

THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE FARNBOROUGH

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Part 1 - Introduction

The Sixth Form College Farnborough seeks to promote equality and celebrate diversity. The College is committed to creating an environment in which everyone is welcomed and respected, given equal opportunity and afforded full access to all activities wherever possible.

The College's Equality and Diversity Policy states:

'Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, nationality/ citizenship, religion/ belief, sexuality, gender re-assignment or social background will not be tolerated. Staff and students are expected to behave in a way which makes other people feel accepted, comfortable and safe.'

The Disability Equality Scheme therefore seeks to remove barriers which may prevent disabled people, whether they are students, staff or visitors, from participating in the full life of the College.

The Scheme outlines the College's response to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which requires all public bodies, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take account of disabled people's disabilities, even when that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others

These 6 general duties are known as the 'Disability Equality Duty' ('DED').

The context of the new Disability Equality Duty:

In 1995 the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) established new rights for disabled people. The major requirements of the Act are:

- Disabled people must not be treated less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- Service providers must make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people. This includes physical adjustments with regard to premises as well as in matters of policy, procedure and practice.
- Colleges must take 'reasonable steps' to encourage students to disclose disability, but also to respect the student's right to confidentiality.
- Colleges must *anticipate*, not merely react, to the likely requirements of all learners.

In addition, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) was implemented as an amendment to the Disability Discrimination Act and strengthened the requirement for student services in education to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

The College has sought to implement the Disability Discrimination Act by:

- Reviewing the student diary, College Charter and Enrolment Briefing pack. In particular, encouraging the early disclosure of an additional need in a confidential and supportive environment.
- Reviewing admissions practices and procedures, including alerting applicants to their rights in addition to anticipating and assessing student additional needs prior to enrolment.
- Relevant staff have been trained in supporting students with specific disabilities and support needs.
- The fabric of the building has been adapted to meet the needs of the disabled and all future building plans are considered in the light of the requirements of disabled users.

The Disability Equality Scheme (DES) is therefore an extension of the College's existing commitment to ensure that all members of the College community are treated with the utmost respect and have genuine opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Part 2 - Disability equality vision, values and principles:

The College Mission Statement:

The mission of the College is to develop as a distinguished major provider of the highest quality academic and Vocational Education, leading to Higher Education opportunities and employment, and contributing to the achievement of the National Targets for Education and Training

and

to develop the lively caring community of the College, enriching the lives of all students and equipping them with the qualifications and skills to meet the demands of a changing world with confidence and assurance

The College adopts the 'social model' of disability in that it regards the attitudinal and environmental barriers experienced by disabled people as the most important factors in promoting equality; inequality is not a natural consequence of an impairment or medical condition.

The College, therefore, will seek to integrate the spirit of the Disability Equality Duty (DED) into all its Policies, Plans, Procedures and Practices and thus maintain its proud status as a Beacon College which treats all its members as individuals with a unique and valuable contribution to make.

Part 3 - actively engaging with disabled people:

The College realises that true collaboration with disabled people is central to the success of the Disability Equality Scheme and therefore a variety of different steps has been, and will be taken, to ensure that wherever possible, disabled people are an integral part of review and decision making processes.

Previously, attempts to involve disabled students in a forum have been limited in their success; information has therefore largely been gathered by monitoring application forms, course forums and by individual contact. This approach has thus, largely, fallen short of the requirement of the Disability Equality Duty (DED) to engage disabled students in 'genuine and active' involvement. Information regarding staff needs has also largely been obtained by the monitoring of application forms and individual discussion.

The College already has very effective links with many external agencies and is building upon existing relationships. For example, the expertise of the Hampshire County Council Sensory Impairment Unit is regularly sought and its recommendations implemented. In addition, the College has a long-standing partnership with a local Special School and students from both institutions share experiences and learn together; much has been learned regarding physical access and needs by welcoming disabled young people on to College premises.

