

Parent/Guardian Involvement Strategy

Introduction

The College aim to be a first choice provider and to provide expert and individual guidance and advice to parent/guardian and prospective students.

We want all of our students to enjoy their time at The Bedford College Group and to be successful in their chosen courses. We believe that a partnership between students, staff, and where appropriate parent/guardian is key to student success. This Strategy aims to balance our intention to involve parent/guardians for students aged under 19 in our support partnership, with an appreciation of the students' rights to confidentiality and our encouragement of an adult learning environment

We will ensure that parent/guardian receive minimum levels of communication outputs which include appropriate documentation: these can include timetables, course information, and opportunities to meet with course tutors/teachers: parent evenings, disciplinary meetings, achievement evenings, student activity events and access to Moodle with their child. We will seek consent from 16-18 age groups who are studying full or part time to contact parent/guardian as this fits with the College values.

The parent/guardian involvement strategy relates to:

- the provision of College and course-related information to the parent/guardian of prospective and existing students
- the provision of non-sensitive student related information about academic progress, attendance and disciplinary matters
- the provision of welfare-related information to the parent/guardian of residential students.

Scope of this strategy

This strategy is aimed primarily at the parent/guardians of full time students aged 19 and under at the start of their course, and for SLDD students who may be deemed as vulnerable adults aged 19 and over. The term 'parent' refers to anyone deemed to have parental responsibility.

Parent/Guardian of prospective under 19 students

The College will provide up-to-date information which increases parent/guardian awareness of curriculum options, to enable them to be well informed and play a vital role in supporting their son or daughter in making career course choices. The College will provide pre-entry information through both electronic and printed media and face to face communications including:

- Course information and progression opportunities including destination data via the website or by request
- Attend any interviews with son/daughter

- Parent/Guardian' section of the College websites
- General information about the College including events and enhancement activities through College open days and school careers/options events

Parent/Guardians of existing under 19 full-time students

Parent/Guardian surveys indicate the need for accessible systems of communication to develop effective mechanisms for support to enhance opportunities for student success. This will be achieved through:

- Parent/Guardian' section on the College's websites
- Parent Guide to College
- Access to Pro-Monitor with their son/daughter
- Parent surveys

Student-related information

The College aims to work with parents/guardians of full-time students who are under 19 at the start of their course, in order to seek their support in maximising achievement and success. It is our policy to keep named parent/guardians informed about academic progress including absences and disciplinary matters. We aim to build on this through accessible communication systems, whether these are electronic, by telephone or print based:

- An opportunity to attend an initial meeting with staff in the area as a whole parent group
- Opportunities to meet with course tutors/teachers/personal achievement tutors at a mutually convenient time to discuss progress or concerns
- Direct contact to report absence, lateness or misconduct where appropriate
- Invitation to parent/guardian' evenings to discuss your son/daughters progress
- Opportunity to attend disciplinary meetings (if appropriate)

Any communication with parent/guardian is conditional on the student's consent.

We recognise that young people come to the College to be treated as adults with rights as well as responsibilities and therefore need to ensure we have their consent to share information with parent/guardian. The College will seek consent from students who are under 19 at the start of their course. Consent will be collected by tutors during the student's first day of induction and held in ProMonitor. Such general consent relates only to information about student progress including attendance or disciplinary matters, and the student may withdraw consent at any time.

Parent/Guardian of residential students

All prospective residential students (whatever their age) and their parent/guardian are required to attend a mandatory information evening prior to taking up residence. Consent to share information is included in the occupancy agreement.

We believe that, once students are in Halls, regular communication with their parent/guardian is crucial for their wellbeing and success, and we have processes in place for obtaining consent to disclose. Many of these students are moving away from home for the first time and we actively encourage parent/guardians to keep in touch with their son/daughter and with staff, particularly during the settling in period. We have wardens available by telephone 24/7 to deal with any concerns.

Parent/Guardian of Apprentices under 19

Pre course information and guidance is offered to parent/guardian of prospective apprentices along the same lines as for parent/guardian of part/full time students. However, once on programme, apprentices are encouraged to take an independent approach to developing their work ethic and progressing through their qualifications. All apprentices are allocated a named key contact that supports them and their employer and provides assistance throughout the apprenticeship programme. Apprentices are regularly visited at work and in college by the key contact that provides feedback and guidance.

Parent/guardian who wish to raise issues or seek clarification regarding any aspect of the programme should call the key contact who will provide information within the bounds of The Bedford College Group Confidentiality Procedure.

The College will hold emergency contact details as provided by the apprentice which may on occasions be used to make contact with the apprentice when all other efforts to do so have failed.

The Bedford College Group Apprentice Handbook provides further details of information and support available to apprentices.

Updated March 2020
Fiona Phillip
Director of Student Services