



## Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2017-18

### SECTION A Context

A.1 In 2017-18, the Equality & Diversity lead in College was the Assistant Principal, Quality Improvement who chairs a Committee that meets three times a year. From 2018 this passed to another Assistant Principal. Membership includes principalship, teaching and support staff and up to two student representatives. Minutes from these meetings and any key reports are discussed and policies impact assessed by the College Leadership team. Equality and Diversity and student issues are standing items at the weekly College Leadership Team meeting.

A.2 This report summarises the key areas of work considered by the Committee in 2017-18 and assesses the impact of this on the life of the College, the work of our staff and the achievements of our students.

### SECTION B The College

B.1 On 1st August 2017, the College joined the Ninestiles Academy Trust. It is one of the largest level 3 education only Sixth Form Colleges in the region and provides 'A' level and level 3 BTEC Extended courses predominantly to Solihull and Birmingham.

B.2 The College's Mission is built around three key words, which capture our commitment to equality, fairness and opportunity, "Aspire, Invest, Respect". The Principal and Academic Coaches use the College's Mission with students during enrolment and induction, to emphasise the core values of the College and students are invited to enter a competition, producing a creative piece which captures these values. So that all students have specifically and formally committed themselves to this culture, the core values are also written into the Enrolment Contract. This approach also informs the College's position on the national Prevent agenda, which is set out in the position statement "Promoting Resilience: Preventing Vulnerability". This statement reflects a methodology for Prevent rooted in a positive and empowering Equality and Diversity approach.

B.3 The College's Equality & Diversity Policy aligns fully with the Equality Act 2010 and our Prevent duties including the promotion of British Values. Our Public Sector

Equality Objectives for 2016 to 2020 map across to the College's strategic priorities and to our Mission Statement and that of the Trust.

B.4 The College was inspected by Ofsted in January 2018. In their report, Inspectors commented that students have a good understanding of the importance of equality, and they value the diverse community in which they learn. They also stated 'Leaders and managers place particular importance on equality. Senior leaders clearly set out expectations in terms of respect and non-discriminatory behaviour. They ensure that staff and students participate in appropriate training. Staff and students treat each other with respect. As a result, leaders and managers have developed a safe and harmonious learning environment, which staff and students value.'

However, in terms of areas for improvement, Inspectors commented that the variations in the achievements of different groups have not closed sufficiently. This is a key focus for College leaders in 2018-19.

B.5 At the end of 2015-16, the College worked with the National Centre for Diversity (NCFD) to achieve the Investors in Diversity Stage Two Award. The College's E&D Lead was nominated for an award at the staff NCFD Grand Awards 2018.

B.6 The College holds British Dyslexia Association's Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark which recognises the College's dyslexia-friendly practice. The College will have to apply for re-accreditation in June 2020.

B.7 The Student Development Officers have continued to help raise awareness of Equality issues and celebrate Diversity through the use of monthly calendars placed strategically on the inside of toilet doors.

B.8 Whole College events for prospective students and their parents/carers are important opportunities to highlight our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The College seeks to recruit student guides and subject ambassadors who reflect the diversity of the study body to support these events. Visitors are overwhelmingly positive in their evaluations, with frequent comments made about the friendly and warm welcome received from staff and students. We endeavour to meet the needs of our diverse student body and have formalised arrangements to provide prayer facilities for visitors including parents and carers.

B.9 The College's 'Planning for Learning' and Lesson Observation guidance encourages teachers to take opportunities to explore equality and diversity issues when they arise in lessons. Planning documentation has since been strengthened following the outcomes of the College's own lesson observation and Ofsted Inspection, so that cross college themes including E&D are explicitly and consistently signposted by all curriculum teams.

B.10 Teams continue to evaluate their student progress to identify any performance gaps. A key priority for 2017-18 has been to improve the data with a focus on value added measures to bring about improvements in progress.

This year the Equality and Diversity Committee considered the work of the Humanities team on closing the achievement gap between males and females.

