



Bournemouth and Poole College Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan (DES) 2006-09

The Disability Equality Scheme is available on request in other formats, such as larger print, easy read, audiocassette and floppy disk.

If you require the scheme in an alternative format please contact:

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1 – Introduction

College Mission Statement

‘To serve the community through world class, high quality education and training, and the pursuit of excellence in all that we do’

The Bournemouth and Poole College is committed to the principles of Equality and Diversity for everyone. This commitment underpins and impacts on every area of activity and influences how the College works and what it does, and is integral to the delivery of its mission.

The College is opposed to any form of discrimination. It commits itself to the redress of any inequalities by taking positive action wherever appropriate. The College views meeting the spirit and the letter of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) as central to its mission, and aims to respond positively to its duties in this respect. The College approach to disability equality reflects the social model of disability and focuses on the removal of social, cultural and physical barriers to equality.

1.1 College profile

The College student enrolment for 05/06 indicates that 7.7% of our enrolments have reported one or more disabilities; and 8.3% have reported one or more learning difficulties. 9% of our enrolments did not declare whether or not they had a disability or a learning difficulty.

As of October 2006, 1.4% of College employees had indicated a disability, 2.7% had declared they did not have a disability and for 95.7% of employees data is not held.

Disabled people appear to be underrepresented in job applications to the College, with the last six months data indicating that virtually no job applications have been received from people who have declared whether or not they have a disability.

There are a number of reasons why this may be the case. It may be that applicants are reluctant to disclose a disability for fear of suffering unlawful discrimination, or because disabled people do not perceive the College as an inclusive employer and therefore do not apply. It may also be that data input is inaccurate and disability information has been missed from the input. It may be a combination of all of these factors.

The staff composition and high levels of non-declaration are a concern, and action to address will form part of the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) action plan.

2 – Disability equality vision, values and principles

The College Disability Equality Policy, written in conjunction with disabled staff and with input from disabled students, aims to provide the framework and context for the Disability Equality Scheme through formal statement of the College's commitment to:

- Actively promoting equality of opportunity for current and prospective College students and staff who have disabilities
- Actively encouraging involvement of current and prospective College students and staff who have disabilities in policy and decision making to remove barriers to access, achievement and progression
- Valuing the diversity and differences of everyone who works and studies at the College, and using this diversity to enrich the learning and work experience
- Meeting individual needs in ways that make everyone feel valued and respected in order that they can fulfil their potential
- Striving to provide an outstanding learning experience for every student
- Continuing the process of inclusive learning and creating an environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation

The delivery of the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and action plan forms part of the College development plan 2006/07, the Equality Forum action plan and the Disability Equality Task Group action plan.

3 – Actively involving disabled people

This DES has been written with the active involvement of disabled staff; disabled students; disabled community members, and representatives of these individuals.

3.1 Scheme publicity

The DES framework, draft scheme and questionnaire relating to the scheme have been accessible through the College website, which also invites further involvement from community members.

Equality and diversity posters are prominently displayed throughout the College inviting people to become involved.

The College Equality and Diversity newsletter publicising the scheme and opportunities for involvement has been issued to all staff and is accessible on the website, on the shared drive and on the shared email system.

A letter was issued to all College employees in July 2006 inviting their involvement in the scheme, and messages have been issued on the staff message of the day inviting involvement and notifying staff about the DES framework and questionnaire (appendix one). These documents have been stored on a central drive to ensure all staff have access and can provide feedback.

Messages have been issued on the student message of the day inviting student involvement and letting students know about the DES questionnaire and where it is available.

The Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator has attended Student Council meetings to encourage student involvement.

Two versions of student questionnaires were placed in Study Advice Centres, in Student Services, and provided to tutors to ensure that there were opportunities for as many disabled students as possible to contribute to the scheme, in an anonymous way if preferred. The

questionnaire format (appendix two) asked what students liked about the College, what they didn't like, and what we could do to make things better. The easy read format (appendix three) was mainly pictorial and asked students to indicate what was good and not good about the College.

