



# Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

2023-2025

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Our mission

Is to enable people to recognise, develop and fulfil their potential

## Our Vision

Is to be an ambitious technical college that enhances the prosperity and prospects of our people and communities

## Our commitment

Lakes College has embraced The public sector duty within the Equality Act 2010 and is fully committed to eliminate discrimination, directly or indirectly, against employees and potential employees, learners and potential learners and any other stakeholders of the college who have any of the protected characteristics, which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships (not applicable to students), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and religious belief, sex and sexual orientation.

## Our values

The College's framework of robust policies and procedures support the delivery of this strategy and are underpinned by British and Lakes College values of **Ready Respectful Potential**. Embracing and advancing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are central to delivering the college's values, ensuring that we meet the needs of our diverse community. This ethos is not just limited to Lakes College campus; we are proud of the leading role we take to promote EDI in our local community and through national partnership activity, and we will continue to fulfil our responsibility with enthusiasm.

Lakes College continues with its commitment to supporting skills development for the community of West Cumbria, contributing to economic growth, success and prosperity. An increasing focus on the key priorities of apprenticeships, core employability skills and equipping the disadvantaged to secure employment drives college priorities over the period of this strategy. We are looking to ensure choice is available to all our stakeholders to limit barriers and promote opportunity.

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By working innovatively with stakeholders, employers and partners to promote equality, celebrate diversity and embed inclusive values ensures that we are considered as an inclusive, progressive and modern organisation. By actively promoting these values we strive together to challenging opinions and behaviours ensuring that learners and staff:

- Respect our democratic society and the laws that govern our country
- Accept responsibility for their own behaviour recognising the positive contribution they can make toward the lives of others in college and the local community
- Develop a deeper understanding of different cultures and traditions fostering mutual respect, appreciation and tolerance
- Distinguish the difference between right and wrong in line with civil and criminal law
- Respect for themselves and each other.

We work with our learners to inspire them to succeed and build the skills to overcome any obstacle they may experience; with our staff to cultivate their aspiration and curiosity, and with our wider stakeholders to invest in communities and source opportunities.

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## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION?

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Our equality, diversity and inclusion approaches go beyond meeting our statutory duties; we strive to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, are responsive to our environment, promote emotional wellbeing and champion social mobility

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## EQUALITY

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. No one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

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## DIVERSITY

Diversity is to recognise that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued.

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## INCLUSION

Inclusion involves fostering an environment that allows people to be themselves. Regardless of their backgrounds, characteristics and ways of thinking, to work effectively and fulfil their full potential. Staff and learners must feel valued, listened to and respected. We also want them to develop a range of skills as they get ready for the working world and other opportunities in the future.

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# THE LOCAL CONTEXT

18.5% of children in Allerdale and 16.8% in Copeland live in relatively low-income families. While this is below the national average (19.1%), there are some wards in the district where levels of child poverty are much higher than the national average. 10 communities within our catchment fall within the 10% most deprived areas in England. The achievement rates for learners of all ages are currently below national rates, and there are emerging gaps in outcomes by gender or ethnicity at college level. Closer analysis shows underachievement by gender on some regulated qualifications, and BAME students slightly outperform white British students, overall but with some difference in achievement rates within BAME groups, albeit small numbers. Students with learning difficulties do not perform as well as their peers, reflecting the focus of improvement required for teaching, learning and support.

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# OUR COMMITMENT

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At Lakes College, commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is demonstrated by:

- A visible senior leader with responsibility for equality, diversity and inclusion
- Strategies, policies and working practices to inform all members of the college' community about the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion
- Equality objectives which are values driven, relevant to our communities and meet our general equality duty
- A planned approach to identifying and closing equality gaps for students and staff
- Enable our employee engagement forums and learner 'changemaker' committee to influence change
- Listening to the voices of staff and students, involving them with campaigns, forums and networks in the college and across West Cumbria to develop meaningful equality and diversity initiatives

# Our EDI Objectives and Aims

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# 1 Realise Potential

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Aim: To enable staff and learners to inspire, motivate and thrive in an atmosphere of high performance and trust

We will do this by:

- Become a leading organisation in EDI practice by securing appropriate quality charter marks
- Create an inclusive environment that fosters good relationships and trust
- Lead and develop an integrated approach to embed EDI in college practice
- Ensuring retention and attainment gaps are identified and addressed to maximise progression for all learners

## 2 Champion Accessibility

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Aim: ensure accessibility of the curriculum and the college environment, improve physical accessibility, challenge ability discrimination, and promote respect and inclusion regardless of ability, disability or mental wellbeing.

We will do this by:

- Striving to adhere to government accessibility guidelines in all our published, digital and teaching, learning and assessment materials
- Improving the way we identify and meet additional support needs for all stakeholders
- Raising awareness of the impact of hidden disabilities on participation and inclusion in college life
- Addressing the barriers that building users' experience

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## VOICE AND INFLUENCE

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**Aim:** We will promote a diverse culture where students, apprentices and staff are widely consulted and create their own opportunities to shape and promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the college and local communities.

We will do this by:

- Working with the wider student and staff body to increase engagement, influence and co-production in our equality, diversity and inclusion activity
- Developing the knowledge, confidence and awareness of EDI through professional development, employee and learner forums
- Coordinating campaigns and activities for learners and staff to plan, co-produce and lead activities which challenge non-inclusive behaviours
- Creating opportunities for staff to engage with local communities and networks, to share best practice and build links with external groups

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## CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

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**Aim:** We will seek and create opportunities to celebrate diversity, being responsive around the needs of the college community and ensure excellence through inclusion.

We will do this by:

- Celebrating the differences between members of the college community with actions, words and images, drawing on diversity in its broadest sense
- Improving the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the profile of our students, and addressing under representation of protected groups
- Reviewing college policies and practices for learners and staff to ensure they are inclusive in both language and impact
- Recognise and reward those who actively embrace and lead good practice in EDI

# 5 CHALLENGE DISCRIMINATION

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We will promote a culture of mutual respect, tolerance, democracy, individual liberty and shared expectations in our practice and communications.

We will do this by:

- Challenging stereotyping and working practices which may reinforce systemic disadvantage, including gender stereotyping
- Training staff and developing curriculum resources to raise awareness of unconscious bias
- Providing opportunities for staff and students to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to challenge behaviours which are oppressive, disrespectful, intimidating or bullying through restorative approaches
- Aspiring to create a safe and respectful learning and working environment for all members of the college community, free from physical risks, bullying or harassment

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## PROMOTE WELLBEING

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We will invest in and promote a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing across the college.

We will do this by:

- Providing access for staff and learners to activities and opportunities to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing, including community engagement, social action and promoting a healthy lifestyle
- Creating a culture of safe disclosure around mental wellbeing and encourage a life-work balance
- Recognising that risk or vulnerability of learners and staff may be heightened due to protected characteristics
- Developing relationships with multi-faith organisations to meet the needs of a diverse learning community



# MAKING IT HAPPEN

Activities align with our continuous improvement plans to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of impact takes place

The plan is monitored by the Lakes College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group, which is chaired by the Assistant Principal. Regular reports are presented at operational and strategic forums.

Our achievements to date and next steps are outlined in the following section and updated on a termly basis.

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Aim 1: Realise Potential	Our achievements to date	Next steps
Become a leading organisation in EDI practice by securing appropriate quality charter marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Confident Employer status</li> <li>• Matrix accreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm membership of NWEDI network</li> </ul>
Create an inclusive environment that fosters good relationships and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Voice group established and playing an active role contributing to college decision making</li> <li>• Lakes College ‘Changemakers’ established and underway from Jan 2023</li> <li>• Staff Conference Day Feb 2023 – An Outstanding College Working Together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend activity for forums to build on successful implementation</li> <li>• Staff climate survey released as per cycle</li> <li>• Learner survey released as per QA cycle</li> </ul>
Lead and develop an integrated approach to embed EDI in college practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New SEND Vision created</li> <li>• Professional Development Framework contains SEND as a central strand</li> <li>• Realignment of the Learning Support department with a new infrastructure to support college practice</li> <li>• High Needs CIP speed dating undertaken between Learning Support &amp; Curriculum COLs to ensure that CIPs accurately reflect improvement areas needed to develop High Needs provision across college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor impact of SEND structure</li> <li>• EDI Working Group to consider and develop initiatives</li> </ul>
Ensuring retention and attainment gaps are identified and addressed to maximise progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement variations identified during self-assessment process</li> <li>• Department level quality improvement plans have actions to reflect specific activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Support Deep Dive and regular learning walks to ensure the quality of support given</li> <li>• SEND Case Conferences between learning support department and curriculum areas to monitor EHCP learners</li> </ul>

