

The Sheffield College Voluntary Reporting Scheme Report 2021/2022



"At the Sheffield College, we celebrate, support and thrive on the differences that our diverse community brings for the benefit of our students, our colleagues and our community. We want to provide a happy, healthy and inclusive workplace, where people feel confident in declaring their disability, knowing that we are here to support them and remove any barriers, ensuring they can reach the highest success. We pride ourselves on being Disability Confident Leaders and Leaders in Diversity, demonstrating our commitments to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart everything we do."

Angela Foulkes, CEO and Principal

Introduction

It is The Sheffield College's ambition to be an employer of choice and to be a first-choice provider, recognised for high quality, relevant education and training. At the heart of this aspiration, we want to create a community where all students and staff are treated with respect and that there are no barriers to anyone reaching their full potential. The Sheffield College works hard to ensure that it is reflective of the communities that we serve. We value difference. We continually seek to create an inclusive environment for our current and future colleagues and students where diversity is valued, recognised and celebrated.

The Voluntary Reporting Framework has been developed by the Government in response to the 2017 Thriving to Work Review to support large organisations to record and report information regarding disability, mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. At the Sheffield College, we set out to take part in the Voluntary Reporting Scheme to demonstrate our commitment to being an inclusive and attractive employer for people with disabilities and/or long-term health conditions.

This report sets out the activities that we are already doing to attract disabled candidates, retain, develop our disabled staff and promote a disability confident culture across the College and we are making a commitment to a number of actions to enhance the experience of our

disabled colleagues. Our staff completed a Mental Health, Wellbeing and Disability Survey in September 2021 and their voices drive the actions outlined in this report.

Our Aims, Achievements and Future Commitments

Talent Attraction and Recruitment

We want to create a diverse workforce as we believe that having a diverse community enriches the organisation and high-quality education and training. We want to actively implement ways to attract people with disabilities and provide an inclusive recruitment process that suits candidates needs and help candidates to flourish.

Our Progress:

- We clearly and proudly display our Disability Confident Leader logo on all vacancies, ensuring that candidates know we encourage applications from disabled individuals.
- Our Recruitment Guidelines tells our disabled candidates that we will offer them an interview if they meet the Essential Criteria.
- We provide opportunities for candidates to tell us they are disabled and ensure that reasonable adjustments are made from application to interview/assessment.
- Our website meets W3C requirements (with a few exceptions).
- Our application process is anonymised and includes a blind shortlisting process, ensuring the removal of unconscious bias.
- We provide Volunteering and Work Experience opportunities for disabled people, helping individuals who need it gain valuable and practical experience within a workplace.

Next Steps:

- We will continue to review our talent attraction and recruitment processes to ensure they are fully accessible and allow all candidates to thrive.
- We will work with disability focused job boards to widen our talent pool.
- We will ensure that at least one manager on any recruitment panel is trained on Disability Confident and how to apply this to recruitment.

Providing a Disability Confident Culture

We want to provide a happy, health, safe and accessible working environment for all, where everyone feels confident to be their true self at work. We want those with disabilities to feel confident to disclose their health conditions. We want to make sure that all of our disabled colleagues are given the right reasonable adjustments so they can progress and develop throughout The Sheffield College.

Our Progress:

- Our FREDIE values mean **f**airness – being reasonable, right and just, **r**espect – Having due regard for feelings, wishes and rights of others, **e**quality – where every person has equal rights and every person has a fair chance, **d**iversity – diverse means different and we are all different so diversity includes us all, **i**nclusion – where every person feels respected, valued and that they fit in with the organisational culture and **e**ngagement – two-way

commitment and communication between an organisation and its employees. These values are well embedded and understood. We are a 'Leader in Diversity' accredited by the National Centre for Diversity.

- We have a long-standing EDI Board which ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion within the College are consistent with current legislation and guidance. We ensure that our policies, procedures and practices are accessible and eliminate any inequality.
- We ensure that all new process, practices and policies are Equality Impact Assessed.
- We encourage our suppliers and partner firms to be Disability Confident.
- Our equality and diversity campaigns have encouraged our colleagues to update their EDI information and helped them to feel confident in disclosing disabilities.
- Our Single Equality Scheme sets out that no member of staff should experience barriers, especially though internal development and progression.
- We ensure that all of our colleagues are trained in equality and diversity.
- We have introduced Reasonable Adjustments Passports to help disabled colleagues have a clear document outlining the adjustments we are committed to making and stays with them throughout their career.

Next Steps:

- We will continue to embed our FREDIE values and promote disability confidence across the College, encouraging a trusting relationship to disclose disabilities.
- We will have an Aspiring Leaders Programme and prioritise place(s) for colleagues with disabilities to ensure equal opportunity, development and progression into leadership roles.
- We will introduce a Staff Disability Network so our disabled colleagues can connect, share experience and make positive change on organisation culture, policies and practices.

Our Disability Data

At The Sheffield College, we have invested in our data capabilities to understand the makeup of our colleagues, to identify where practices can improve and to celebrate success. Our EDI data is currently collected through our HR Self Service system, iTrent. We are transparent about how this information is stored and how we use this data for reporting.