3.2 Scheme involvement

One to one meetings have been held with individual students, community members, social services, and members of staff to discuss the proposed scheme and obtain input on the action plan. A meeting was held with Bournemouth Borough Council to discuss the scheme in the context of the Council's independent travel project.

Group meetings have been held with students as part of the College student feedback day, and as part of the student fora. These meetings discussed what students liked about the College, what they didn't like, and what we could do to make things better.

Group meetings have been held with staff members and the College Disability Equality Task Group to discuss the Scheme and identify priority actions.

Joint public sector consultation has been carried out with local community members and groups to discuss what is important to them, what barriers they face, and what can be done to overcome them.

An email was issued to all members of staff advising of the draft scheme and asking for feedback.

The feedback from all of the consultation has been used to inform the DES action plan at part ten of this document. The following table indicates the stakeholders who took part in developing the 2006-09 DES

Stakeholders	Numbers
Disabled students via easy read questionnaire	112
Disabled students via standard questionnaire	54
Disabled students via student forum meetings and student feedback day	31
Disabled students via one to one meetings	1
Disabled members of the public via Positive about Disability day	90
Disabled members of the public via one to one meetings	2
Representatives of current and potential students who are disabled via one to one meetings	3
Disability equality task group and College equality and diversity staff group members	37
Disabled staff via email/questionnaire response	5
Disabled staff via one to one meetings	3
Other staff via email/questionnaire response	6
Total disabled people or their representatives	344

3.3 Summary of barriers identified during consultation

Accessibility

- **Poor accessibility of College information**
 - On website; documents and publicity e.g. College News is not available in alternative formats
 - Text is too small on notice boards, notices too small and not easy read

- Map of college is inaccurate and difficult to read
- There is no information about accessibility of College available to potential students and staff outside the College
- **Poor access to the College**
 - Insufficient car parking spaces for disabled staff and students
 - Issues with taxis for some students
- **Poor access within the College**
 - Physical – e.g. uneven steps; no space where taxis turn; no where to sit inside if need to rest; no common room; no blinds in some classrooms meaning that smart boards cannot be easily seen; no fans or windows that open in some classrooms meaning they can become excessively warm; some doors are too heavy to open; stair lifts are often broken; it is difficult to get keys to stair lifts; lifts are often out of order; poor visibility of fire safety signs, many entrances inaccessible by wheelchair
 - Disabled toilets – toilet seats etc are often broken
 - Canteen – self service can be difficult and potentially unsafe; very noisy, poor choice of healthy food, poor accessibility of menu information, lack of help, too small, lack of supervision is seen as leading to bullying, lack of tables accessible to wheelchair users
 - Ability to know the time - clocks that speak time
 - Poor travel information
- **Barriers to teaching and learning**
 - Use of upstairs classrooms for disabled students; distance between disabled toilets and classrooms; distance between lifts and classrooms
 - Lack of technology, no voice recognition software etc
 - Poor accessibility of course materials, materials not issued in advance
 - Length of college day for disabled students – suggested possibility of fewer breaks and leaving earlier

Process and systems

- Student application and enrolment systems contain barriers to disabled students, e.g. sometimes classrooms for open

evenings are in inaccessible rooms; in some cases learning support are not involved in initial interviews, our application forms are not advertised as being available in other formats. Level of accuracy of recording means many students recorded as 'other' disability and learning difficulty making it difficult to anticipate and plan for student needs

- Staff recruitment and promotion process may contain barriers for potential and existing staff and result in self de-selection and reluctance to disclose
- Delivery of Disability Symbol commitments is not well embedded particularly in respect of staff consultation mechanisms
- Disabled staff and students do not have a chance to review and input to College policies, plans and developments which may impact disabled students and staff (e.g. new build)
- The process for ensuring informed consent for disclosure and information dissemination is not working effectively
- The processes for removing employment barriers for current and potential disabled staff are not seen as fit for purpose, being poorly understood and insufficiently publicised

Attitudes, behaviour and understanding

- The behaviour and attitude of some students towards disabled students is unacceptable. A number of students expressed concern about bullying and teasing.
- The behaviour and attitude of some staff towards disabled staff and students creates barriers to success e.g. '....some people still treat me as if my brain doesn't work, not my legs. Even some tutors.'
- A lack of staff understanding of symptoms of some types of disability and learning difficulty creates issues for staff and students e.g. '...lecturers need to understand the symptoms of learning difficulties and how it can affect...behaviour and work skills.'