To further collaborate with disabled staff, students and service users, the college is participating in the following activities:

- A joint project with Rushmoor Borough Council to consult with as many disabled people as possible and to share information with service providers in the Borough
- The College Human Resources Administrator is circulating a questionnaire to all staff, asking them to consider disclosing disability and inviting volunteers to participate in an Equality and Diversity group which will be responsible for carrying out impact assessments throughout the College
- Membership of the Equality and Diversity group will include 2 officers from the Student Association - those with responsibility for 1) Teaching for Learning and 2) Equal Opportunities.
- All students who have disclosed a disability will be invited to complete a questionnaire on how the College meets the requirements of disabled students. Volunteers will be sought to join focus groups and to assist with Impact Assessments

Part 4 - Leadership and Management:

The College Governors and Senior Management team are committed to the ethos of the Disability Equality Duty (DED) and enthusiastically support the measures to comply with it. The Principal has therefore charged a small Steering Group with the task of overseeing the development of the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan. The Steering Group comprises:

Simon Jarvis: Vice Principal

Rosemary Heasman: Assistant Principal, Student Services

Simon Reigh: Faculty Director, Humanities and Social Sciences

Ann Horsley: Assistant Director, Teaching for Learning (inc. study support)

Sheila Davine: Director of Resources

Jenny Pearson: Human Resources Administrator

Members of the Steering Group (plus appropriate volunteers and co-opted persons) have responsibility for impact assessing the Policies, Procedures, Plans and Practices of a particular area:

- Human Resources: Simon Jarvis, Jenny Pearson
- Estates: Sheila Davine, Gordon Dodds
- Curriculum Planning: Simon Reigh, Vince Scannella
- Quality: Simon Jarvis
- Marketing and Admissions: Simon Jarvis, Rosemary Heasman, John Guy
- Student Services: Rosemary Heasman, Ann Horsley

The Steering Group is mindful of the fact that all staff and students must be made aware of the Disability Equality Duty (DED) and of the positive and far reaching impact it will have on the College. The Action Plan therefore, has a detailed timetable for the dissemination of information and the promotion of disability equality.

The Disability Equality Duty (DED) will initially be introduced to teaching staff at one of the regular Faculty meetings and to non-teaching staff at a specially convened meeting. All students will be made aware of the Disability Equality Duty (DED) during tutorial lessons and will be encouraged to be involved in Impact assessments as appropriate.

Part 5 - Carrying out Impact Assessments:

The specific duty requirement of the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to carry out impact assessments provides an important mechanism for ensuring that due regard is given to disability equality in all policy development and decision-making activities. The College is committed to ensuring that equality becomes a central and integral activity to all services and functions.

Impact assessments are a means by which the college will narrow the gap between the expectations, experiences, education, qualifications and employment of disabled and non-disabled people; they provide the starting point for organisational change.

The College has adopted the Learning and Skills Council Development Agency's suggested format for conducting impact assessments:

- Map all Policies, Plans, Procedures and Practices
- Screen to determine priority
- Consider the evidence and assess likely impact
- Assess the likely impact
- Explore options and make decisions as to any action required
- Put in place measures to monitor and evaluate the outcome of any changes made
- Publish results

The College Steering Group has compiled a comprehensive list of all Policies, Procedures, Plans and Practices and each has been designated 'priority 1' or 'priority 2' (see Appendix A). Staff and student focus groups will determine the exact order in which the impact assessments will take place. The appropriate member of the Steering Group will then be responsible, in collaboration with members of the College Equality and Diversity Group, for conducting impact assessments and suggesting changes and amendments. Such amendments will then be subject to the usual college approval procedure i.e. approval by the Senior Management Teams and Governors.

The College Equality and Diversity group will ensure that such changes are monitored appropriately by existing information gathering mechanisms and procedures or, if required, by new, more appropriate methods.

Results of impact assessments, and resulting changes, will be included in the College Disability Equality Scheme (DES), which will be updated at least annually.

Part 6 - Gathering Information:

Gathering statistical information is vital to the process of achieving greater equality for disabled staff and students; it will enable the College to:

- Assess its performance
- Carry out appropriate and effective impact assessments
- Identify barriers to good practice and inform action for improvement
- Review progress and adjust action as appropriate
- Monitor progress in relation to available national benchmarks

As outlined in the Action Plan (see Appendix B) the Human Resources Administrator will encourage staff to disclose disabilities; this information, in conjunction with impact assessments on relevant Policies, Plans, Procedures and Practices, will inform future decision making and action. Disabled staff will be encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of this process and it is anticipated that further need for information gathering and statistical analysis will emerge.

