



## **Access and Participation Statement**

### **Introduction**

Brockenhurst College, with over 100 years of academic excellence, is a large tertiary college situated in the heart of the New Forest, Hampshire. We serve our local and wider community highly successfully, with our strong focus on enabling learners to make the most of their lives through learning. We have an outstanding reputation, locally, nationally and indeed internationally, with learners travelling to study with us from a wide regional catchment area and international learners from over 30 countries worldwide. Currently we have 2500 16-18 year olds and a total of 6435 learners across our provision. In addition we offer 42 apprenticeship pathways across levels 2,3,4 and 5 and have 802 learners.

Our breadth of curriculum covers academic, technical and vocational specialisms, including A levels, BTECs, Apprenticeships and Degree level. A highly inclusive college with learners from all backgrounds and ability levels, our holistic approach to education and training and excellent achievement and progression records show that our learners consistently achieve the right qualifications and life skills they need for their future success. We achieve this through our focus on outstanding learning, outstanding outcomes, sustainability and growth.

Our commitment to excellence and strong belief in social mobility can be seen in our 'Brock' approach to everything we do. Our governors, teachers, trainers, managers and professional support staff believe in, inspire and support our learners to achieve their full potential and be proud to be part of an exceptional college.

### **Context**

#### **Our location**

The College is situated in a highly rural location in the New Forest. It serves a large geographical area centring on Southampton in the east to Salisbury in the north, Poole in the west and the Isle of Wight in the South. The New Forest is central to this area, largely rural and a National Park. However, it also includes larger centres of population such as Hythe, Ringwood, Fordingbridge, Totton, Lymington and New Milton. Brockenhurst village has a station on the main line from Weymouth to London (Waterloo) but public transport is difficult for those living in many of the towns and villages not served by the railway. Additionally, we have in excess of 400 learners each year coming from another of our key catchment areas, the 'Waterside' (Marchwood, Hythe, Dibden Purlieu, Fawley, Calshot, Blackfield). The area has a population of over 40,000 and has no rail station or FE/HE provision.

As a result of our rural location and limited public transport links, Brockenhurst College contracts with a private bus company, First, to provide an extensive bus network operating out of 4 depots and requiring up to 30 drivers. The College therefore subsidises up to 32 daily bus services, at a net cost to the College in excess of £470,000 per year, for all learners within a 20 mile radius who would otherwise be unable to access our broad FE provision.

The M3 Local Enterprise Partnership has identified STEM skills and the ICT and Digital Media, Pharmaceuticals, Aerospace and Defence and Professional and Business Services sectors as priorities with an emphasis on high level skills. Other analysis has identified six sectors as particularly significant in the College's area of operation; Construction and the Built Environment, Children's Services and Childcare, Engineering and Manufacturing, Transport, Warehousing and Logistics, Public Sector Services and Retail – along with IT user skills.

## **Our learners**

The College's 16 – 18 learners mostly come from partner schools in South West Hampshire, East Dorset, including Christchurch, Bournemouth and Poole, South Wiltshire and the Isle of Wight. 19+ learners are similarly drawn largely from South West Hampshire, East Dorset and South Wiltshire as are most of the employees for whom the College provides training. The majority of the College's learners come from the New Forest and Waterside. However, about 44% of 16-18 year old learners and 37% of adult learners come from the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch areas. The proportion of learners enrolled from non-white ethnic backgrounds is 6.5% for all learners, which is higher than the proportion in the local population but lower than the widest travel to learn area. The College has in the region of 115 international learners who make a significant contribution to cultural diversity. Equality and diversity measures indicate that learners from different backgrounds are well represented and supported, and achieve and progress well.

The most recent Hampshire Child Poverty Needs Assessment placed New Forest Wards in 8 of the top 10 in Hampshire where child poverty has the greatest incidence and impact and, according to HMRC 2018 statistics, we have 6,027 children living in the New Forest in poverty and 6,756 household living in fuel poverty. 'Attainment 8' scores from across our key local New Forest feeder schools, demonstrate a mixed picture of the previous attainment of learners, with 4 of the 10 schools posting below average 'Attainment 8' scores when compared with the national picture. The percentage of learners attaining both English and maths was also below the national averages in 4 of the 10 schools.

## **Our Curriculum Offer**

We offer our learners the opportunity to access a wide variety of courses. We were designated a good College by Ofsted (2017) and our latest performance data shows that disadvantaged learners make good progress while at the College. Those learners with a D or below at Key Stage 4 achieve half a grade higher than the national average

at this College. In our local area three sixth form colleges are graded as requiring improvement and therefore the choice of high quality provision for local disadvantaged learners is limited. Within the New Forest we are the only post-16 establishment offering a broad range of A Level and vocational/technical subjects. The College offers 19 level 2 vocational qualifications, 25 level 3 vocational qualifications, over 40 different A levels, apprenticeships and a foundation studies provision for our SEND learners. In total we have 150 high needs learners at the College from 6 different local authorities. We also have a Construction and Marine Skills Centre offering the opportunity to learn carpentry, bricklaying, marine engineering, electrical and upholstery, from level 1 to level 3 in Marchwood, an area with a high level of poverty. Currently we have 68 higher education (HE) learners, having grown from a figure of 16 in 2014. The spectrum of provision at the College is therefore much broader than any other local provider in the area.