4 - Leadership and management

The senior managers within the College demonstrate their commitment to disability equality not only through their contact with students and staff, but also through the structures, systems and processes they have established to focus on disability equality.

The College has a specialised directorate responsible for the provision of learning support, assistive technologies, and communication support. The directorate also provides a source of expertise for College staff in relation to disability equality matters. In addition, dedicated support is provided within the Academy of Access and Community Education, which delivers specialised preparation for life and work programmes.

A robust disability equality governance structure has been established within the College. The Disability Equality Task Group contains representatives from each area of the College, and the senior management team attends the Equality Forum to which the Disability Equality Task Group reports. A member of the Board of the Corporation attends the Equality Forum and the Equality Forum reports through to the Board of the Corporation.

In addition, an equality and diversity report is presented every term to the College Executive, and an annual report is presented to the Board of the Corporation.

Equality and diversity training is compulsory for all College staff, and managers are committed to ensuring all of their staff attend. The training includes explanation of medical and social models of disability, the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act Amendment 2005 (DDA), the practical application of the DDA information on the removal of barriers for disabled people, and the College requirements on disability equality. The corporate induction training also includes equality and diversity and the DDA. In addition, the College has developed a computer based training package for staff on disability equality. All training focuses on the responsibilities

of individuals as well as the organisation in the delivery of disability equality.

The College policies outline individual responsibilities in the delivery of equality throughout the College. The relevant policies are distributed as part of corporate induction and as part of the equality and diversity training programme as well as being available on the shared drive and on the College website. The College provides resources on disability equality and awareness for use with both students and staff.

The College aims to ensure disability equality through the mainstreaming process, embedding equality principles through the curriculum, processes and culture of the College.

The College works closely with community groups and partnership boards, as well as working with other public sector bodies to co-ordinate our community consultation approach.

5 – Impact assessments

All of the College policies have been stage one impact assessed, and all except seven require stage two impact assessment. As the College is impact assessing for all diversity strands simultaneously, policies have been prioritised on the basis of the potential impact taken collectively. It is anticipated that all existing policies will be impact assessed over the three years of the scheme, and new policies will be assessed as they are developed.

The responsibility for stage one impact assessment is with the policy owner, supported by the Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator. Stage two impact assessment consultation is managed by the Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator, and delivered through the Disability Equality Task Group. Responsibility for implementation of action is with the policy owner.

Policy maintenance is managed through the Quality and Development department which will notify the policy owner and the Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator when a policy is due for review. Impact assessment will form part of the review process.

A new process to be established as part of the action plan will ensure that staff and student consultation groups and the Disability Equality Task Group will review plans and developments which may have an impact on disabled staff and students.

6 – Gathering information

This section covers information about the arrangements for gathering information on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled staff and the educational opportunities available to, and the achievements of, disabled students.

Information pertaining to staff disability is collated as part of the equal opportunity data in the College recruitment process, although, as mentioned in 1.1 of this document, the College has some challenges with high rates of non-disclosure. Actions to address this will be included as part of the DES action plan.

Recruitment and retention are monitored monthly for disability, and the results form part of the reporting process. The College would like to establish a more robust process for consulting with disabled staff, and as part of the DES action plan, will be seeking to include additional consultation mechanisms.

All staff development is monitored through the development database and reports on development activity are sent to Academy Directors and Department Heads on a monthly basis. In addition, continuing professional development records are issued annually to all staff. At present the database does not record information relating to disability and hence monitoring of the development of disabled staff is not developed as well as it could be and actions to address will be included as part of the DES action plan.

