring all students have access to the social opportunities provided by Rotherham Opportunities College;
- Ensuring all students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and are not excluded from activities because of disability or additional need;
- Exploring the use of technology and adaptive equipment to support independence and participation;
- Supporting students with neurodiversity, communication needs, mental health needs and hidden disabilities appropriately.

Reasonable adjustments will be identified in partnership with students, parents/carers and relevant professionals, and reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.

8. Monitoring

To meet the Public Sector Equality Duty, aspects of college life will be monitored to identify whether there is an adverse impact on individuals with protected characteristics.



The college will monitor:

- Recruitment, retention and wellbeing of disabled staff;
- Accessibility issues and feedback from students, staff, parents/carers and visitors;
- Student progress, participation and achievement;
- Access to resources, facilities and enrichment opportunities;
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination incidents.

The college is committed to:

- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Promoting equality of opportunity across all protected characteristics;
- Encouraging positive interaction, mutual respect and good relationships between all members of the college community;
- Challenging prejudice, discrimination, racism, harassment and bullying in all forms.

Racism, discrimination and harassment are not acceptable and will always be challenged appropriately.

Monitoring information will be reviewed regularly by senior leaders and governors to identify trends, address concerns and support continuous improvement.

9. Accessibility Planning

The college will maintain and review accessibility planning arrangements to improve:

- The physical environment;
- Access to the curriculum;
- Access to information and communication;
- Digital accessibility;
- Staff awareness and training;
- Emergency evacuation arrangements, including Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) where appropriate.

10. Contact with Parents and Carers

When providing newsletters, reports and other information for parents and carers, the college will make information available in accessible formats wherever reasonably practicable so that parents and carers with disabilities or additional needs can access the information effectively.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or college procedures.