

Parent/Guardian Involvement Strategy

Introduction

The Bedford College Group aims 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 our college 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 the parents/guardians of students under the age of 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 the parents/guardians receive minimum levels of communication outputs which include appropriate documentation: these can include reports, 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 their parents/guardians as this fits with the college values.

The Parent/Guardian Involvement Strategy relates to:

- the provision of College and course-related information to 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 parent/guardian of residential students.

Scope of this Strategy

This strategy is aimed primarily at parent/guardian 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 enrichment 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 the marketing team co-ordinating:

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

Student Related Information

The Bedford College Group 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 the named parent(s)/guardian(s) 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:

- 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
- Student progress reports issued once a year providing a minimum level of information (BSF only).
- 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. When English is not the parent's first language and there are communication barriers, all efforts will be made to have a college employee who would interpret at a disciplinary meeting.

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 the Student Information File (SIF). 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/Guardians 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 Prospective 14-16 Students (Bridges only)

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.

Course information, including pre-entry guidance will be shared with partner schools and parent/guardian through electronic media and face to face communications as follows:

- Course information and progression opportunities
- Parent's Guide detailing 14-16 arrangements
- Information through 14-16 College open days and school year 9 options events.
- Attend any interviews with son/daughter

Parent/Guardian of Existing 14-16 Students (Bridges only)

The College aims to work closely with partner schools in order to maximise student achievement and success. We do not deal directly with parent/guardian of 14-16 students. Parent/guardian are regularly informed by termly progress reports which are sent to parent/guardian via the students' home school.

We will, however, fully involve parent/guardian where a student is experiencing difficulties at College. Parent/guardians are also expected to attend any disciplinary meetings. All arrangements for direct parent involvement are managed by the students' home school.

In exceptional circumstances, such as adverse weather or an emergency the College may contact parent/guardian if they are unable to get hold of the home school.

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

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