

# LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

*This scheme is based on guidelines produced by the Disability Rights Commission*

### **Introduction**

Longley Park Sixth Form College was incorporated in November 2002 in response to the findings of the Post-16 Area Inspection of Sheffield. It has a clear mission to provide high quality educational opportunities post-16 for the young people of North East Sheffield who had previously had to cross the city to access sixth form provision. This lack of local progression opportunities contributed to a history of poor achievement and low participation compared to national benchmarks in the area. The seven partner schools, which work with the College, serve communities facing challenging social and economic conditions. The College is part of a concerted regeneration initiative, which has seen a significant rise in achievement across all these schools. The College acts as a vital link between rapidly improving 11-16 schools and the two local universities with which it also has close links.

The College opened in September 2004 and has a student cohort of circa 1200.

Key characteristics of the College are outstanding IT provision for all courses and a flexible curriculum, which meets the needs of a wide range of students. Full details of the various programmes can be found in the prospectus.

The College employs 133 full time equivalent staff - both academic and support staff and has an annual staff cost of approximately £4.1 million.

The development of the College was fully funded by the Learning and Skills Council.

The College is a Further Education Corporation created under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

### **Our Commitments**

The College aims to ensure that individuals with a disability are entitled to the same equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities as the majority population. The college strives to ensure that whatever the heritage and origins of members of the college community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect.

This is one of a number of policy statements which serve to remind us all that diversity in our society is a strength and we must ensure equality and equity having regard to issues of gender, age, disability, skin colour, faith, disability, sexuality and culture.

We will work towards the elimination of discrimination whether overt, covert or by omission and we will ensure that individuals and communities have equal access to our learning programmes and facilities.

We are committed to:

- actively tackling discrimination and promoting disability equality and good relations
- encouraging, supporting and helping all students and staff to reach their potential
- working with other institutions, local communities and others to tackle discrimination and to encourage and promote good practice in achieving disability equality

- making sure that the Disability Equality Scheme is implemented and reported on.

We recognise that this Scheme is developmental and will continue to change in response to the needs and priorities identified by the involvement of disabled people.

Doug Liversidge CBE  
Chair of Governors

Paul Ashdown  
Principal

## **Our Statutory Duties**

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005) the College has the following general duties:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

It also has the following specific duties:

- produce a Disability Equality Scheme
- put in place arrangements for implementing the Scheme, publicising its contents and the results of its monitoring of its effectiveness
- gather information on the effect of policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to, and on the achievements of, disabled students.

## **Meeting our duties**

We will seek to ensure that:

- Governors, staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of our Disability Equality Scheme and the action needed for its implementation.
- Staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of the value placed upon equal opportunity and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the Scheme.
- Governors and staff have access to comprehensive information which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the Scheme.
- The College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about minority ethnic groups.
  
- Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity.
  
- Ethnic minority learners have access to appropriate support and facilities.
  
- Applicants for employment are drawn from a wide pool with positive action to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
  
- Recruitment and promotion procedures are designed to eliminate cultural bias.
  
- Staff development schemes are designed to meet the particular needs and enhance the skills of under-represented ethnic groups.

## **Involvement**

The College is committed to involving disabled people and giving disabled people every opportunity to comment on how our services and employment practices are provided and developed. The College also recognises that it is important disabled people are represented in all the ways in which we consult.

We will involve disabled people on employment matters and the services we provide including:

- finding out what barriers disabled people face and taking steps to remove them;
- asking if disabled people are happy with the services we provide e.g. through satisfaction surveys, focus groups;
- setting priorities and helping us to plan things;
- looking at the impact of existing and proposed policies;
- monitoring and checking how well things are done;
- reviewing and revising the scheme and providing feed back on how disabled people's views have influenced our decisions.

## **Responsibilities**

### The Governing Body

The governors are responsible for:

- making sure the college stays within the Disability Relations Act and meets all its duties, including the general duty and the specific duties;
- making sure the Disability Equality Scheme is followed;
- ensuring that the membership of the governing body reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College
- ensuring that the College's strategic plan includes a commitment to disability equality;
- ensuring they receive and respond to the information gathered on learners and staff with disabilities on an annual basis.