Student enrolment, success, retention and achievement rates are monitored by type of disability and learning difficulty and are compared to the rates of students who do not have a disability or learning difficulty. The information suggests that for academic year 05/06 success, retention and achievement rates were marginally lower for students with disability and learning difficulty than for those without. However, for most groups, success rates improved on 04/05 levels.

The student data is analysed by the Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator as and when the data becomes available. An initial data extract is usually produced and distributed in October, and a final version in January.

This information is reviewed at College level by the Disability Equality Task Group, the Equality Forum, the Senior Management Team, the Executive and the Board of the Corporation. The College wide information is used to inform the College development plan, the Equality Forum action plan, the Disability Equality Task Group action plan, the Learning Support plan and the College EDIMs.

In addition, Academy specific information is prepared and discussed with Academy management teams who use the information to inform their individual action plans and their self assessment reviews (SAR) which are monitored through the College Quality Board.

Although success, retention and achievement are analysed by type of disability and learning difficulty it has been identified that improvements to data recording need to be made to reduce the percentage of disability and learning difficulty recorded as 'other'. Additional guidance has been provided to enrolment staff for academic year 06/07 and improvements are anticipated in future, however actions to address will be included as part of the DES action plan.

7 – Putting the scheme into practice

The scheme and action plan will be published on the College website by December 06, and updates to the action plan will be published each term on the College website, on the College shared drives, and on the shared email system. In addition the information will be discussed through the consultation and governance mechanisms within the College.

The College disability equality action plan reflects

- the priorities of those consulted
- the strategic priorities of the College
- the specific improved outcomes and disability equality targets the College wants to achieve and timetable for delivery
- measurable indicators of progress towards outcomes
- lines of accountability

8 - Monitoring and evaluation

The action plan will be monitored and updates on actions and outcomes provided every term at the Disability Equality Task Group meeting and the College Equality and Diversity staff group meeting. A full update will be provided to the Equality Forum which meets once a term and updates will be posted on the College website, included on the shared drive, and on the shared email system. Updates will also be provided once a term to the Student Council.

Student and staff consultation mechanisms will be used to obtain input on evaluation of the scheme. Evaluation of the scheme will be completed by the Disability Equality Task Group at the last meeting of the academic year, and will be reported to the Equality Forum and the annual equality and diversity report to the Board of the Corporation. It will also inform the College SAR. The evaluation will be posted on the College website and feedback invited. Results of impact assessments, success, retention and achievement data etc. will also be published on the website and stored on the shared drive.

Amendments to the plan will be made on an annual basis at the first meeting of the Disability Equality Task Group each calendar year. Prior to the meeting, consultation with disabled students, staff and community members will have taken place to inform priority actions for that year.

9 - College contact

The College welcomes feedback on this scheme and action plan. Please contact Theresa Linder, Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator on lindert@bpc.ac.uk or phone on 01202 205417

10 – Action plan 2006-2009

Section one – Accessibility

	Action	Disability equality will be achieved through	Timescale for delivery	Lead responsibility
1.1	Address barriers to information about The College	Amendments to website to ensure accessibility	2006-2007	AP Learning Resources & ILT
		Amendments to College documents and publicity to ensure accessibility and positive promotion	2006-2008	Director of Marketing; SMT
		Amendments to College notice boards and maps to ensure accessibility particularly to those with visual impairment and learning difficulties	2006-2008	Director of Marketing; AP Student Services, Director of Estates
		The delivery and publication of an appropriate accessibility statement	2006-2007	Director Learning Support
1.2	Address access barriers to the College	Actions to address the shortage of disabled parking spaces on all sites	2006-2009	Director of Estates
		The development and implementation of a contingency plan to be actioned in the event of all disabled parking spaces being filled and someone with mobility impairment requiring	2006-2007	Director of Estates