The student disability profile for the academic year 2006-7 is as follows:

Nature of disability	Count
Dyslexia	96
Medical condition (various)	10
Dyspraxia	8
Hearing Impaired	7
Asperger's Syndrome	7
Emotional needs	5
Visually Impaired	5
Physical Disability	3
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	3
Dyslexia+ Dyspraxia	1
Dyscalculia+ Dyslexia	1
Dyscalculia	1
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder+ Medical condition+ Visually Impaired	1
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder+ Dyslexia	1
Attention Deficit Disorder+ Medical condition	1
Attention Deficit Disorder+ Dyslexia	1
Asperger's Syndrome+ Hearing Impaired	1
Total no. of students with disclosed disability	152

Part 7 - Putting the scheme into practice:

The Disability Equality Scheme will be published on the college website. It will be thoroughly revised on a yearly basis and minor adjustments will be made in the intervening period.

The DED will be a standing item on all Faculty meeting agendas within the Equality and Diversity standing item.

In addition, the College Action Plan will accompany the Disability Equality Scheme (DES), and will detail all activity focused upon improving equality of opportunity for disabled members of the College Community. The Action Plan will set *SMART* targets:

- *Specific* – targets will detail exactly what is to happen and who will be accountable
- *Measurable* – it will be possible measure whether a target has been achieved
- *Achievable* – targets will be achievable in the timescale
- *Realistic* – targets will be challenging but possible
- *Time-related* – all action will have deadlines

The College Action Plan will be published on the college website and updated at least annually.

Part 8 - Monitoring and evaluation:

The Steering Group will be responsible for amending the Disability Equality Scheme (DES), and Action Plan. All information gathered, impact assessments completed and action agreed will be recorded as an on-going process. At the end of each academic year, the necessary revision of the Action Plan and Disability Equality Scheme (DES), will be undertaken.

The appropriate member of the Steering Group will be responsible, in collaboration with members of the College Equality and Diversity Group, for conducting impact assessments and suggesting changes and amendments. Such amendments will then be subject to the usual college approval procedure i.e. approval by the Senior Management Teams and Governors.

The College Equality and Diversity group will ensure that such changes are monitored appropriately by existing information gathering mechanisms and procedures or, if required, by new, more appropriate methods.

During the first year of the College Action Plan, the major focus will be on reviewing cross-college Policies, Procedures, Plans and Practices. However, during years two and three, it is anticipated that the focus will increasingly turn to individual curriculum and support staff areas. In consequence, disability equality will increasingly become an integral part of subsequent plans and action.

FARNBOROUGH SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
DISABILITY EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Interim Action Plan

ACTION	LEAD	TIMESCALE	REPORTS/ MONITORING	OUTCOMES	Check
Agree composition of a Steering Group possibly comprising: Simon Jarvis Rosemary Heasman Jenny Pearson Ann Horsley Sheila Davine Tracey Falzon Faculty Director SA Officer Parent- Governor/ parent of disabled student Disabled staff member (s)	Rosemary Heasman	12/12/06	Principal briefed re composition of group and date of planning day	Group is recognised as the planning and driving force for preparation of DES and Action Plan	✓
Steering Group meet and agree on date for whole day planning meeting	Rosemary Heasman	19/12/06		Whole day meeting arranged	✓
Write a detailed paper outlining suggested methods of: • Taking stock • Identifying where we wish to be in 3yrs time • Suggesting how we achieve our objectives	Rosemary Heasman/ Ann Horsley	31/01/07	Written report to Principal	Report	DES & Action Plan started following SG day out 22 Jan 07
Steering Group have whole day planning meeting during which: • Members are fully briefed as to rationale and requirements of the legislation • A lead person(s) will be designated to co-ordinate activity • Agree who is to collate information and write DES and Action Plan • Dates for further meetings will be agreed • The group will consider the report prepared	Rosemary Heasman	31/01/07	Interim outline action plan presented to Principal	Update Interim action plan	✓ Rosemary & Simon J Ann & Rosemary ✓ Done by all