Percentage of Staff with a Declared Disability 2020-2021

	TSC		SMS		SSL		STS	
Year	20-21	19-20	20-21	19-20	20-21	19-20	20-21	19-20
Declared Disability	14%	14%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	11%
No Declared Disability	78%	79%	66%	68%	87%	87%	77%	80%

Prefer Not to Say or Not Declared	8%	7%	29%	27%	6%	6%	18%	10%
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As part of our recruitment practices, we ask all candidates applying for our vacancies to complete an Equality and Diversity Monitoring section as part of the application form. This helps us to monitor the diversity of our applicant pool. We complete all recruitment through a recruitment system, Networx which collects the data. We are transparent about how this information is stored and how we use this data for reporting.

Percentage of Candidates with a Declared Disability 2021-2022

	Percentage of Candidates Declaring a Disability	Percentage of Candidates who Did Not Declare a Disability
Shortlisted	53%	57%
Attended Interview	42%	45%
Offered	8%	11%

When we asked our colleagues to undertake a Mental Health, Wellbeing and Disability Survey in September 2020, we asked colleagues if they described themselves as disabled and if the answer was "yes", they were asked to complete additional questions about their experiences at the College. This will help us to drive positive change. In this survey, 17.4% of respondents said "yes" to describing themselves as disabled.

Questions and Percentage Response Rates

Questions	Response Rate (%)
How comfortable did you feel disclosing your disability in this survey?	65.52% said Comfortable
How supported do you feel by the College in relation to your health condition?	50% said Supported
Do you feel that the College is physically accessible?	78.26% said Yes
Do you feel that you are openly able to discuss your health condition with your line manager?	95.65% said Yes
Do you feel that you have equal opportunity to develop and progress in the College, regardless of your health condition?	52.17% said Yes

Our Mental Health and Wellbeing

In 2019, we launched our Health and Wellbeing Strategy and outlined our aim to provide proactive support to all of our colleagues. We recognised that Health and Wellbeing is vital in achieving our strategic ambitions and desired to create a culture where our colleagues are empowered and wellbeing is embraced. Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy takes an integrated approach to physical, mental and financial wellbeing. Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy recognises that our colleagues may have a range of health and wellbeing challenges

or disabilities and that our approach is supporting our colleagues with these challenges and helping them to look after their health and wellbeing.

Since 2019, we have made a number of public commitments to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff. In 2019, we signed the Dying to Work Charter alongside the TUC. The Dying to Work Charter is a pledge to support those who have been diagnosed with terminal medical conditions. It is a commitment that the College will not treat these staff differently and will support them to continue working if they so wish. In 2020, we signed the Association of College's Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter, showing our commitment and a responsibility to create an environment that promotes student and staff wellbeing and that we proactively support mental health. Also in 2020, we signed the Mindful Employer Charter for employers who are positive about mental health in the workplace.

Since the launch of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, we have built up a provision of proactive and reactive interventions that our colleagues can access at any time. We have put in place the following:

- Continued access for all colleagues to our Employee Assistance Programme providing colleagues access to confidential advice and emotional support that is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year through a telephone helpline, online resources and an app.
- The Health and Wellbeing Hub is a dedicated website provided by the College to provide information, advice and guidance on physical, mental and financial wellbeing to all our colleagues.
- CBT Mindfulness Courses which are an online accredited NHS programme with the aim of reducing stress, anxiety and depression.
- Managerial Advice Line which allows our managers and leaders access to emotional support and provides advice and guidance on how to support staff in time of low mental health.
- Wellbeing Rapid Action Plans are being embedded across the College for everyone so our managers are aware of signs of stress or triggers for our colleagues so rapid intervention can be put in place.
- Mental Health First Aiders are being introduced throughout our departments with the ambition of having at least one Mental Health First Aider in each department.
- Regular wellbeing events and a dedicated wellbeing week to encourage and empower our colleagues to improve their wellbeing. We support and promote national health campaigns.

When we asked our colleagues to undertake a Mental Health, Wellbeing and Disability Survey in September 2021, we asked colleagues to think about their current mental health and wellbeing so we could measure the wellbeing of our colleagues. This will help us drive positive change and make improvements to our current health and wellbeing programme.

Questions and Percentage Response Rates

Questions	Agreement (%)
Overall, how satisfied are you with your current wellbeing?	63%
How happy do you currently feel?	63%
My colleagues help and support me at work?	80%
My line manager helps and supports me at work?	77%
How would you rate your overall mental health now?	62%
How would you rate your overall physical health now?	66%
If you were diagnosed with a mental health condition, how comfortable would you feel disclosing this to the College?	66%
If you were diagnosed with a physical health condition, how comfortable would you feel disclosing this to the College?	77%

N.B. Our colleagues were asked to rate their response on a 5-point scales (1-5). The percentage response rate column shows the overall average of responses to each question.

Conclusion

We aim to ensure that continuous progress is being made in helping all colleagues to flourish and will continue the work of promoting disability confidence across all of our practices. We truly believe that this is a continuous journey and we continue to commit to providing the best experience for our disabled colleagues throughout their own journey.

In order to progress, we will:

- Run an annual Mental Health, Wellbeing and Disability Survey and use the voices of our disabled colleagues to make improvements. From this survey, we will continue to externally published these results each year.
- Begin Disability Pay Gap Reporting despite this not being a legislative requirement.
- Continue to raise awareness our colleagues on hidden disabilities.
- Continue to reduce stigma around disability and mental health and continue to develop a disability confident culture.
- Providing advice, guidance and training for our managers to help them understand neurodiversity in the workplace.
- Put in place a specific recruitment budget dedicated to attracting diverse candidates.