		parking on site. Liaison with Dorset County Council and taxi companies to address service issues relating to delays etc Open evenings only to be held in rooms which are accessible to everyone	2006-2007 2007-2008	AP Student Services & Director ACE Director of Marketing & SMT
1.3	Address barriers within the College	<p>Actions to review and address physical access barriers which can be actioned prior to the College new build. Review to include uneven steps, lack of handrails; lack of ramps; reliability of lifts and stair lifts; key access to stair lifts; doors which are too heavy for disabled people (especially e-learning in Lansdowne); lack of inside seating for those who need to rest; risk assessment of taxi turning area; lack of deaf alert system, lack of wheelchair accessible tables in cafeteria, lack of blinds in classrooms with smart boards; provision of fans or windows that open in classrooms; wheelchair inaccessible entrances</p> <p>Development and implementation of a proactive programme to review disabled toilets for maintenance requirements</p>	2006-2008 2006-2007	Director of Estates Director of Estates

		<p>Actions to deliver accessibility in the Cafeteria including review of materials used in self service coffee area; provision of pictures instead of or as well as text on the menus and signs; assessment and implementation of best way to provide support with tray carrying etc, particularly to those with mobility and visual impairment; assessment and implementation of best way to provide supervisory support in cafeteria seating area</p> <p>Provision of accessible support information e.g. 'speaking' clocks, easy read travel boards</p>	<p>2006-2007</p> <p>2006-2008</p>	<p>Hospitality Services Manager; Director ACE; Director Learning Support</p> <p>Director Learning Support; Director ACE</p>
1.4	Address access barriers to teaching and learning	<p>Assessment and implementation of the most appropriate way to minimise the use of upstairs classrooms by disabled staff and students, and minimise distance between classrooms allocated and disabled toilets, and classrooms allocated and lifts.</p> <p>Assessment and implementation of programme to disseminate the appropriate use of assistive technologies throughout the College.</p>	<p>2006-2008</p> <p>2006-2008</p>	<p>AP Data and Funding</p> <p>AP Learning Resources & ILT & Director Learning Support</p>

	<p>Assessment of accessibility of all course materials and amendments where required so that improvements in success, retention and achievement rates for students with learning difficulty and disability are delivered and differentials are minimised between those with disability/learning difficulty and those without.</p>	2006-2009	All academies
	<p>Provision of multiple opportunities for students to declare support needs, and multiple opportunities for support needs to be identified so that needs and aspirations are assessed and support is put in place asap (including special equipment and Learning Support Assistants) delivering improvements in success, retention and achievement rates for students with learning difficulty and disability and minimising differentials between those with disability/learning difficulty and those without</p>	2006-2009	AP Student Services; Director Learning Support; All academies
	<p>Review and report with recommendations on appropriateness of length of College day and most appropriate break schedules for disabled students</p>	2006-2007	Occupational health services manager

Section 2 Processes and systems

	Action	Disability equality will be achieved through	Timescale for delivery	Lead responsibility
2.1	Impact assess all policies in compliance with DDA 2005 requirements.	Development and implementation of policies which are inclusive, compliant, and meet the needs of all stakeholders	2006-2008	Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator & Disability Equality Task Group & policy owners
2.2	Revise student application and enrolment systems to remove barriers to disabled students, include learning support at the earliest opportunity, and reduce number of students recorded as 'other' disability and learning difficulty	Development and implementation of a student application and enrolment system which is inclusive, accessible, and within which disabled students feel welcomed The College being better able to anticipate and meet the needs of disabled students	2006-2008	AP Student Services & Director Learning Support
2.3	Development and implementation of processes to ensure staff recruitment; appointment; promotion, and consultation arrangements meet DDA and Disability Symbol requirements.	Recruitment; appointment; promotion and consultation arrangements which are inclusive and accessible. Disabled staff feel welcomed and supported Information is accurate and can be used to benchmark performance and set targets	2006-2008	Exec Director HR

