

# Parental Participation Policy

Version	1
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Date created/ updated	July 2023
Approval body	Executive
Date of approval	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Date of next review	February 2025
EIA date	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
DPIA date	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Publication	Website and staff intranet

This policy has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation and Disability. We will continue to monitor this policy and to ensure that it has equal access and does not discriminate against anyone, especially any person/s listed under any protected characteristic.

## **PARENTAL PARTICIPATION POLICY**

### **1. PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1 Parental participation in their child(ren)'s education is key to ensuring students succeed and achieve their ambitions. The purpose of this policy is to outline the opportunities TBCG will put in place to enable parents and each college to work in partnership to support students on their programmes and achieve the very best outcomes.
- 1.2 The scope of this policy encompasses parents of students aged 16-18 and students who are vulnerable and have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) who are studying a full-time programme.
- 1.3 It applies to all of TBCG's colleges including, but not limited to, Bedford College, Central Bedfordshire College, National College for Motorsport, Shuttleworth College, The Bedford Sixth Form, The Corby Sixth Form and Tresham College.
- 1.4 This policy is drawn up in line with TBCG's values of valuing teamwork, improving continuously, student centred, inclusive, open and caring, and nurturing educational excellence.

### **2. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy, the term 'parent' refers to anyone with parental responsibilities and others who care for or look after children or young people, and acknowledges that individual family units may comprise a wide range of parenting roles.
- 2.2 Parental participation is defined as a combination of engagement (parents actively supporting their children's learning) and involvement (parents taking part in college life) activities.

### **3. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 3.1 TBCG is committed to engaging with and involving parents in their child(ren)'s education so that students enjoy and get the very most out of their time at college, and are challenged and supported to achieve their very best.

To facilitate strong partnerships with parents, we will provide parents with:

- Information to aid decision-making about courses and careers, and opportunities to visit the college when researching post-16 education options
- Copies of key communication to applicants, such as interview dates and how to enrol (subject to applicant consent)
- An opportunity to attend the College and speak to the Principal prior to enrolment
- An opportunity to attend a parents information event at the start of term

- A recognisable point of contact at the College for any questions or concerns, including what to do to report absence, lateness or misconduct where appropriate
- An opportunity to attend parents' evenings at least twice a year to meet with course tutors/teachers/personal achievement tutors to discuss student progress or concerns
- A student report prior to parents' evenings so that the content can be discussed at these events
- Invitations to key events relating to students' subject pathway, such as shows, exhibitions and celebratory events
- An opportunity to provide formal feedback through a parents' survey at least twice a year.

We will also:

- Proactively communicate with parents any questions or concerns that may impact on a student's experience at the College
- Continue to develop accessible and inclusive ways to involve parents in college life, taking account of the diversity of our student and parent populations and their differing needs.

#### **4. ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT MECHANISMS**

A wide range of engagement and involvement mechanisms will be made available right across the student / parent journey, from the discovery and research stage into post-16 education choices and career options prior to starting at the College to the achievement stage where celebratory events take place. These are summarised below (see Appendix 1):

##### **4.1 Discovery and research**

- College website (course and careers information, and specific section for parents)
- College prospectus
- Engagement with secondary schools and home-schooled networks throughout Bedfordshire and North Northamptonshire
- Open Day events
- Organised college tours
- College social media networks Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

##### **4.2 Application and enrolment**

- Copy of key applicant communication
- Parents talk at the College Welcome Day
- College social media networks Facebook, Instagram and TikTok
- Parents' guide to college.

##### **4.3 Settling in (first term)**

- Parents' information event within the first few weeks of term
- Key information pack, including named contact at the College.

#### **4.4 On programme**

- Dedicated parents' evening at each college twice per year (one in the Autumn term and one in the Spring term)
- Student report prior to parents' evenings
- At least two parents' feedback surveys each year
- Opportunity to attend disciplinary meetings (if appropriate)
- Invitation to attend relevant shows, exhibitions and events
- Access to Parents' Portal (where available).