ACTION	LEAD	TIMESCALE	REPORTS/ MONITORING	OUTCOMES	Check
by Rosemary Heasman/ Ann Horsley and use to formulate an interim outline action plan • The group will decide how the work is to be carried out- allocate responsibilities to members of the group who will then convene further sub- groups/ delegate tasks • An interim outline action plan will be produced. This will detail steps to be taken before the DES and Action Plan can be written					6 members of Steering Group ✓ ✓
DES and Action Plan are published and made available to all interested parties and a report is prepared for the governors	Designated member(s) of Steering Group	16/04/07	DES and Action Plan	DES and Action Plan published and contents promoted	✓

Continuation of Action Plan following Steering Group planning day 22-1-07 and follow-up session 15-2-07

ACTION	LEAD	TIMESCALE	REPORTS/ MONITORING	OUTCOMES	Progress Check
Investigate gaining the charter mark ✓✓ Positive about Disability	Jenny Pearson	April 07		College in position to decide benefits of gaining charter mark	
Write up the list of policies, procedures, plans and practices that were arrived at by the Steering Group in priority order.	Rosemary Heasman Jenny Pearson	29 Jan 07		List of policies, procedures, plans and practices in priority order.	✓
Write the preliminary Disability Equality Scheme	Ann Horsley Simon Jarvis	15 March 07		Preliminary DES	✓
Write the preliminary Action Plan	Rosemary Heasman Simon Jarvis	For the briefings	See briefings below	Action Plan	✓
Arrange a ½ hour follow-up meeting of the Steering Group before the spring Reading Week to consider the preliminary DES and Action Plan	Rosemary Heasman	By 16 Feb 07		Steering Group approves: • preliminary DES • Action Plan	✓
Brief the following on the outcomes of the Steering Group day out : • Pastoral and Curriculum Group • Support Managers • Principalship • Curriculum and Quality – Governors committee • Joint Staff Group	Rosemary Heasman Sheila Davine Jenny Pearson Rosemary Heasman Rosemary Heasman Rosemary Heasman	29 Jan 07 30 Jan 07 31 Jan 07 5 Feb 07 15 Feb 07		Governors, Principalship and senior teaching and support staff will be brought up-to-date.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Establish the number of staff and students who have disclosed a disability: 1. staff: e-mail Core Document Appendix B - "Who are 'disabled people'?" + invitation to disclose a disability (paper to some support staff) 2. students: use current information in Cristal	Jenny Pearson Simon Jarvis Rosemary Heasman David Woodward	20 March 07 20 March 07	List of disabled staff and students	Accurate data on disabled people in the College	

- Brief Student Association - Discuss how to set up a focus group of disabled staff and students	Rosemary Heasman	By Easter		Focus group ideas	
Questionnaires: - Write suitable open-ended questionnaire(s) to obtain disabled student and staff views on how the College meets the requirements of disabled people at the moment. - Carry out the surveys. - Evaluate the surveys and feed the information to the Equality and Diversity group and the staff responsible for the relevant policies, procedures, plans and practices.	Ann Horsley	By June 07	Questionnaire evaluations	Feedback from staff and students will inform the development of the Impact Assessments	
- Staff and students invited to form a focus group - Focus group discusses the problems that disabled staff and students have in the College.	Simon Jarvis?	By June 07		Informs order of priority of the Impact Assessments	
Consider the prioritising done by the Steering Group with respect to the policies, procedures, plans and practices under the 6 sections below. - Complete the list of policies, procedures, plans and practices for each section. - Revise priorities if necessary. - Human resources - Estates - Curriculum Planning - Quality	Rosemary Heasman Simon Jarvis Jenny Pearson Gordon Dodds Sheila Davine Simon Reigh Vince Scannella Simon Jarvis	20 March 07	List revised by each of the 6 section heads	College is ready to start carrying out the Impact Assessments once Impact Assessment teams are formed and trained. People with disabilities are appointed to posts at the College. College site and buildings are suitable for disabled people. The T4L team help curriculum areas to meet the needs of disabled staff and students. The outcomes of disabled students are monitored to inform future actions.	

