

Annual Equality and Diversity Statement 2023/2024

**Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)**

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation with a single act. It aims to simplify the law, remove inconsistencies, and make it easier to understand and comply with. It also aims to strengthen the law and to help tackle discrimination and inequality.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), a key measure of the Equality Act, came into force across Great Britain in April 2011 and was developed in order to harmonise the equality duties and to extend it across the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The PSED requires public bodies, which includes colleges, to consider how existing and proposed policies and practices impact on equality. This includes how employees are treated, the design and delivery of services and how financial decisions are made. The duty requires those public bodies in the execution of their day-to-day duties to have due regard to the need to:

* eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.
* advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
* foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

To assist in the performance of this duty the college will comply with the requirement to:

* publish equality objectives at least every 4 years.
* publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the PSED.

The college meets the above requirements by updating and publishing this annual statement, and demonstrates continued good practice in relation to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion by embedding a culture that aims to remove or minimise disadvantage experienced by people whether on account of their protected characteristics, or their life experiences / life chances. Regular and detailed analysis of student/apprentice and staff data influence equality objectives set across the organisation, progress of which is reported to the College Corporation and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.

**Chesterfield College Group Equality Objectives (2022-2025):**

**Academic year 22/23**

*Objective 1 - The college will launch and embed the full Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter, which will include staff, student and apprentice voice in shaping the way that the commitments within the charter are brought to life and embraced by the whole college community.*

**Progress update June 23**

The college are signed up to the Association of Colleges Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter, which was officially launched in May 2019 as part of the Love Our Colleges campaign and Mental Health Awareness Week. The commitments are published on the college website and demonstrate a public pledge to prioritising mental health and wellbeing within the organisation. Progress against each of the 11 commitments is outlined below:

* **Ensuring that well-being and mental health work is led by a senior manager supported by a member of staff with particular responsibility for mental health.**

The Assistant Principal People and Culture and Assistant Principal Student Experience and Wellbeing have completed the government funded Senior Mental Health Leads course and are the recognised college Mental Health Leads. The leads drive forwards any required actions associated with the commitments at a senior management level, with operational champions in place to drive both the staff and student mental health and wellbeing agenda.

* **Having a well-being and mental health policy accompanied by a clear implementation action plan which is monitored regularly and reviewed annually.**

Policy development is underway and will be approved and published from September 23 aligned with the new academic year.

* **Creating an open and inclusive college ethos which includes respect for those with mental ill health.**

Effective signposting for mental health services is in place for all members of the college community, which is encouraged and openly discussed when someone is experiencing mental ill health. Awareness raising events are held across the college year to reduce stigma of mental ill health and increase visibility of resources, including those related to mental fitness.

* **Promoting equality of opportunity and challenging mental health stigma through curriculum teaching and also by promoting well-being through tutorial programs.**

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter commitments are reviewed termly by the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, with working groups being established to drive the mental health agenda through the college Aspire Tutorial Program.

* **Encouraging and collecting student views on mental health and wellbeing by working with the Student Union and other student representative bodies.**

Student representatives are involved in the Safeguarding and EDI Committees and will be working to strengthen student voice activity in 23/24 including in relation to mental health and wellbeing campaigns.

* **Providing appropriate mental health training for staff.**

A number of staff across the business have completed the Mental Health First Aid training, two senior managers have completed the Mental Health Leads course, and the safeguarding team have completed suicide awareness training. Further training for managers will be identified in 23/24 related to suicide prevention.

* **Ensuring a consistent and positive approach to staff well-being.**

Following completion of the Mental Health Leads course, the Assistant Principal People and Culture is leading on the Department for Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, which includes the following commitments against which significant progress has been made: prioritise staff mental health; give staff the support they need to take responsibility for their own and other people’s wellbeing; give managers access to the tools and resources they need to support the wellbeing of those they line manage; establish a clear communications policy; give staff a voice in decision-making; drive down unnecessary workload; champion flexible working and diversity; create a good behaviour culture; support staff to progress in their careers; include a sub-strategy for protecting leader wellbeing and mental health; hold ourselves accountable, including by measuring staff wellbeing.

* **Providing targeted individual mental health support where appropriate or alternatively signposting to external support services.**

All staff are signposted to the Employee Assistance Program where free counselling is available. The safeguarding team and those in pastoral support roles are well equipped to signpost students and apprentices to suitable mental health support services and have good working relationships with those in the local area. Some staff are also trained in Mental Health First Aid and provide initial support and signposting to those in mental health crisis.

* **Providing relevant information to parents and carers.**

The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team are always present at college open evenings and parent information evenings, where they engage well with parents/carers in relation to all aspects of support, including that related to mental fitness and mental ill health. They host coffee mornings for parents/carers and facilitate supported transition activities prior to the start of term, continuing to work closely with parents/carers to support young people who are or who become vulnerable and/or at risk of harm.

* **Establishing effective links with local health services and voluntary sector mental health providers.**

The college have excellent working relationships with local services and work collaboratively to ensure the best possible support is in place for those experiencing mental ill health. Some services are brought into the college to enable better accessibility and the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team work proactively with services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to support the staff development.

* **Promoting the benefit that physical activity and sport has on mental health.**

The college runs a varied enrichment program with activities available to the wider college community through the social purpose strand of the Aspire tutorial program. External fitness organisations attend college events and promote the benefits of physical activity on mental health, which is supported by tutorial resources. This will be further developed in line with induction activity from September 23.

*Objective 2 - A Chesterfield College Group Learning Difference Quality Framework will be developed and launched, inspired by and built upon the Autism Standards Framework. (see post 16 Autism Education Trust Standards Framework)* <https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-02/Post-16-Standards-Framework_T-HUB-Sc-Mt.pdf> ).

**Progress update June 23**

The research and design stages of the Inclusion Quality Framework are complete and the framework is being consulted upon and launched through strategic quality improvement activity. A plan is in place to embed the framework through a phased approach into 23/24, with impact measures built into the performance management review cycle throughout the year. Phase 1 will focus on inclusive teaching and learning in readiness for September 23, phase 2 on exam assessments ready for the summer exams series, and phase 3 on enrolment activity for 24/25. The completed framework will provide a self-assessment tool for each department to enable them to assess and progress their inclusive practice across every aspect of the learning journey.

**Academic year 23/24**

*Objective 1 - Embed the Chesterfield College Group Learning Difference Quality Framework into all curriculum planning, delivery and quality assurance activity across the group.*

*Objective 2 - Embed Equality Diversity and Inclusion themes into the Aspire tutorial program for all students and apprentices.*

**Academic year 24/25**

*Objective 1 - Establish robust processes to enable evaluation and quality assurance activity related to the Chesterfield College Group Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter commitments, Learning Difference Quality Framework and Equality Diversity and Inclusion within the tutorial program.*

*Objective 2 - Publish feedback, successes, and future plans on the college website.*

Jo Down

Assistant Principal Student Experience and Wellbeing (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead)