



Southport
Education
Group

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Report 2025/26

Vision:

To be a driving force for educational and economic excellence in Southport and the region.

ABOUT US



Michelle Brabner: Principal CEO

Southport Education Group consists of Southport College, King George V Sixth Form College, Compete Apprenticeships & Training and The Bridge. The colleges campuses are long-established independent further education colleges which together provide a diverse range of education and training to a wide variety of learners across Sefton and the Northwest. Southport Education Group is the area's largest provider of vocational courses and has over 1200 full-time 16–19-year-olds studying a range of qualifications including A Levels, T Levels, BTECs, NVQs and City & Guilds qualifications, in a wide range of subjects from Law, Physics, Hairdressing & Beauty Studies or Electrical Engineering to Childcare, Construction and Digital.

Compete Apprenticeships & Training works closely with employers to offer a range of apprenticeship programmes in subject areas which include Management and Administration, Engineering, Plumbing, Hospitality, Care and Motor Vehicle. In addition to meeting the training needs of employers to develop the skilled workforce of the future.

Southport Education Group provides a range of courses to over 2000 adult learners, including those that support people back into employment, improve their career prospects or provide a route to higher education.

The Bridge is a specialist centre for 16–25-year olds who have additional support requirements, SEMH or need a smaller nurturing environment to help them on their path to further education, training, employment or supported internships. This specialist centre provides a person centric approach with highly individualised support, with a clear focus on personal development to support their next steps.

We continue to invest into improving the extensive and varied learning environments and specialist facilities for all our students with many exciting plans for the future, with the aim of maintaining the College Group as the first choice for high quality training and education. We were incredibly proud to be the first college in the country to achieve the Rainbow Flag Award in recognition of our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. In addition we hold a Gold Award for Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing in the FE sector.

Inclusion is at the heart of our values and drives our everyday actions and future plans.



OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At Southport Education Group, we are committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity across all our activities and services for staff, students, and visitors. We strive to create an inclusive environment that encourages full participation in learning and actively challenges harassment, discrimination, and bullying.

We celebrate the diversity of everyone who studies or works with us and recognise the vital contribution each individual makes to the success of the College Group. We are firmly committed to ensuring that all individuals have equal access to opportunities and are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of:

- Age
- Disability or learning difficulties
- Ethnic origin
- Sex
- Marital status or domestic responsibilities
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic background
- Gender identity

Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion applies to all:

- Enrolled students
- Former students
- Prospective students
- Link students
- Employees
- Ex employees
- Job applicants
- Governors
- Contractors
- Partners
- Clients
- Visitors



OUR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION OBJECTIVES

Our specific Equity, Diversity and Inclusion objectives for 2024-2028

1. To increase the achievement rate of cared for and care experienced young people across the college group.
2. To narrow the achievement gap of learners in receipt of Free College Meals.
3. To narrow the achievement gap between learners not from a Global Majority background compared to Global Majority learners.
4. Increase learner voice activities for learners from marginalised groups.
5. Increase the opportunities for EDI CPD for staff and contractors within the college group
6. To increase work experience participation for learners with high needs.
7. To achieve the Silver Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools FE Mental Health Award.

Progress against Equity, Diversity and Inclusion objectives in 2025/26

Leaders and Managers regularly monitor retention and achievement throughout the academic year. Performance Boards and Retention Panels take place monthly, EHCP and High Needs Panels are held termly and Divisional Self-Assessment Reports are presented and reviewed annually. Examples of monitoring success include:

- The retention rate for Looked After young people has improved by 7%
- The retention rate for young people in receipt of free meals is now greater than the group average.
- The achievement gap between learners not from a Global Majority background compared to Global Majority learners has closed.
- Targeted learner surveys, student created 'EDI' areas of college such as the 'Wall of Belonging' and the introduction of Neurodiversity Council.
- Secured the Gold Award for Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing in the FE sector.

THE EQUALITY ACT (2010) AND OUR DUTIES

Southport Education Group has clear duties under the Equality Act (2010) and this report shows how we aim to more than just meet those duties. Demonstrating the Group's legal compliance in relation to EDI and progress made in the academic year 2023/24.