The College views its role in HE in terms of a creative and responsive provision which meets needs in the regional and local economy. The College's HE provision is small and the College took the decision to focus on its most successful higher education provision in the curriculum area of Early Childhood and Health which offers professional development for employees in education and child care occupations as well as progression opportunities for our own learners at the College. This provision is vital in upskilling the local workforce in the early years' sector, particularly for mature learners who would not otherwise have pursued a higher education course. In addition, it gives our current level 3 learners the opportunity to access HE. As such it supports social mobility within the communities it serves, as well as providing employers with a highly skilled workforce and candidates for promotion. In doing this the College seeks to play its part in creating a fairer society.

## **Review of Current Provision**

Brockenhurst College is committed to educational and social inclusion and widening participation remains a key strategic aim.

Brockenhurst College's vision is to help people make the most of their lives through learning which supports its social inclusion and widening participation ambition. It is fully committed to attracting, enrolling, retaining and supporting learners from all backgrounds, ages, disabilities and ethnicities to achieve well and progress successfully in a fair and transparent way. With regard to HE, the College will only charge learners the basic fee to facilitate wider participation and therefore give more opportunity.

Brockenhurst College has a diverse learner body with courses from pre-entry through to level 6. This diversity contributes to a range of experiences and perspectives and adds to the College's educational experience, preparing our learners to make a positive contribution to life in society. Teaching and learning is highly supportive and inclusive enabling equal opportunity for all. The College is learner-centred and fully accessible. The College through its teaching staff, intensive support team, skills development and pastoral provision enables all of its learners to achieve their full

potential and optimise their outcomes. The College is a participant of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme and is fully involved in the local network to support increased participation from targeted local communities. It is actively involved in a project to increase participation rates into HE with the Southern Universities Network.

HE courses run by the College over the last three years have been aimed primarily at people in work to provide opportunities for professional development and HE qualifications for learners who have not, and in some cases could not, access HE experiences through traditional routes. The Brockenhurst College HE provision is distinctive and responsive to local needs, and this tenet has shaped the provision. The Foundation Degree in Early Years and BA (hons) Early Childhood Top-up (in partnership with the University of Chichester), creates these opportunities in a low-paid sector. In these ways the programmes contribute to widening participation and to the College's ethos of diversity and inclusion. These courses continue to be the main focus of the College's recruitment strategy particularly given that demand is increasing, provision is growing and the quality is high. Success rates are high and have been maintained. Destinations of Learners in Higher Education (DLHE) data shows a significant number of leavers progress on to professional managerial jobs (77% in 16/17 compared to a national figure of 53%) These courses address the decline in higher education participation by mature learners.

It achieves this through:

- Simple and affordable fee structure through adopting a value for money approach to attract potential learners from non-traditional backgrounds as tuition fees increase in other HEIs.
- Targeted marketing to ensure that potential learners are aware of the Higher Education offer. Target information evenings have led to an increase in learner numbers over the last 3 years.
- Fair and effective admissions policy.
- Effective initial advice, guidance and learner support for prospective learners including support to complete application forms for Disabled Learners Allowance. The College has been awarded the Matrix Standard for our information, advice and /or guidance services and support for learners.
- Strong academic and tutorial support. Where appropriate we have a team of specialists to help with learners' needs. These include learning, social, emotional and physical disabilities. To ensure the best possible experience assessments will be carried out either prior to or at the commencement of the programme.
- Financial support which can be discussed in confidence, and then signposted to experts.
- Flexibility of provision to ensure that mature learners may continue with paid work for 4 days a week.
- Learner Involvement. All learners are part of the Brockenhurst College Community and are regularly invited to share their thoughts and views on their chosen programme of study through a variety of activities including questionnaires, focus groups, and tutor activities. All feedback is taken seriously and adjustments made where appropriate. Each HE programme has

a designated learner representative who contributes to the wider picture through attendance at meetings as a conduit for learner views.

### **Management of HE and Relationship with HEI partners**

The College is currently running non-prescribed HE programmes, working in partnership with one HEI – the University of Chichester. An Early Years HND/Foundation degree has run very successfully since 2012. The College has also been validated to run a BA top up degree in Early Years, accredited by the University of Chichester, as well as the Foundation Degree in Early Years, which were validated for first teaching in September 2016.

The College is also a partner of the University of Southampton on the PGCE-FE initial teacher training programme. Members of College staff act as visiting lecturers to Southampton University, delivering some of the lectures to the trainee teachers

### **Ambition and Priorities:**

To grow capacity of current high quality provision in the early years sector to maintain our commitment to mature learners.

To maintain high learner retention and success to ensure that the College supports its mission towards increased social mobility

To grow our HE provision to increase the entry rates of learners from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. Disadvantaged learners 16-18 year olds make good progress while at the College. Similarly the College has a highly effective high needs provision with over 150 learners. The strategies in place to ensure success here can be utilised in post-18 education. In addition we have in excess of 400 learners each year coming from the 'Waterside' (Marchwood, Hythe, Dibden Purlieu, Fawley, Calshot, Blackfield). The area has a population of over 40,000 and has no rail station or FE provision. According to HEFCE the young participation rate of learners entering into Higher Education from this area is as low as 15% even though the figure for the New Forest is high.

To explore the option of applying for the Teaching Excellence Framework beyond 2018 given the positive outcome of the APR (Annual Provider Review 2017 – meets requirements)

To consult with the Brockenhurst College higher education learners and the Student Union on our access and participation statement to further develop the approach and in focusing our growth strategy. Currently the College monitors learners' perceptions of the quality of their educational provision with the aim of identifying priority areas for improvement and making recommendations for future practice.

To investigate the introduction of Higher Level Apprenticeships with a view to implementation starting during 2019/20