

LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

This scheme is based on guidelines produced by the Equal Opportunities 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 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, 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 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 equality

- making sure that the Gender 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 people of all genders and sexual orientation.

Doug Liversidge CBE
Chair of Governors

Mo Nisbet
Principal

Our Statutory Duties

Under the Sexual Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended by the Equality Act 2006) the College has the following general duties:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

It also has the following specific duties:

- prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme, showing how it will meet;
- in formulating its overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap;
- gather and use information on how the College's policies and procedures affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services;
- consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives;
- assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality;
- implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so;
- report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years.

Meeting our duties

We will seek to ensure that:

- Governors, staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of our Gender 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 gender diversity.
- Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity.
- 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 gender bias.
- Staff development schemes are designed to meet the particular needs and enhance the skills of individuals of all genders and sexual orientation.

Involvement

The College is committed to involving employees, service users and others and to provide them with every opportunity to comment on how our services and employment practices are provided and developed. The College also recognises that it is important employees, service users and others are represented in all the ways in which we consult.

We will involve employees, service users and others on employment matters and the services we provide including:

- building up a better picture of the most important gender issues in our work;
- gathering evidence to use in determining priorities and in the gender impact assessment process;

- 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 people's views have influenced our decisions.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governors are responsible for:

- making sure the college stays within the Equality Act and meets all its duties, including the general duty and the specific duties;
- making sure the Gender Equality Scheme is followed;
- ensuring that the membership of the governing body reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College;
- ensuring that there is a Strategic Framework that fosters a positive ethos with regard to sexual diversity and the elimination of sex discrimination and that the College's strategic plan includes a commitment to gender equality;
- ensuring they receive and respond to the gender monitoring information on staff, impact assessments and general equality objectives;
- ensuring they receive and respond to reports on recruitment, retention, achievement and success rates for male and female students.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on gender equality issues;
- promoting the Gender Equality Scheme inside and outside the College;
- making sure the Gender 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 gender discrimination legislation;
- all aspects of college policy and activity are sensitive to gender issues;
- gender monitoring information is collected and analysed;
- targets are set on the recruitment, retention and achievement of learners based upon the analysis of the gender monitoring information;
- teaching observation reports include criteria on gender issues;
- internal verification procedures include scrutiny of gender issues;
- curriculum areas are required to assess performance in relation to gender 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 gender monitoring information;
- the College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about gender diversity;
- 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 gender.

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 gender equality;
- the Personnel Manager is responsible for compiling a brief annual action plan on gender 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 gender equality and good relations and avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of gender;
- keeping up-to-date with the law on gender equality and taking up training and learning opportunities;
- ensuring their schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of gender equality.

Contractors and service providers

All contractors and providers of services are responsible for

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

Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of the Gender 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:

For learners:

- gender and ethnicity 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:

- gender and ethnicity 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. Gender issues will be considered alongside other equality issues such as race and disability.

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

Publicising our Policy and Progress

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

- our commitment to gender 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, race, skin colour, disability, gender, marital status, sexuality and faith.