The Equality Act (2010) provides us with the legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and promote equity, diversity and inclusion for all. There is a requirement for the Group to evidence its compliance with the two main legal duties stated in the Act. These are the General Equality Duty and the specific Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Public Sector Equality Duty prescribes that the Group **MUST** have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equity of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The College Group's vision 'To be a driving force for educational and economic excellence in Southport and the region' reinforces the Equality Act 2010 through its commitment to develop and maintain high quality, modern, safe learning environments for students and staff. Our mission 'To create a positive, high expectation learning environment that allows people to excel in their future careers, education, training and life.'" reflects its aim to ensure that equity of opportunity and preparing students for life beyond college is valued by all stakeholders.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the College is monitored by dedicated groups of staff and students, led by College managers. These groups include:

Student Support Management Group

This group meets fortnightly, led by the Assistant Principal: Learner Development and Careers and attended by the group Support Directors and Heads. The remit of this group is:

- To share updates about support services and issues arising in respect of safeguarding, learning support, behaviours and attitudes, personal development, welfare and progress.
- To review and where appropriate, amend policies and procedures in relation to conduct, safeguarding, progress, welfare and attendance issues.
- To discuss and confirm key events in relation to EDI, progress, safeguarding and welfare.
- To discuss and confirm operational activities across all support services.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

This committee meets termly, chaired by the Director: Learning Support and Inclusion, attended by the College Group's EDI link governor, senior leaders, teaching staff, business support staff and a student representative. The committee responsibilities are to:

- Monitor key developments and activities regarding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and British Values in the classroom and workplace.
- Appraise and monitor relevant data reports which evidence the College's commitment to promoting and further advancing a culture whereby equity of opportunity exists for all across the protected characteristics as defined in The Equality Act 2010.
- Review data for recruitment, retention, professional development, progression and pay scales for staff by age, gender, race and disability and advise actions where appropriate.
- Review data for student recruitment, admission, retention, success, progression and destination details across all subject sector areas by programme level and known protected characteristics and advise actions where appropriate.
- Review and monitor policies and procedures to ensure compliance and accessibility.

PROMOTING EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The College Group has supported many EDI activities throughout the year including awareness events such as:

- Mental health
- Anti bullying
- Prevent
- International Women's Day
- Disability
- Safer internet
- Black history
- LGBT+ history
- Sexual health
- Hate crime

Other activities aimed to promote EDI include but are not limited to:

- Continued provision of ICT for staff and students, including accessibility software.
- Life Hack Academy – extended programme delivered 3 times per week. This covers many skills required for adult life, including budgeting, managing stress, friendships and is bespoke to individual learners .
- Compulsory EDI training for all staff.
- Activities on-site during lunch times for vulnerable students who are not permitted to leave College premises such as Lego, Board Games, Chess and Draughts
- Friendship Group
- College Foodbank
- Distribution of free sanitary products
- Safer Summer
- Wall of Belonging
- Kindness Pledges
- Anti-Bullying Week



We value our staff

At the College Group we value our staff and the contribution that everyone makes to the success of our College Group. We are committed to being the employer of choice in the area. For this reason we offer fantastic support for all of our staff and staff development is encouraged throughout all departments.

We offer a family friendly environment and support staff so that they get the best out of their job and their time here. Many of the team have been here for many years, growing with us and progressing on to new challenges and roles.

Regulation 3 of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires Colleges to publish annually information to demonstrate compliance with the general Equality Duty. This includes information relating to employees who share a relevant protected characteristic who are affected by their policies and practices.

Age and Gender

The table below shows the spread of College Group staff split by age and gender.