### The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on disability equality issues;
- promoting the Disability Equality Scheme inside and outside the College;
- making sure the Disability Equality Scheme is implemented and reported on.

## **Managers, including Directors and Senior Support Staff Managers**

Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- they are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to disability discrimination legislation;
- all aspects of college policy and activity are sensitive to disability issues;
- disability monitoring information is collected and analysed;
- targets are set on the recruitment, retention and achievement of learners based upon the analysis of the disability monitoring information;
- teaching observation reports include criteria on disability issues;
- internal verification procedures include scrutiny of disability issues;
- curriculum areas are required to assess performance in relation to disability issues and take action as appropriate;
- the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equal opportunities;

- targets are set on the recruitment and promotion of staff based upon the analysis of the disability monitoring information;
- the College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about minority ethnic groups
- learner induction programmes and tutorial programmes reflect the College's commitment to promote equality of opportunity;
- all staff know their responsibilities and receive support and training in carrying these out;
- the relevant procedures are in place and action is taken against staff or students who discriminate for reasons of disability.

### **Staff with specific responsibilities**

- Directors and Senior Cross College Managers are responsible for dealing with incidents of discrimination or harassment;
- the Personnel Manager is responsible for co-ordinating staff training initiatives on disability equality;
- the Personnel Manager is responsible for compiling a brief annual action plan on disability equality targets for presentation to the Corporation (based on the general action plan in Appendix 1).

### **All staff**

All staff are responsible for:

- challenging inappropriate behaviour by either learners, work placement providers or other members of staff;
- promoting disability equality and good relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of disability;
- keeping up-to-date with the law on disability equality and taking up training and learning opportunities;
- ensuring their schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of disability equality.

### **Contractors and service providers**

All contractors and providers of services are responsible for

- following the College's Disability Equality Scheme and any disability equality conditions in contracts or agreements.

### **Breaches of the Policy**

Breaches of the Disability Equality Scheme will be dealt with under staff or student disciplinary procedures as applicable.

### **Monitoring Our Progress**

To inform the setting of targets and the measurement of our progress in achieving them we will collect and analyse the following information by ethnic origin:

For learners:

- disability profiles of learners
- applications and success and failure rates for admission to programmes
- retention rates
- achievement rates
- work placements including success rates, satisfaction levels and job offers

- disciplinary action
- complaints by learners or their sponsors
- satisfaction surveys

For employees:

- disability profiles of employees by grade and type of work
- job application rates
- selection success rates
- type of contract (permanent, temporary)
- training application rates
- promotion, application and success rates
- disciplinary proceedings
- grievances
- satisfaction surveys

### **Impact Assessments (IA's)**

We need to understand whether our services are meeting everyone's needs and that people who need our services have access to them. To help us to do this we carry out an Impact Assessment.

#### **What are Impact Assessments?**

An Impact Assessment is a way of deciding whether an existing or proposed policy, procedure, practice or service does (or may) affect people differently, and if so, whether it affects them in an adverse way.

The College will carry out an Impact Assessment on new policies and services, as they are developed and over time on all other existing policies and services. Disability issues will be considered alongside other equality issues such as disability and gender and will involve disabled people.

A summary of the results of Impact Assessments, action plans, and consultation exercises will be reported as part of the annual review of the Disability Equality Scheme.

#### **Publicising our Policy and Progress**

We will publicise to the public (including learners, work placement providers and staff) :

- our commitment to disability equality highlighted in our prospectus and annual financial statements;
- a summary of the results of our monitoring information will be included in our annual report.

#### **Equality of Opportunity**

The College is committed to the implementation of policies to achieve equality of opportunity for all staff, students and members of the community it serves. In doing so the College will actively work to achieve equality regardless of age, disability, skin colour, disability, gender, marital status, sexuality and faith.