5. Marketing and admissions 6. Student services	John Guy Simon Jarvis Rosemary Heasman Rosemary Heasman Ann Horsley			Disabled people apply to the College and feel welcome. Disabled students are fully supported whilst at College.	
Establish list of people willing to join the Equality and Diversity group and assist with the Impact Assessments. Use staff briefing, note in staff pigeon holes, e-mail, computer messages, tutorials etc. to contact: - Teaching staff - Support staff - Students - Disabled staff - volunteers - Disabled students – ask for volunteers in TGs	Rosemary Heasman Jenny Pearson Ann Horsley	16 March 07 13 March 07 By Easter By Easter	List produced Faculty meetings Support staff meeting Tutorials	Equality and Diversity group formed	✓
Set up Impact Assessment teams from: - Within a newly formed Equality and Diversity group: - Write terms of reference for Equality and Diversity group. - Convene and brief Equality and Diversity group. - Other interested staff and/or students.	Simon Jarvis Rosemary Heasman Rosemary Heasman	20 March 07 21 March 07	List of IATs + P to be assessed (P=one of 4Ps)	- Equality and Diversity group terms of reference - Equality and Diversity group convened and briefed	
Set up other collaborative groups with representation from: - Parents - Local disabled people	Rosemary Heasman	July 2008 April 2007	Minutes of meetings with RBC	Working with Rushmoor Borough Council to get feedback from sight and hearing impaired people.	2 meetings already with RBC, next one 8 Feb 07

Equality and Diversity group to: 1. Consider and revise the prioritising of the policies, procedures, plans and practices within the 6 sections. 2. Keep in mind the 4 stages of the student experience: • Recruitment • Induction • On-programme • Moving-on 3. Produce a calendar for completing the impact assessments of all the first priority policies, procedures, plans and practices. 4. Agree personnel for each of the impact assessment teams.	Rosemary Heasman	21 March 07	Calendar of impact assessments Impact assessment teams	Staff responsible for policies, procedures, plans and practices are informed as to their impact on disabled people. Suggestions are made as to necessary changes.	
Equality and Diversity sub-groups to: 1. Undertake initial impact assessments of the first priority policies, procedures, plans and practices in each of the 6 sections. 2. Feedback results of the impact assessments to the staff responsible for each of the policies, procedures, plans and practices being assessed.	Rosemary Heasman	Each sub-group to meet once every ½ term	Impact assessments completed	Impact assessments handed to member of staff responsible for particular policy, procedure, plan or practice.	
Results of the impact assessments to be incorporated into the relevant College policies, procedures, plans and practices.	Simon Jarvis Jenny Pearson Gordon Dodds Sheila Davine Simon Reigh Vince Scannella John Guy Rosemary Heasman Ann Horsley	July 2007		College policies, procedures, plans and practices are changed so that the gap is reduced between the expectations, experiences, education, qualifications and employment of disabled and non-disabled people.	

Involvement of teaching and support staff: 1. Staff training on the Disability Equality Scheme. Consider bringing in a consultant (Christine Rose) to run a training session. 2. Curriculum areas to list and prioritise their policies, procedures, plans and practices. 3. Curriculum areas to start the process of impact assessing. 4. Personal tutors to start the process of impact assessing. 5. Support staff to start the process of impact assessing.	Rosemary Heasman	July 2007	First round of impact assessments completed	All staff trained. Curriculum area and Student Services policies, procedures, plans and practices are changed so that the gap is reduced between the expectations, experiences, education, qualifications and employment of disabled and non-disabled people.	
	Simon Jarvis	July 2007-08			
	Rosemary Heasman	July 2007-08			
	Gordon Dodds	July 2007-08			
Monitor progress and: • Write Annual Report • Re-write Disability Equality Scheme • Write new Action Plan	Rosemary Heasman Ann Horsley Rosemary Heasman	4 Dec 2007		Legal requirements met by College	

27 February 2007

Up-dated 14 March 2007