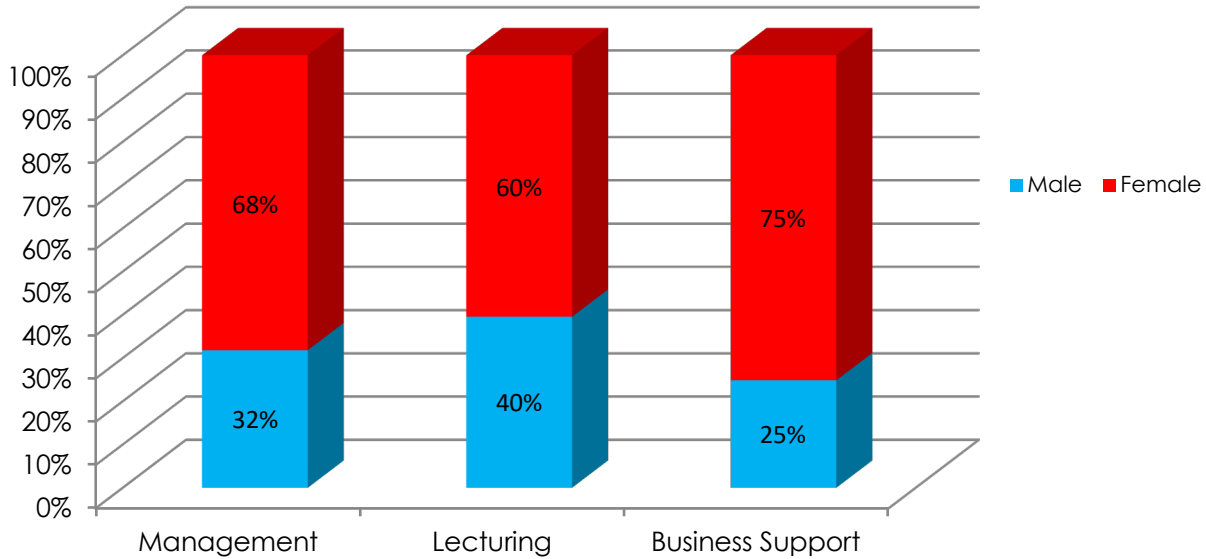
The number of female staff employed in 2024/25 has reduced by 1.39% when compared with 2023/24.

This reduction is reflected across management and lecturing staff at the College, however the gender split of business support staff remains largely unchanged from the previous year.

Age Range	Male				Female			
	2024/25		2023/24		2024/25		2023/24	
	Number of Employees	%	Number of Employees	%	Number of Employees	%	Number of Employees	%
16 -24	6	1.80%	7	2.22%	2	0.60%	6	1.90%
25 -39	25	7.51%	23	7.30%	53	15.92%	48	15.24%
40 - 59	45	13.51%	39	12.38%	118	35.44%	125	39.68%
60 - 74	27	8.11%	25	7.94%	54	16.22%	40	12.70%
75+	1	0.30%	0	0.00%	2	0.60%	2	0.63%
Total	104	31.23%	94	29.84%	229	68.77%	221	70.16%

VALUING OUR COLLEGE GROUP COMMUNITY - STAFF

The chart below shows the gender profile of staff across Management, Lecturing and Business Support during 2024/25.

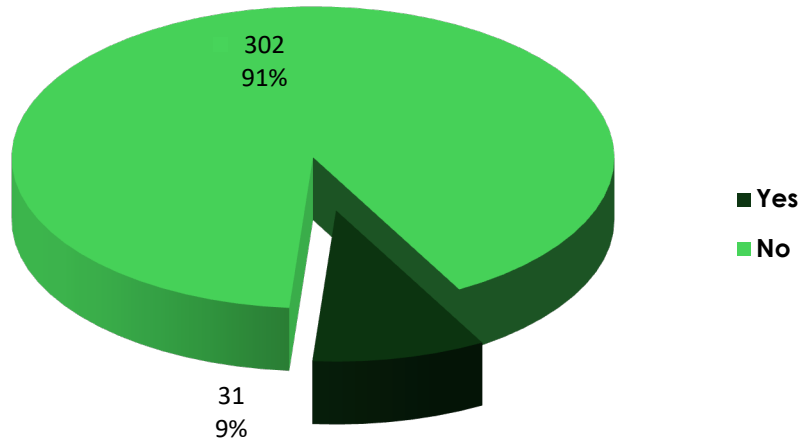


The chart below indicates full time equivalent salaries by gender.



Disability

The chart below shows the College Group staff profile by disability.



9% of the College staff have declared a disability (9% in 2023/24).

In recognition of the College's commitment regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees, the Department for Work and Pensions have awarded the College the Disability Confident Employer symbol.

In using the Disability Confident Employer symbol, the College agree to:

- interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy;
- consider them on their abilities;
- ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities;
- make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment;
- take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work each year.

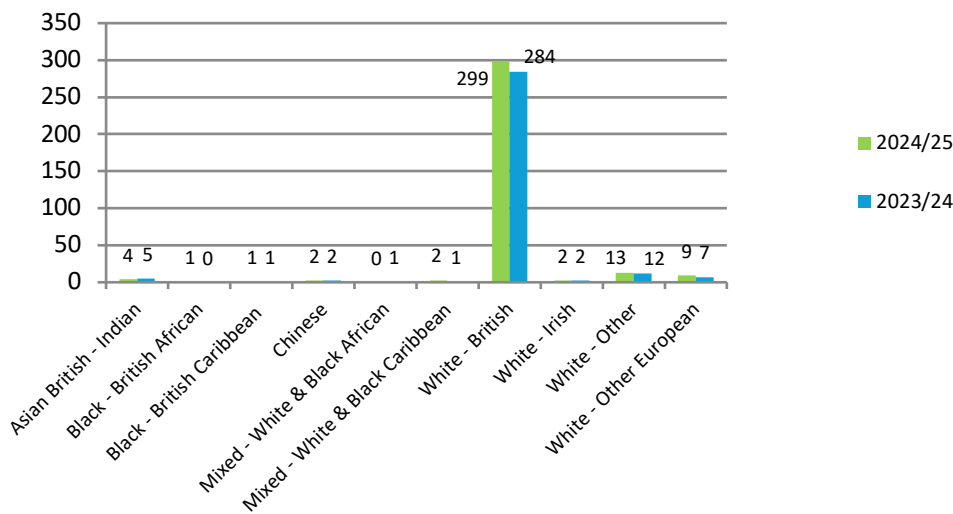
Gender Reassignment

This information was collated from staff, and job applicants, for the first time in 2011.

There are no staff at the College who have declared that they are transgender and no staff issues have been raised in relation to this particular group.

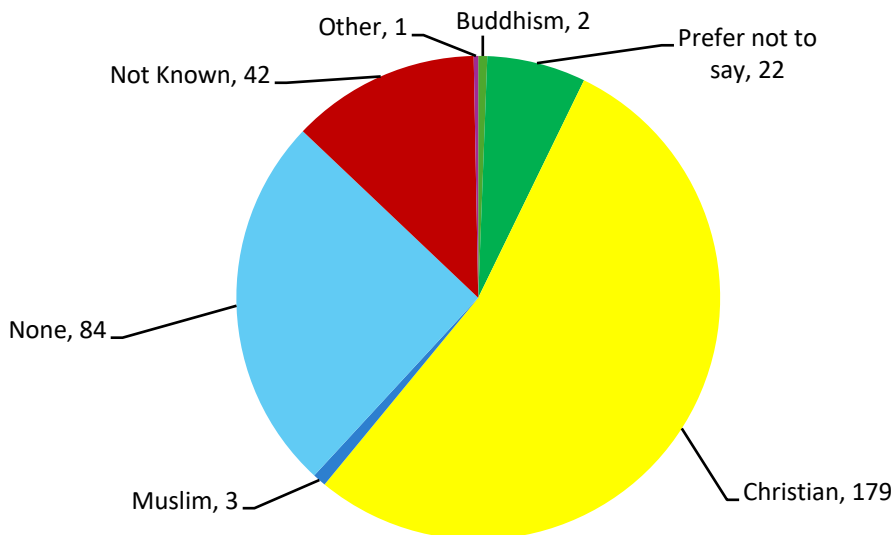
Ethnicity

299, 90%, (90% in 2023/24), of College staff declared that they were White – British. The chart below shows the College’s staff profile by ethnicity.



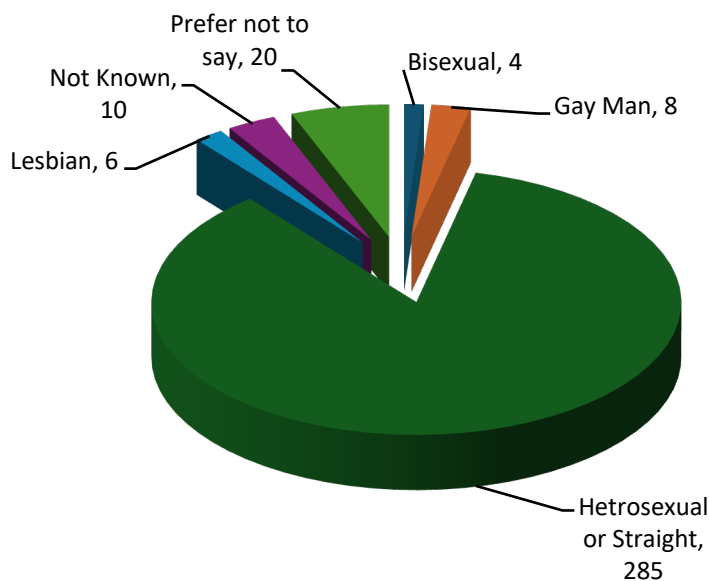
Religion and Belief

The chart below shows the College’s staff representation by religion and belief.



Sexual Orientation

The chart below shows the staff profile by sexual orientation.



Disciplinary Policy and Grievance Procedure

The College Group has a disciplinary policy that is communicated to all staff. The purpose of the procedure is to help and encourage employees to achieve and monitor acceptable standards of conduct at work. It is also designed to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all in relation to disciplinary action taken in response to misconduct. A separate procedure is used to address issues of professional capability and competence.

Grievances

The grievance procedure was invoked on four occasions during 2024/25. Of those who raised a grievance, two were female and two were male.

Disciplinary

The College's Disciplinary Procedure was invoked on four occasions during 2024/25, involving two male members of staff and two female members of staff.

GENDER PAY REPORTING

The College Group fully supports the principle of staff being given equal access to opportunities and being treated with dignity and respect in the workplace which includes equal pay for work of equal value.

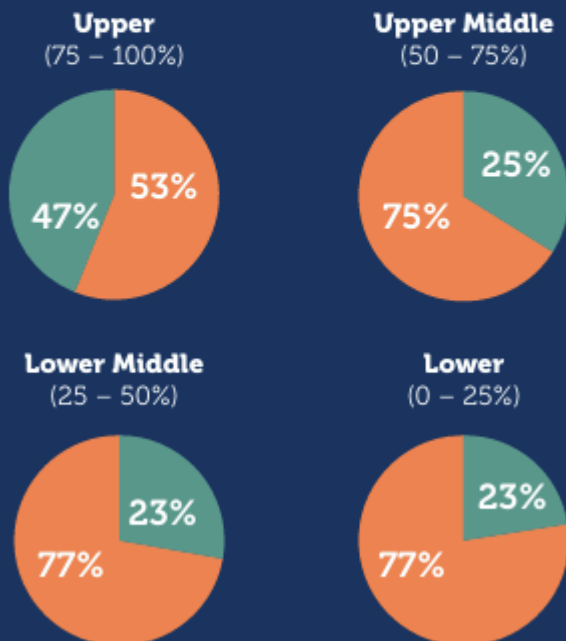
The College Group operates an open and transparent pay structure and has fair recruitment processes, policies and training to ensure there are no gender biases in pay for employees on the same grades or in the recruitment of staff.



Quartile

The College employs significantly more female staff than male staff both overall and across all quartiles.

■ Male ■ Female



Mean Gender Pay Gap	14.4%
Median Gender Pay Gap	23.2%
Mean Bonus Gender Pay Gap*	0%
Median Bonus Gender Pay	0%

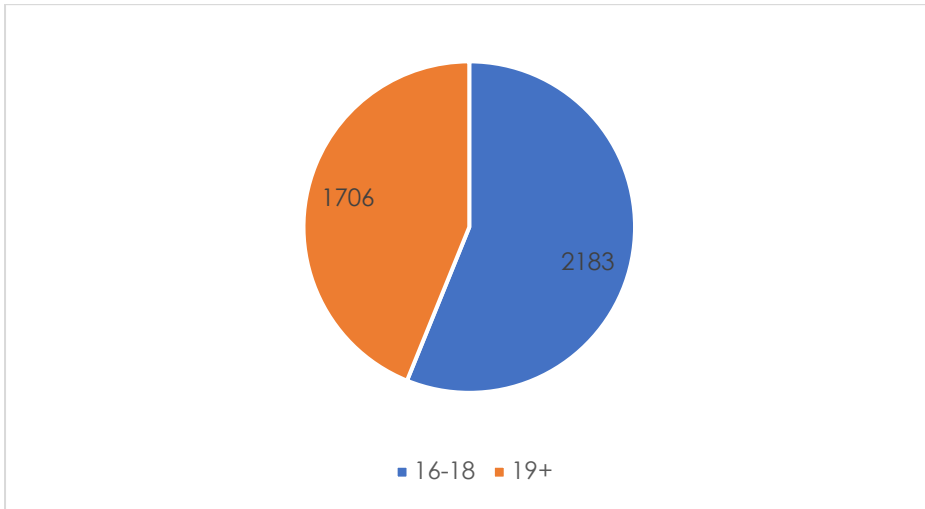
*Not applicable to Southport College, as there isn't a bonus payment system in operation.

There is an overall mean gender pay gap of **14.4%**. The key reason for this difference is that there are significantly more female staff than male staff across part time, term time only, administrative and learning support posts most of which fall within Quartile 1 of the organisational gender profile. The Group will continue to monitor this disparity and identify whether there are any actions that can be taken to encourage more males to take up positions both overall across

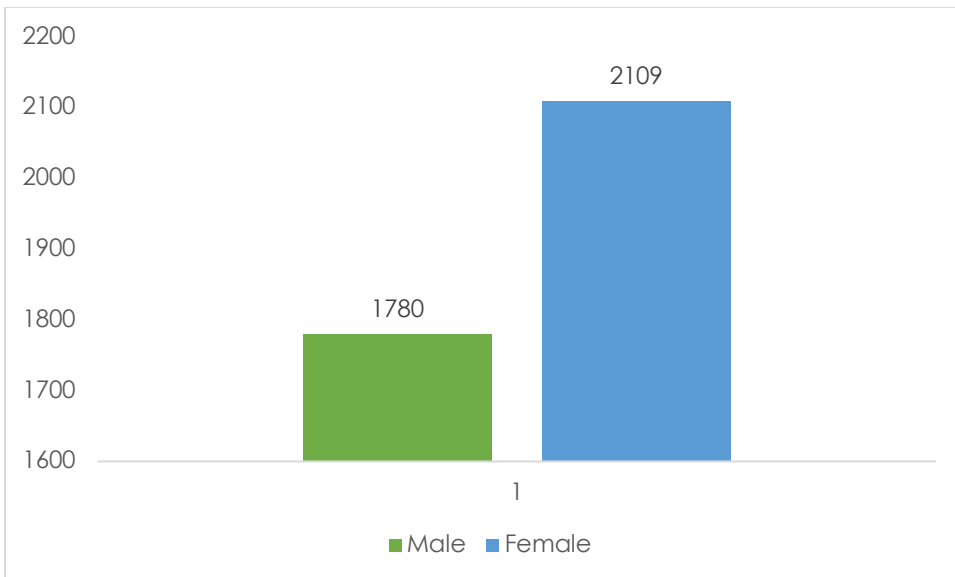
the group and particularly for roles in Quartile 1.

Note: The information contained in this document is correct at time of print.

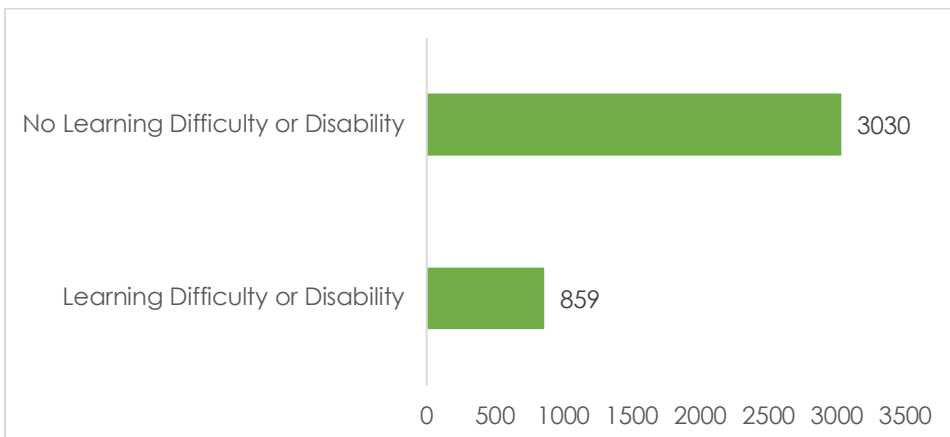
All student age profile 2024/25:



All student sex profile 2024/25:

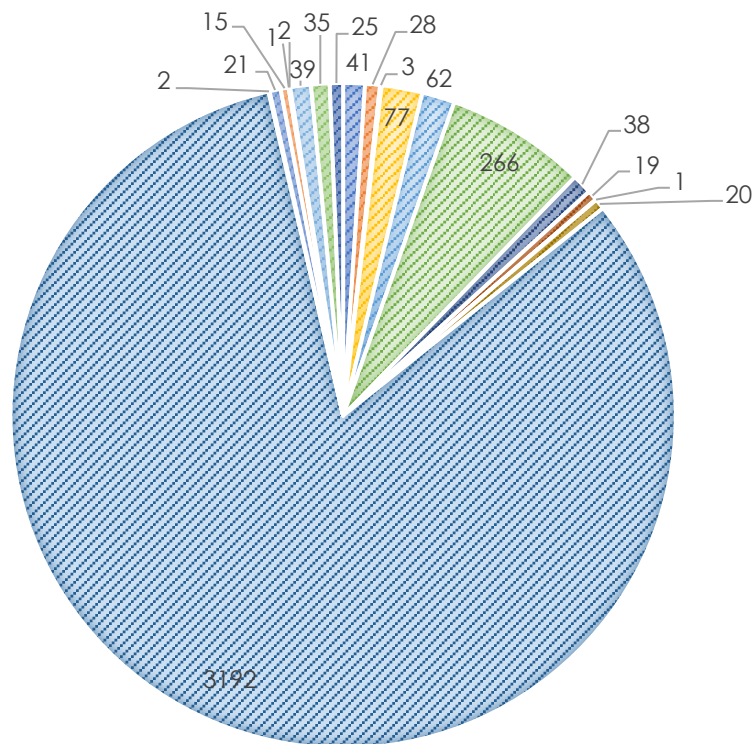


All student disability profile 2024/25:



All student ethnicity profile 2024/25:

- African
- Any other Black/ African/ Caribbean background
- Any other mixed/ multiple ethnic background
- Arab
- Caribbean
- English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
- Indian
- Not provided
- White and Asian
- White and Black Caribbean
- Any other Asian background
- Any other ethnic group
- Any other White background
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Gypsy or Irish traveller
- Irish
- Pakistani
- White and Black African



COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

The College Group aims to listen to the views of all who use its services, learn from its mistakes and continually try to improve. It openly encourages suggestions, comments, compliments and complaints about the services offered. All incidents and issues are recorded as necessary and monitored via the Equity and Diversity Committee. Formal incidents of complaints received from students are analysed by sex, age, race and disability with remedial action taken as necessary.

There are currently protected characteristics we are unable to report on for analysis of complaints due to non-collection of this data. These include religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

2024/25	
No. of formal complaints received	20
No. related to EDI	5

As a result of the complaints that related to equity and diversity issues, actions arising from these included:

- Additional training for staff
- Review of policies and procedures
- Improved communication
- Improved links with external agencies

Profile of complaints

The nature of these complaints was diverse and ranged from those which were easily addressed to others being more in depth. Complaints that related to equity and diversity issues and areas under investigation included:

- A parent did not agree with action taken by college following a disclosure.
- A student felt the location of their work placement to be inappropriate to her needs.
- A group of students wanting to be allowed to eat in classrooms.
- A student felt that a member of staff had not considered her mobility needs.

