



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:

making it happen

Varndean College is a diverse community where everyone is valued for their individuality and uniqueness. This booklet explains how you can help us achieve this.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: key aspects of British Values

The Equality Act (2010) gives protection to individuals based on certain '*protected characteristics*'. These, include race, sex, disability, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs.



At Varndean College, we aim to create an environment of mutual respect where **everyone feels appreciated irrespective of their differences.**

British Values include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This means ensuring other people with different faiths or beliefs (or none) are accepted and do not experience prejudice or discrimination

Equality is about ensuring that every one has an equal chance to make the most of their lives and talents. Nobody should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Historically, certain groups of people with particular characteristics (eg. race, disability, sex and sexuality) have been subjected to discrimination. Our aim is to do everything we can to remove this unfairness.

Diversity in its simplest form means 'difference.' It is about recognising individual and group differences, valuing these differences and treating people with fairness and respect. We value having a diverse college community. It provides a wider range of skills and viewpoints, increasing creativity and making us stronger and more successful.

Inclusion is about removing any barriers that may prevent students or staff feeling welcomed and valued at Varndean. People may feel excluded for a number of reasons (for example ability, sexual orientation, social background or age). Our aim is to raise understanding and promote tolerance so that we build an inclusive community where these differences are seen in a positive rather than a negative way.



What are prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harassment?

Prejudice is where we form an opinion about something or someone without any actual evidence for that opinion. For example, you may form a dislike of a person or group solely based on their religion, sexual orientation or appearance.

Discrimination involves acting on a prejudice by treating someone in a less favourable way because of their membership of a particular group. The law protects individuals from discrimination where that discrimination is based upon their race, sex, disability, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion and beliefs.

Bullying and harassment includes any unwanted behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended. Bullying may involve: physical assault, teasing, ignoring, making threats, being stared at or online bullying.

The College won't tolerate bullying or behaviour which threatens others' safety or wellbeing of others, and we will take the strongest action to deal with any instances reported. When individuals hold prejudices and discriminate against or harass others, it is the responsibility of anyone who witnesses it to speak out.

The **language** we use is important. Sometimes, without realising it, we use words or terms that may offend others. If you hear derogatory words used, even if the person using them says it's just a joke, please stand up and challenge it.



What to do if you witness or experience discrimination, bullying or harassment

Please tell a member of staff. There are a number of people you can talk to including your Core Studies Tutor and the Wellbeing team (based in room 14.2).

Alternatively you can contact the NUS Equality Officer or College Equality & Diversity group - equal@varndean.ac.uk.

Ways we can **support each other**:

- ❖ take responsibility for your own behaviour. Make sure you are not acting out of prejudice - consider how you speak to others and do not use language which may be considered offensive.
- ❖ if possible, challenge others when you see or hear them acting in a discriminatory way
- ❖ report any instances of discrimination, bullying or harassment so that it may be dealt with appropriately