

# Annual Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Review

Halesowen College – Compliance and Progress Report

## Introduction

This annual review evaluates the college's approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in line with legal requirements, best practice, and the college's own strategic commitments. It reflects on progress made during the year, identifies areas for improvement, and sets out recommendations to ensure ongoing compliance and advancement of the EDI agenda.

## Legal Compliance Overview

The college remains committed to fulfilling its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. All policies, procedures, and practices are regularly reviewed to ensure they do not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Staff and student codes of conduct reflect current legislation, and mandatory EDI training is provided for all staff. The college continues to publish annual information on its website regarding workforce diversity and student outcomes, in compliance with transparency requirements.

## EDI Strategy and Governance

The college's EDI strategy is driven by a cross-functional steering group – our EDI Champions, including representatives from senior leadership. Regular meetings are held to monitor progress against strategic objectives, with clear accountability for delivery.

Equality objectives are reviewed annually and are integrated into departmental plans.

## Performance Against Objectives

Key points to note:

### Students

Adults do not achieve as well as young people. Learners with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) perform well on their main programme but high needs learners progress less positively. An achievement gap exists for Looked After Children (LAC). Female learners achieve at higher rates. Achievement for most ethnic groups are converging but some show more variability. 96% of learners have a positive destination and progress into additional education, apprenticeships or employment. Although overall destination success is high, certain cohorts sit well below the college average. Those groups align closely with the ones identified for targeted intervention in the achievement analysis, suggesting persistent barriers. For example: looked After Children (CLA) and High Needs Students (HNS) have substantially reduced positive outcomes (88%); Bangladeshi, Mixed, Other Asian and Black Other learners also achieve lower progression (94% or below); students with EHCPs show a modest reduction (95%). The most deprived IMD deciles (9, 10) and FSM eligible students are lower than average. Socio-economic factors remain a challenge.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are core components of the pastoral curriculum and student improve their understanding and have opportunity to discuss current affairs against the backdrop of college values.

The curriculum is broad based and there is a course for every learner. However, the recent white paper on Post-16 Education creates significant that this will not continue – at least in the short term.

Detail of performance against objectives is contained in appendix C which has a focus on the quantifiable performance data and highlights achievement gaps.

### Progress Achieved in the Past Year

- Inclusive Recruitment: Recruitment materials and processes have been reviewed to ensure a trauma informed approach, accessibility and fairness. Diverse interview panels are now standard practice.
- EDI Champions have been established and are now a vibrant and dynamic group ensuring voices are heard.
- Student Support: The college expanded its range of support services, including mental health provision and accessible learning resources for disabled students.
- Curriculum Review: Course content has been audited to reflect diverse perspectives and challenge stereotypes. Staff have received guidance on inclusive teaching methods.
- Celebrating diversity: The college hosted events celebrating cultural diversity and worked with local organisations to promote inclusion beyond the campus. The Culture Day and the All About Me week had impact.
- Data has begun to be collected from staff and students on sexual orientation and religion and belief.

### Areas for Improvement

- Data Collection: While progress has been made, further improvements are needed in the collection, analysis and understanding of EDI data, particularly around intersectionality.
- Student Voice: Continued efforts are needed to ensure that all student groups are empowered to contribute to EDI policy and practice, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds to ensure inclusion.
- Accessibility: Ongoing investment in new buildings and learning spaces must ensure full participation for disabled staff and students.
- Training – a new whole college approach facilitated by Barquer Training and Consultancy Ltd. The programme is designed to build on the college's strong existing foundation and support the journey toward a fully embedded, inclusive culture across all staff teams and functions.

The college is now aiming to:

- Move beyond awareness weeks to promote everyday inclusion
- Empower all staff to act inclusively and understand lived experiences
- Strengthen and expand the current group of six EDI Champions into broader staff networks, with each Champion leading a protected characteristic strand and building a team of engaged staff around that area.
- Ensure that inclusion is fully embedded in the workplace culture.

## Actions

1. Enhance data systems to enable more granular analysis of EDI outcomes, cross referencing to national data wherever available, to inform decision making and action.
2. Address achievement gaps with targeted interventions and positive role models
3. Consider the impact of intersectionality and engage with community groups to provide additional support for learners
4. Further increase engagement with student and staff networks, especially those representing minority groups.
5. Invest further in accessibility improvements across campus facilities and online platforms.
6. Continue to embed EDI principles into all aspects of teaching, learning, and support services.
7. Provide ongoing training and development opportunities focused on current EDI challenges.

## Conclusion

During a time of unprecedented national and international turbulence, the College has made significant strides in embedding EDI into its culture and operations, in full compliance with legal obligations. Continued progress will depend on sustained commitment, effective monitoring, and active engagement with staff, students, and the wider community. The recommendations outlined above will support the College in maintaining its position as an inclusive and equitable community for all and sustaining our genuine culture of inclusion.