B.11 The College continues to support staff and students who wish to have time with their families to celebrate important religious events and endeavours to make reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

## **SECTION C Staff**

### Staff Profile

C.1 The College applies its Equality & Diversity Policy in all areas in the employment process including the recruitment of new staff. Copies of the policy are available to applicants for employment at the College and all advertising promotes the College's commitment. We are a disability symbol employer and all disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria for a post will be offered an interview. We will endeavour, when vacancies arise, to recruit suitably qualified staff and governors who better reflect the diversity of the College's student population with regard to protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

C.2 In 2017-18, the number of staff employed at the College is approximately 190 and about half of the staff are on part time contracts. Staff who work a full week but are term time only are included in the part-time figures. There are significantly more female members of staff than males. The majority of female staff are employed on a part-time basis whereas the majority of male staff are employed in a full time capacity.

C.3 The age profile of staff overall is about the same each year and there is a spread in the age of staff from 18 to over 65.

C.4 In terms of ethnicity, 16% of staff at the College are Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), which is significantly higher than the Borough and the national average of teachers in England. However, it is well below the diversity amongst our students. About 15% of our staff have declared a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

C.5 The College offers a greater amount of flexibility to staff due to changes in legislation and our policies, including support for those who wish to phase their retirement and are therefore recorded as part time. We have also advertised for more part-time staff than full-time in recent years. Our current timetable incorporates half-day teaching blocks, making it possible for part-time staff to work elsewhere alongside

their contract here. However, the College plans to change its timetable in September 2018, and will work to ensure that those flexibilities are maintained wherever possible.

### Staff Development and Training

C.6 In 2017-18, a key priority has been to support teachers and academic coaches to respond to a changing cohort of students.

C.7 One aspect of staff development has been to improve the use of student data to inform interventions and close gaps. The Senior and Wider Leadership teams received a presentation on the use of student data, organised by Ninestiles Academy Trust. With the introduction of the monitoring dashboard, teachers received training on its use from Assistant Principals and Curriculum Leaders.

C.8 A session for teachers and coaches on supporting students experiencing anxiety was included in the one-hour training programme. The College also secured a 2-day Mental Health First Aid course led by Solihull MBC Children Service and attended by the Senior Leadership team, Student Development Officers, College Counsellors and the Senior Science Technician. This course was repeated for a similar number of students identified through the College's 'Health Ambassadors' scheme led by Senior Student Development Officer.

C.9 Staff training to support LGBT students continued this year. A session on supporting trans students was offered as part of the one-hour programme. Staff 'allies' continued to attend the LGBT network through EMFEC,

C.10 A number of teaching and support staff attended sessions on managing behaviours to create positive learning environments, mental health and well-being, risk taking behaviours and sexuality and transgender issues at the CENBASE Joint Training day in June 2018.

C.11 Two sessions with staff on student and staff 'expectations' also considered changes in the student cohort as part of their discussions.

C.12 Academic Coaches received 'A level Mindset' training in August 2018, in preparation for the introduction of the VESPA model, to support student progress.

## **SECTION D Students**

### Student Cohort

D.1 Over the last 4 years there has been a significant change in the numbers of students coming from Birmingham postcodes compared to Solihull. This trend looks

set to continue. In 2017, approximately 25% of students who enrolled with us came from Solihull postcodes and 73% of students come from Birmingham.

D.2 The percentage distribution of students at College continues to be about the same with the percentage of female students is about 51%. There is one student who describes their sex as non-binary and there are six transgender students.

D.3 The College continues to have a diverse population in terms of ethnicity. The single largest student group remains White British followed by students from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian heritage.

D.4 The growth in the number of students in receipt of bursary and/or free meals continued in 2017. Priority for bursary fund is given to vulnerable students – those in care, care leavers, students living independently and in receipt of Income Support, disabled students in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and students registered as carers. In addition, discretionary awards are made to students whose total household income fell below a threshold. The levels of award were proportionate to the levels of income. Additional emergency awards were made during the year to students in crisis because of referrals from staff.

D.5 Students with additional learning needs continue to be well supported as recognised through the Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark. As well as disclosures on application, some students choose to inform us after they have enrolled and staff are proactive in referring students to the team if they suspect there may be a need, which as yet has not been identified.

### Student Societies and Groups

D.6 The Student Development Officers promote student societies and groups to new students during our Welcome to College day in the summer term and as part of a Fresher's event during induction in the autumn. A range of societies have continued to flourish; this report highlights just a few.

D.7 **Student Health Ambassadors** are recruited by the Student Development Co-ordinator and have the opportunity to work with a range of external agencies and providers who promote the health and wellbeing of young people. This group of students are recruited from a range of A level and BTEC backgrounds, including those from the BTEC health and social care course. Health Ambassadors receive training on a range of issues, for example:

- Refuge Children & Family Workers, Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid
- Neurodiversity training by ALS Curriculum Leader
- Mental Health First Aid training led Solihull MBC Children Service

Health Ambassadors are trained to provide peer education and awareness raising campaigns to fellow students, for example, they used what they learnt to conduct a quiz with students in the refectory to raise awareness about domestic violence.

D.8 The **LGBT society** continued to thrive this year. With the support of the Student Development Intern, the society created a LGBT history display and bunting which was put up in the refectory. They also had a film festival, showing 'But I'm a Cheer Leader' and 'Pride'. Students held a successful bake sale, raising £95 for Galop (an LGBT domestic abuse charity).

D.9 Facilities for prayer were popular amongst our students. The Meriden building continues to be used as a quiet space for prayer and reflection. Friday prayers remains popular and is supported by staff. Prayer times are discussed with and communicated to students. We continue to keep this provision under review so that we can continue to maintain this service to staff and students.

D.10 Students have demonstrated their commitment to supporting communities through their charitable fundraising including

- 'Name the bear' in support of Cancer Research
- 'Guess the number of sweets in the jar' in support of Red Cross
- Cakes sales in support of McMillan, Children in Need, Bloodwise (a leukaemia and lymphoma research charity)
- 'Tea and Talk' with stalls and games in the refectory on behalf of Mental Health Foundation
- 'Wear Pink' in support of Breast Cancer Awareness
- Christmas Shoebox Appeal
- Christmas Jumper day and cake sale for Save the Children

D.11 Students also held a Silly Sock event and campaigned in the refectory to raise awareness about autism. Photos were taken for publicity and information about autism was displayed around College.

D.12 The SDOs also forged links with Solihull Carers Trust and Young Adult Carers and organised four events over the year to promote awareness of the support available for those students who may be in a caring role.

D.13 The College makes use of national events such as British Dyslexia Awareness week and Mental Health Awareness week to raise awareness, encourage discussion and promote positive role models who have successfully overcome the barriers they may have faced.

## Student Destinations

D.14 The College works hard to ensure that students from widening participation postcodes access the support arrangements available to them. The College is involved in all three locally available access schemes: The A2B scheme at University of Birmingham, University of Leicester Enhanced Access Programme (Leap), and the Aston Progression Pathways scheme.

D.15 The College offers comprehensive support and guidance to a large number of students aspiring for the most competitive of courses and universities including Oxbridge, Medicine, Dentistry and Vet Science. This support includes:

- Specialist Academies offering a range of tailored activities and opportunities such as the Pre-Medical School and the Shakespeare Academy
- The college provides a Stretch and Challenge Summer School for students applying for competitive courses and includes a range of talks, activities and visits from key universities including Oxford. There are also sessions on test preparation and personal statements.
- There is a discrete Oxbridge support programme offering test preparation, mock interviews and support with applications. Curriculum Areas will also provide subject specialist support to throughout the process.

D.16 The number of students progressing onto positive destinations from the College remains incredibly strong, with the majority progressing on to Higher Education despite increasing student costs. We are very successful in getting our students into university and higher apprenticeships because of the enriched learning opportunities we provide and the tremendous amount of personalised guidance and support we offer.

D.17 In 2018, destinations were collected for Year 13 completers and positive destination figures are in keeping with DFE value. Higher Education acceptances are consistently higher than UCAS national figures for all applicants, with excellent progression for BTEC students. The number of students securing places on apprenticeships and direct employment has been maintained from 2017.

D.18 Data for 'All SFCS UCAS Applicants' (i.e. Year 13 plus "gap year") on the '2018 UCAS Progression Report', indicates hardly any gender difference when it comes to successful university applications from our students.

D.19 Data from the UCAS Progression Report shows the College's overall application data compared to national figures. This data is presented in the form of broader, more general, ethnic groups than those used internally by the College. The percentage of Asian and white applicants placed in HE is above national figures and black applicants in line with national. However, 2018 saw a decline in the percentage of mixed applicants placed in HE and this group will be monitored during 2018-19