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Aim 2: Champion Accessibility	Our achievements to date	Next Steps
Striving to adhere to government accessibility guidelines in all our published, digital, and teaching, learning and assessment materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installed accessibility tool to website to ensure compliance</li> <li>• Mylakes app developed with consideration</li> <li>• VLE materials developed and hosted in line with relevant guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development reflects emerging requirements</li> </ul>
Improving the way we identify and meet additional support needs for all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised application process for Employability provision</li> <li>• Improved relationship with the local authority has resulted in an improving EHCP process</li> <li>• Phased Transfer Consultations aligned to the Code of Practice</li> <li>• Onboarding arrangements adapted and reflected in Learner Journey Maps across types of provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and amend Learner Journey Maps as per evaluation cycle</li> </ul>
Raising awareness of the impact of hidden disabilities on participation and inclusion in college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Support Ladder created and shared which highlights the different types of SEND learners and the responsibilities of staff</li> <li>• ETF Middle Leader training includes module on 'Leading EDI'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development reflects emerging requirements</li> <li>• Build on Middle leader training feedback at department level</li> </ul>
Addressing the barriers that building users' experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled car parking spaces and tactile paving to assist all users of the college</li> <li>• Accessible classrooms with adjustable furniture</li> <li>• Personalised Risk Assessments carried out where required for staff and learners</li> <li>• Auto doors /led lighting/accessible toilets/lifts</li> <li>• Tactile signage</li> <li>• Accessible welfare facilities in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of EDI when undertaking capital projects</li> <li>• Review approaches to supporting individuals with hearing impairments</li> </ul>

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Aim 3: Voice and Influence	Our achievements to date	Next Steps
Working with the wider student and staff body to increase engagement, influence and co-production in our equality, diversity, and inclusion activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Enrichment &amp; Engagement Coordinator</li> <li>• LGBTQ+ group established</li> <li>• Changemaker group contributing to staff recruitment</li> <li>• Staff engagement forum established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop wider engagement programme to meet learner needs and interests</li> <li>• Extend activity for forums to build on successful implementation</li> </ul>
Developing the knowledge, confidence, and awareness of EDI through professional development, employee and learner forums and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development Framework implemented</li> <li>• High Needs Steering Group created</li> <li>• Working groups in place for Transition Planning and Development of Foundation learning Curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement an ambitious curriculum for all learners through curriculum and skills planning</li> <li>• Changemaker groups to have a strong EDI voice in their study, work and social environments</li> <li>• Professional development reflects emerging requirements</li> </ul>
Coordinating campaigns and activities for learners and staff to plan, co-produce and lead activities which challenge non-inclusive behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise our Activzone facility to engage students in activities – open safe space (sports hall/3G pitch)</li> <li>• Positive promotion of non-traditional career pathways using existing learners and Alumni as role models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Supported Internship Day (27/03/2023)</li> <li>• Extend internal and external promotional campaigns to align with local and national initiatives</li> </ul>
Creating opportunities for staff to engage with local communities and networks, to share best practice and build links with external groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active participation by staff members in local community groups, governing bodies and trusts</li> <li>• Group of Middle leaders attended to Nelson &amp; Colne Outstanding Conference (High Needs)</li> <li>• Training with local SENCO's led by Inclusive Learning Leader &amp; Head of TLA</li> <li>• Supported Internship Programme developed in partnership with Right to Work &amp; DFN Project Search</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead local networks to drive forward collaboration and nurture excellence in practice</li> <li>• Maximise subscription to NWEDI network</li> <li>• Align activity with social value strategy</li> </ul>

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Aim 4: Celebrate Diversity	Our Achievements to Date	Next Steps
Celebrating the differences between members of the college community with actions, words and images, drawing on diversity in its broadest sense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College newsletter developed sharing achievements across all staff and learners</li> <li>• New images produced which promote diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• Staff and Learner awards celebrating achievement</li> <li>• LGBTQ+ group developing presence across college</li> <li>• British Values positively promoted through Personal Development programme and campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend internal and external promotional campaigns to raise the profile of EDI</li> </ul>
Improving the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the profile of our students, and addressing under representation of protected groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended reach of recruitment has resulted in a shift in the profile of staff from underrepresented groups employed</li> <li>• Staff age profile is evenly distributed across specified age categories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider through recruitment process</li> </ul>
Reviewing college policies and practices for learners and staff to ensure they are inclusive in both language and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies &amp; Procedures form key part of employee and learner forums</li> <li>• EDI impact assessment carried out for all P&amp;P</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner behaviour and conduct procedure for review with Changemaker group</li> </ul>
Recognise and reward those who actively embrace and lead good practice in EDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practitioner of the Month</li> <li>• Student of the Month reimagined</li> <li>• Celebration share first item on internal meeting agendas captures good news stories and celebrates EDI themes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal staff recognition award to be considered</li> <li>• EDI working group to consider future initiatives and opportunities</li> </ul>

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Aim 5: Challenge discrimination	Our achievements to date	
Challenging stereotyping and working practices which may reinforce systemic disadvantage, including gender stereotyping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training staff and developing curriculum resources to raise awareness of unconscious bias</li> <li>• Detailed review of staff leavers carried out to inform induction and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development reflects emerging requirements</li> </ul>
Providing opportunities for staff and students to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to challenge behaviours which are oppressive, disrespectful, intimidating or bullying through restorative approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching of new/less confident staff members to address behaviours in a constructive manner (patrol buddy system)</li> <li>• Personal Development programme includes diversity in cultural awareness and topics that challenge narrow thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on good practice and extend Personal Development themes</li> </ul>
Create a safe and respectful learning and working environment for all members of the college community, free from physical risks, bullying or harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low level concern policy introduced for all staff</li> <li>• Average turnover for staff at 12% (17.8% national benchmark)</li> <li>• Unacceptable conduct and behaviour is challenged with clear consequences</li> <li>• Pivotal Patrol group established with 25 members of staff from across college supporting positive behaviour management</li> <li>• Safe quiet space allocated for vulnerable learners</li> <li>• 97% FT learners feel safe at college</li> <li>• 98% Apprentices understand how to keep themselves safe and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed Low Level Concern reporting</li> <li>• Continue to raise the profile of child-on-child abuse through campaigns and learning opportunities</li> </ul>

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	know how to report concerns	
<b>Aim 6: Promote wellbeing</b>	<b>Our achievements to date</b>	
Providing access for staff and learners to activities and opportunities to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing, including community engagement, social action and promoting a healthy lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ActivZone staff to lead on activities around sport and wellbeing for staff and learners</li> <li>• Staff Benefits package includes health and wellbeing opportunities</li> <li>• College Counsellor active with approx. 100 learners accessing support</li> <li>• Staff social group established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer opportunities to be more effectively promoted</li> </ul>
Creating a culture of safe disclosure around mental wellbeing and encourage a life-work balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive promotion through staff communication channels</li> <li>• Wellbeing calendar shared across the organisation</li> <li>• Flexible work patterns considered at department level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop further opportunities through staff and learner voice forums</li> </ul>
Recognising that risk or vulnerability of learners and staff may be heightened due to protected characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedded within Cylix Online EDI training for all staff</li> <li>• ETF Middle Leader training includes module on EDI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further training and development focusing on specific theme</li> <li>• Build on Middle leader training feedback at department level</li> </ul>
Developing relationships with multi-faith organisations to meet the needs of a diverse student and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection with Muslim Learner Services resulting in workshops for learners</li> <li>• Multi-faith space in college being accessed regularly</li> <li>• Revered Dom de Mattos (Church of England) connected to college</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend partnerships and include within Personal Development programme review</li> </ul>

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## want to know more?

Here's who to contact:

- D Braithwaite (Assistant Principal)
- I Farragher (Learner Support Manager)
- N Anderson (Human Resources Manager)



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