#### **4.5 Achievement**

- Invitation to student awards events.

### **5. OTHER STUDENT GROUPS**

#### **5.1 Parents of residential students at Shuttleworth College**

All prospective residential students (whatever their age) and their parents will be 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 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 parents to keep in touch with their child(ren) and with staff, particularly during the settling in period. We have wardens available by telephone 24/7 to deal with any concerns.

#### **5.2 Parents of apprentices aged 16-18**

Pre-course information and guidance is offered to parents of prospective apprentices along the same lines as for parents of full-time students.

At the start of the apprenticeship, parents are also invited to an event each year where they can obtain information on the structure of the apprenticeship programme, what to expect from the College and the employer, and have any questions answered, such as those relating to additional support, employment, qualifications and end point assessment.

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 who provides feedback and guidance.

Parents 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 TBCG 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. TBCG Apprentice Handbook provides further details of information and support available to apprentices.

## **6. MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION**

- 6.1 TBCG is mindful of its requirement to comply with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Parents contact details are collected on course application forms and held on the Group's student database ProSolution in line with the Group's Data Retention Policy. New students, under the age of 18 as of the 31st August, are advised at enrolment through the Group's Privacy Policy that details about their progress on their programme will be shared with parents.

## **7. ACCESSIBILITY**

- 7.1 Making engagement and involvement channels accessible means making it so that the information can be accessed by as many people as possible. The majority of channels used by TBCG are digital, which allows for screen readers, braille displays, screen magnifiers and speech recognition software, and translation software for example. However, where parents are unable to access digital channels, or for example find it difficult to attend meetings online, the College will endeavour to provide an alternative, such as paper-based materials and face-to-face meetings. Parents can contact their main point of contact (provided in the key information pack) to request this.