	Undertake appropriate positive action as required including target setting for recruitment and representation. Review accuracy of data collection at recruitment throughout employment and address any issues.			
2.4	Amendment of College staff development record keeping to include information relating to disability	Information is accurate and can be used to benchmark performance and set targets	2006-2007	Training Manager
2.5	Development and delivery of a robust and well publicised process for removing barriers for current disabled staff, and the delivery of improvements in non disclosure rates	A well publicised, accessible process being available to all College staff. Staff feeling encouraged to disclose any disability The College being better able to anticipate and meet the needs of disabled staff.	2006-2008	Exec Director HR
2.6	Development and delivery of a robust process whereby disabled staff and students review College	Disabled staff and students being fully engaged and involved in assessing College plans which may impact them	2006-2008	SMT & Disability Equality Task Group

	plans and developments which may impact disabled students and staff			
2.7	Development and delivery of a robust process to ensure informed consent for disclosure, and efficient information dissemination where appropriate	<p>Disabled students and staff are treated with respect and dignity, fully understanding and agreeing to the use of any information they provide.</p> <p>The College ensuring that the dissemination of that information is dealt with quickly and effectively.</p>	2006-2007	Director Learning Support; Human Resources Manager

Section 3 – Embedding disability equality through training and development

	Action	Disability equality will be achieved through	Timescale for delivery	Lead responsibility
3.1	Disseminate information about the requirements of DDA amendment 2005 and the extent to which it places responsibility on ALL staff, through multiple sources	<p>Increased staff understanding of the requirements of the DDA and their individual responsibilities to deliver disability equality</p> <p>Provision of compulsory training for managers on ways to remove barriers for disabled staff</p> <p>Multiple channel information to increase accessibility</p> <p>Adherence to DDA requirements being included within job descriptions</p>	2006-2009	Training manager & Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator & Human Resource Manager
3.2	Develop greater staff awareness of impairment and disability through provision of compulsory training on the social model and removal of barriers, and College requirements on disability equality	<p>Increased staff understanding of the College approach to disability equality, and the symptoms and impacts of impairment and disability.</p>	2006-2008	Training manager & Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator

3.3	Develop greater student awareness of impairment and disability through provision of student induction and tutorials on disability equality; College requirements on disability equality, and on the consequences of bullying	Increased student understanding of the symptoms and impacts of impairment and disability. Reduction in negative incidents involving disabled and non disabled students	2006-2009	AP 14-19 Education and Training & AP Student Services
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Appendix one – Disability Equality Scheme questionnaire

Thank you for accessing the disability equality scheme questionnaire. The results of this questionnaire, together with the outcomes of other involvement and consultation sessions, will be used to inform the College disability equality scheme which will be published in December 2006.

Do you have a disability or impairment? Yes/No

Are you satisfied with the efforts we are making to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people?

Not at all Partly Mostly Completely

Are there any things we are currently doing as a College that create barriers or difficulties for those who have an impairment or disability?

What else could we do as a College to promote equality of opportunity for those who have an impairment or disability?

Is there anything specific you would like to see included in our Disability Equality Scheme and action plan?

Any other comments

Thank you for completing the questionnaire, it can be returned anonymously via internal mail, or you can email it to lindert@bpc.ac.uk. To become involved in the College's equality and diversity programme, or for more information, contact Theresa Linder Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator on lindert@bpc.ac.uk 01202 205417

**Appendix two – Disability Equality Scheme Questionnaire –
Student version**



As you know, at The College we are committed to Equality and Diversity for everyone. This commitment runs through everything we do.

We would like you to let us know how we can make sure that disabled students are treated fairly and how we make things better for all disabled people in The College.

Please answer the following questions

Do you have an illness, disability or impairment? Yes No

What is good about being at The College?

What is not good about being at The College?

How can we make things better?

Anything else you would like to say

Thank you for completing the questions, please hand it into the Study Advice Centre reception desk, or return it to me in the envelope provided.

Theresa Linder Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator - Email lindert@bpc.ac.uk,
phone 01202 205417