Profile of compliments

Not all compliments are forwarded to SLT so are not all recorded, staff are encouraged to share. Compliments received were related to equity and diversity and included:

- Parental thanks to college staff for their support and commitment to providing quality education to their son.
- A member of staff nominated for a SEND award.
- Recognition of positive a speedy action in relation to accessibility

Student Survey Feedback

In 2024/25, 1047 students completed the end of year survey. The highest scoring EDI related questions were:

- I can use special equipment, facilities or rooms at college, when I need to.
- If I need it, the extra learning support I receive in the classroom helps me learn and progress.
- Assessment of my work is fair.
- The College encourages respect of those with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs.
- Students from different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs work well together.
- The College has helped me to understand the importance of treating everybody with respect and tolerance.



Learner Voice Positive comments relating to EDI:

- The staff are friendly and supportive
- Free breakfast!
- Feeling safe!
- The new Enrichment Hub, lots to do and varied.
- Staff show care towards students.
- Free travel pass!
- Being treated like adults.
- Location, being close to town, it is easy to get to.

OUR COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

Our mission is to provide outstanding education and training for individuals and employers. Through inspirational teaching, outstanding support and excellent facilities, we aim to help every one of our learners reach their full potential and progress to success. As a College Group we are constantly looking for opportunities to work with specialists in the field and to share good practice.

We work closely with Local Authority SEND Teams, Social Care, Health Care and Sefton Inclusion Team, who regularly visit College sites to assess accessibility across all areas.

Learning Support

There is a highly effective Learning Support Team at Southport Education Group based in the Learning Support Hub at each campus with provision including:

- Individual assessments which are reviewed regularly.
- Specific Learning Difficulty specialist support
- Learning Support Assistants
- Support for maths and English
- Personal Care
- Specialist equipment
- Exam access arrangements
- Individual student support plans
- Individual transition packages

All of which has led to our high needs and SEND students consistently achieving above the College Group average.

Student Conduct

Issues of bullying and conduct are dealt with effectively and due to an early intervention approach, reported incidents of bullying are low. There is a targeted approach to raising students' awareness of safeguarding issues such as Prevent, Hate Crime and Cyber Bullying.

Faith Room

In collaboration with students, the College Group has a Faith Room which is a multi-faith area for all students and staff to use.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information relating to anything in this brochure please contact:

Director: Learning Support and Inclusion

Southport Education Group

Southport College

Mornington Road

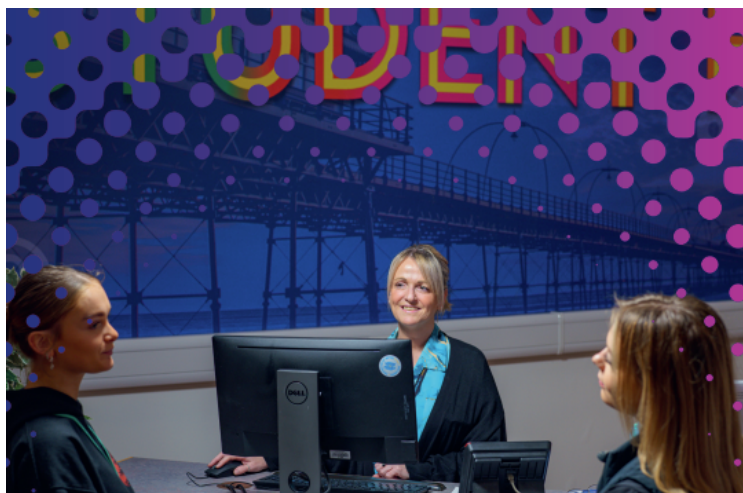
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If you would like this publication in an alternative format please contact Student Services on 01704 500606 to discuss your needs.



The information in this booklet is correct at the time of going to press.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. The College reserves the right to amend details in this publication.

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