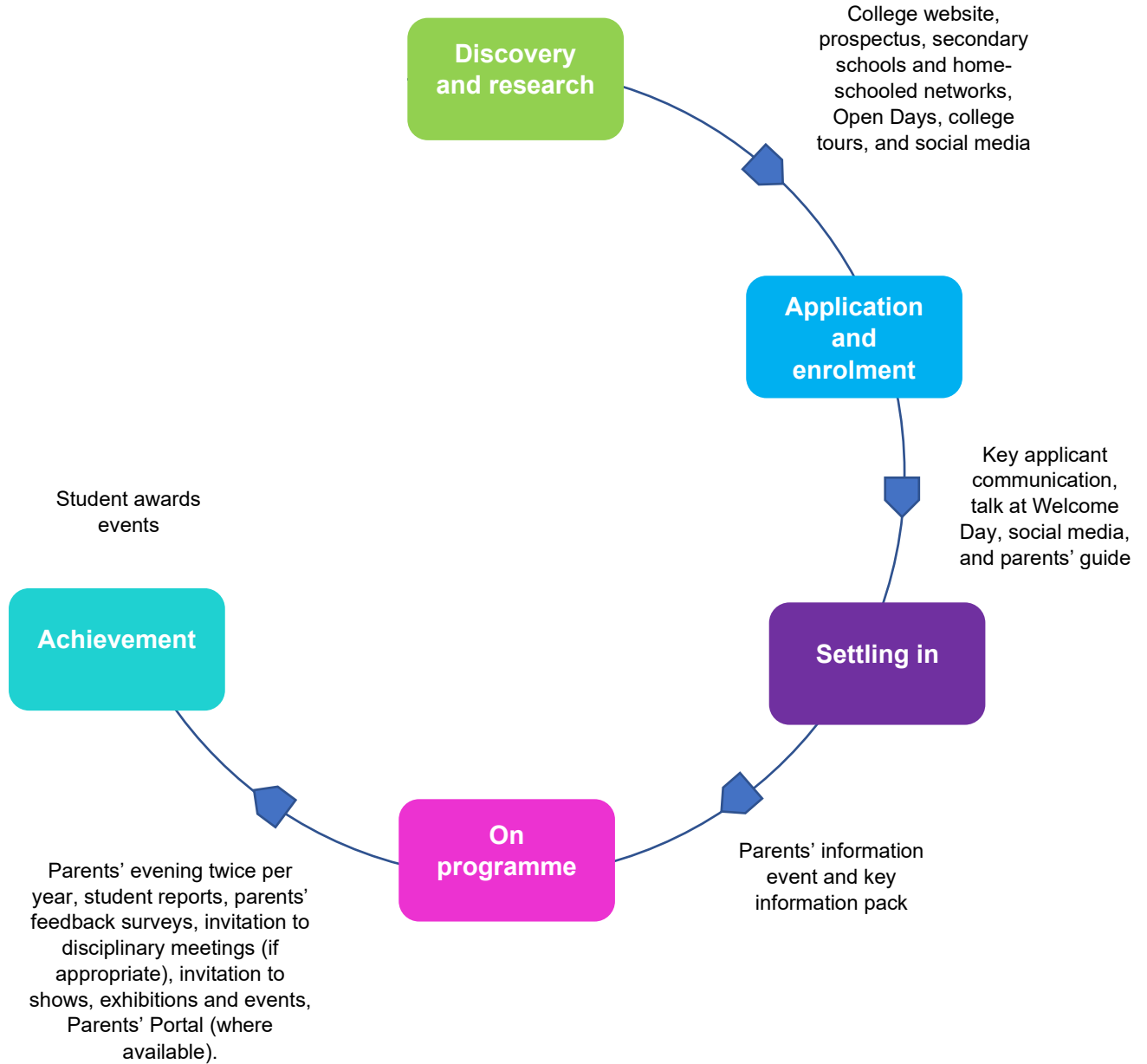
## **8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 8.1 The SLT lead for parental participation is the Executive Director of Marketing, Communications & Student Recruitment, who has the authority and responsibility for setting the strategy and policy relating to Group.
- 8.2 The Head of Marketing and Head of Enquiries & Admissions are responsible for overseeing the discovery, research, application and enrolment stages across the Group.
- 8.3 The Principals are responsible for overseeing the settling in, on programme and achievement stages at their colleges.
- 8.4 All staff detailed in Appendix 2 are responsible for ensuring that the activities assigned to them are undertaken in line with this policy.

## **9. LINK TO OTHER POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

- 9.1 This policy links to the following strategies and policies:
- Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

## Appendix 1: Parents' Journey



## Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Activity	Lead
<b>Discovery and research:</b>	
College website	Head of Marketing
College prospectus	Head of Marketing
Engagement with secondary schools and home-schooled networks	Schools & Community Engagement Manager
Open Day events	Head of Marketing
Organised college tours	Schools & Community Engagement Manager
College social media networks	Head of Marketing
<b>Application and enrolment:</b>	
Copy of key applicant communication	Head of Enquiries & Admissions
Parents talk at the College Welcome Day	Head of Marketing
College social media networks	Head of Marketing
Parents' guide to college	Head of Marketing
<b>Settling in (first term):</b>	
Parents' information event	Vice Principals (set date); Head of Department to organise
Key information pack	Heads of Curriculum Department
<b>On programme:</b>	
Parents' evening twice per year	Vice Principals (set weeks/date); Heads of Departments to organise
Student reports	Heads of Department
Parents' feedback surveys	Customer Feedback Manager
Invitation to disciplinary meetings	As per disciplinary policy
Invitation to relevant shows, exhibitions and events	Heads of Curriculum Department
Parents' Portal	Director of Quality
<b>Achievement:</b>	
Invitation to College / subject area / course awards events	Heads of Curriculum Department
Invitation to TBCG Student Awards evening	Head of Marketing